

Mears Ashby and Hardwick and Sywell with Overstone



**Prayers and Reflections
for use at home**

**Sunday 20 September 2026
Celebrating Harvest**

Welcome to this week's Prayers and Reflections. Across the benefice, over two Sundays, we are celebrating the gathering in of all of the cereals and vegetables, fruits and berries that have been growing in fields, orchards and hedgerows, gardens and allotments. For farmers, gardeners and allotment holders, it has been a challenging few months, with too little rain to swell the grain. Fruit and vegetables, salad crops and grains, all have been affected by the drought conditions. Even so, we can give thanks to God for his faithfulness in providing for us and, also, all his creatures.

Enjoy celebrating God's love and his provision.

God bless,

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*As we begin to celebrate the fruitfulness of God's creation,
we give thanks for the way nature quietly provides for our needs,
and the needs of all creatures.*



For the fruits of all creation,
thanks be to God;
for the gifts to every nation,
thanks be to God;
for the ploughing, sowing, reaping,
silent growth while we are sleeping,
future needs in earth's safe-keeping,
thanks be to God.

Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000)

CCLI reported

Prayers and Reflections for use at home Providing

PREPARING OURSELVES

Take a moment to be still in God's presence and drink in the wondrous beauty of his glorious creation. If you wish, go and look at your garden. Where can you see signs of God's presence and his loving provision? Open your heart to him. Receive of his love as you offer your thanks and praise. When you are ready, say this prayer.

Lord, here I am,
surrounded by your beautiful creation,
sitting in the peace of my home.
All that I have and all that I am is your gift to me.
As I offer you the gift of this time,
give of yourself to me, I pray. **Amen.**

LETTING GO

*Our time of letting go begins with the second verse of our harvest hymn, **For the fruits of his creation.** It reminds us that God's harvest is both local and global. We all have a role to play in providing for the needs of those who do not have enough. The harvest of fields beyond our benefice, beyond our shores, will provide for the shortfall in our own harvests. God's creation is designed to be a circular economy, a sharing one. We are doing God's will when we share of what we've been given.*

What is this verse saying to you this harvest-time?

*Offer your praise and prayers,
seeking God's forgiveness
and asking for his guidance
as you share his goodness
with others.*





In the just reward of labour,
God's will is done;
in the help we give our neighbour,
God's will is done;
in our world-wide task of caring
for the hungry and despairing,
in the harvests we are sharing,
God's will is done.

Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000)

CCLI reported

OUR HARVEST COLLECT

Across this season of Creationtide, this Harvest Collect is being said in churches. Add your voice to this earthly cycle of praise and promise to our God who made us with love.

Creator God,
you made the goodness of the land,
the riches of the sea
and the rhythm of the seasons;
as we thank you for the harvest,
may we cherish and respect
this planet and its peoples,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Our prayer comes in two parts. First, it is a heartfelt celebration of God's abundant creating. Season by season, he provides for all of our needs, for all living creatures and for all the vegetation that sustains life. We are because God does all of this. He is constantly creating and re-creating life on earth in all its many forms.

Contemplate nature - What fills you with joy and happiness? Give thanks! Give thanks as you celebrate the life that is below, above, and around us. All of these are signs of God's creative presence, and our delight in the life he has spoken into being with love.

A Prayer of Thanksgiving

by Annie Heppenstall

God of rainfall and sunshine and ripening grain,
God of fleeing hares and harvest mice,
of pollinating bees and hedgerow flowers,
and of labouring teams at work all day;
bless the fields and bless the grain,
bless our bread and all who will eat it.

Let none go hungry today,
and may all be welcome at our tables.

Break open our hearts
and fill them with gladness
for the fruits of your creation,
Lord, we pray. **Amen.**

Annie Heppenstall (2015)



Nature - of which, we are a part - speaks of God's presence. God is. God creates. And, as this creative re-telling of the Story of Creation shows us, he delights in everything that he has made.

God said, 'Let there be birds to fly and sing, and fish to swim and splash.' And the world was filled with the joyous sound of birdsong.

God said, 'Let there be animals – elephants and giraffes, cats and mice, and bees and bugs.' And suddenly the world was a very noisy place.

But something was still missing. Then God said, 'I will make people, and I'll make them like me so that they can enjoy the earth and take care of it.' He did just as he had said, and it was all so very, very good.

God looked at everything that he had made and clapped his hands together in delight. 'Isn't it wonderful!'

Desmond Tutu (2010)

Without God, there would be no life - no earth - no universe, and this is why we say, 'Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!' for the gift of life.

If we tune our lives and our hearts into him, we feel his call to us, 'Share, share what you have as freely as I have given.' And this leads us into the second half of our Harvest prayer where we ask God to help us to look after - cherish - our planet home and all its inhabitants. It is a call to oneness of living as God's creatures and as Planet Earth.

It is a call to love as he loves. For the gift of love and caring and sharing, thanks be to God!



For the harvests of the Spirit,
thanks be to God;
for the good we all inherit,
thanks be to God;
for the wonders that astound us,
for the truths that still confound us,
most of all, that love has found us,
thanks be to God.

Fred Pratt Green (1903-2000)

CCLI reported

LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

Do not worry...

Jesus said, 'Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?

'And why do you worry about clothes? See how the flowers of the field grow. They do not labour or spin. Yet I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendour was dressed like one of these. If that is how God clothes the grass of the field, which is here today and tomorrow is thrown into the fire, will he not much more clothe you – you of little faith? So do not worry, saying, "What shall we eat?" or "What shall we drink?" or "What

shall we wear?" For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.

Matthew 6:25-34

... God provides

For some of our farmers, this harvest has been a very poor one. Weeks, months without any appreciable rain resulted in stunted crops with ears containing far less grain than past years. Financially, it is an anxious time for them. This reading is a source of hope as climate change impacts on our harvests. Its message is 'Don't worry. Trust that God is, and listen. Listen to what he is saying, listen to what nature and the seasons are saying. Seek to work in time with creation as it is and as it will be.'

Don't worry! It is hard to stop worrying when we have a reason to worry, to worry about the wellbeing of our planet home... to worry about what's happening in Ukraine and Iran and the West Bank and all the world's war-torn places... to worry about our own life or health, or that of a loved one. Harvest reminds us, God is and God provides for all his creatures, for all his people across the globe. We may not yet be able to see a way out of our worries, but God does. We can trust in him.

Feel this as you picture the scene in our Lord's sermon. Feel this as, prayerfully, you contemplate this final Harvest verse. It speaks of this line from the Lord's Prayer, 'Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' You are a part of God's circle of providing. May his will be done.



Then will thy blessing reach every people;
freely confessing thy gracious hand.
Where thy will reigneth no one will hunger:
thy love sustaineth; fruitful the land.

Albert Frederick Bayly (1901-1984)

CCLI reported

OUR PRAYERS

Feel free to say these harvest prayers and to add your own.

Giving God, all that I have, all that I am, you have given to me.
You give me life, and I love you with every fibre of my being.
Teach me to love as you love, and to give as you have given to me...
Lord, hear my prayer.

Creating God, thank you for the beauty of Planet Earth,
and for all that sustains life. As a human race, help us to live at one
with each other and with nature. Forgive our sins, heal our living...
Lord, hear my prayer.

Loving God, thank you for all who care for those who are sick:
doctors and nurses, carers and vets. Bless, Lord, all in their care.
Calm those who are anxious. Dissolve their worries, I pray...
Lord, hear my prayer.

Offer your own heartfelt prayers and yearnings, praise and thanksgivings.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name;
thy kingdom come; thy will be done;
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,
for ever and ever. **Amen.**

PRAYER OF BLESSING

A closing prayer of blessing for this week.

O God, you search me and you know me,
all my thoughts and feelings are open to your gaze,
and you provide for me. Guide my daily living.
Bless me and keep my loved ones safe, I pray. **Amen.**