



Ripon & Lower Dales Methodist Circuit  
With God in the City, Towns, Villages and rural areas

29/24 Charity Comm'n No 1133792

## Worship at Home – Harvest Festival

Share a cuppa, break open the biscuits and  
may the love of God warm all hearts.

Charity begins at our heavenly home, with  
God's gift of grace and mercy for all people.

### Call to Worship – Reading: Psalm 67

- <sup>1</sup> May God be gracious to us and bless us  
and make his face shine on us—
- <sup>2</sup> so that your ways may be known on earth,  
your salvation among all nations.
- <sup>3</sup> May the peoples praise you, God;  
may all the peoples praise you.
- <sup>4</sup> May the nations be glad and sing for joy,  
for you rule the peoples with equity  
and guide the nations of the earth.
- <sup>5</sup> May the peoples praise you, God;  
may all the peoples praise you.
- <sup>6</sup> The land yields its harvest;  
God, our God, blesses us.
- <sup>7</sup> May God bless us still,  
so that all the ends of the earth will fear him.

**Welcome** to this Harvest Festival worship at home service. As we come to worship God and give thanks for all we have, things great and small, may we know God with us.

*Let us pray.*

Generous God, at this harvest time, we thank you for all we have that comes from the richness of your goodness. With our hearts full of adoration, we thank you for this new day and for the freedom to worship you.

**Amen.**

StF n°123

<sup>1</sup> Come, you thankful people, come,  
raise the song of harvest home!  
Fruit and crops are gathered in  
safe before the storms begin:  
God our maker will provide  
for our needs to be supplied;  
come, with all his people, come,  
raise the song of harvest home!

<sup>2</sup>All the world is God's own field,  
harvests for his praise to yield;  
wheat and weeds together sown  
here for joy or sorrow grown:  
first the blade and then the ear,  
then the full corn shall appear –  
Lord of harvest, grant that we  
wholesome grain and pure may be.

<sup>3</sup>For the Lord our God shall come  
and shall bring his harvest home;  
he himself on that great day,  
worthless things shall take away,  
give his angels charge at last  
in the fire the weeds to cast,  
but the fruitful ears to store  
in his care for evermore.

<sup>4</sup>Even so, Lord, quickly come –  
bring your final harvest home!  
Gather all your people in  
free from sorrow, free from sin,  
there together purified,  
ever thankful at your side –  
come, with all your angels, come,  
bring that glorious harvest home!

Henry Alford (1810-1871) adapted by Compilers of Hymns for Today's Church

### Reading the Gospel according to Luke, chapter 12, verses 13 to 21.

#### The Parable of the Rich Fool

<sup>13</sup> Someone in the crowd said to him, "Teacher, tell my brother to divide the inheritance with me." <sup>14</sup> Jesus replied, "Man, who appointed me a judge or an arbiter between you?" <sup>15</sup> Then he said to them, "Watch out! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; life does not consist in an abundance of possessions."

<sup>16</sup> And he told them this parable: "The ground of a certain rich man yielded an abundant harvest. <sup>17</sup> He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' <sup>18</sup> Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store my surplus grain. <sup>19</sup> And I'll say to myself, "You have plenty of grain laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.'"

<sup>20</sup> “But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?’

<sup>21</sup> “This is how it will be with whoever stores up things for themselves but is not rich toward God.”

## Reflection

Charity begins at home. I wonder if you have ever heard or even found yourself saying this phrase. It's not too difficult to appreciate why sometimes this expression might be held as people can often struggle to provide enough for themselves or their family. What's more, it tends to be the nature of most people that we give out of what we have, and usually give from what is left over after bills have been paid. So here is no judgement, but what I am wanting to suggest is that **'charity begins at our heavenly home, with God's gift of grace and mercy for all people.'**

Harvest festivals are typically joyful occasions. They give a sense of assurance for the year ahead with all the crops safely gathered in. Over the years harvest festivals have grown to encompass greater appreciation for other resources we benefit from the earth, such as energy to heat our homes and harvest too observes the many gifts, skills, and blessings we enjoy from the wide and varied areas of life.

This year we come to our harvest festival during a cost-of-living crises. We are witnessing an increase in the number of people who are facing daily challenges to be able to afford food or heat their home or frequently both. This cost-of-living crises is impacting people closer to home, like you and me. How then might we be encouraged by the parable of the rich fool?

This year I am not speaking to you about a particular charitable organisation but rather speaking to you about being charitable to our neighbours. The rich fool was fortunate to have a bumper crop, but rather than sharing the blessing with others, believed it would provide for a life of comfortable excess. The rich fool was not rich towards God.

When recognising that we all receive from our heavenly home, that is God's gift of grace which enables us and God's mercy that affirms us. Ought we not too, extend God's gifts and the blessings we receive with others.

**Share a cuppa, break open the biscuits and may the love of God warm all hearts.**

How might we do this? Time is a precious commodity. The rich fool built bigger barns to hold the abundance of the harvest but didn't have the time to see the benefit. We can share the blessings that come from God through giving time to others. Time to listen and time to care. Time to walk alongside and time to talk. Time to welcome and time to give help or even a cuppa in a warm home.

John Wesley said, **“make all you can, save all you can, and give all you can.”** We will all experience the cost-of-living crises differently. But might we all remain generous towards God as we bear this storm together. May we be generous with our understanding and compassion. May we be generous with our time and gifts. May we be generous with our welcoming of others and be open to care. And if we are fortunate to have a bumper crop whilst others struggle, may we be generous in our giving to others, to charities, but ultimately, may we be rich towards God, recognising that we are all dependant upon God who is dependable always throughout all seasons. *Amen.*

**“Harvest Festivals are for many, not few. They have a heart of gratitude, not greed. It is a shared expression of faith in God who gives life in all its fullness.”** – Revd. Gareth Baron

StF n°256

<sup>1</sup>When I needed a neighbour, were you there, were you there?

When I needed a neighbour, were you there?

*And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, were you there?*

<sup>2</sup>I was hungry and thirsty, were you there, were you there?

I was hungry and thirsty, were you there?

*And the creed and the colour and the name won't matter, were you there?*

<sup>3</sup>I was cold, I was naked, were you there,  
were you there?

I was cold, I was naked, were you there?

*And the creed and the colour and the name  
won't matter, were you there?*

<sup>4</sup>When I needed a shelter, were you there,  
were you there?

When I needed a shelter, were you there?

*And the creed and the colour and the name  
won't matter, were you there?*

<sup>5</sup>When I needed a healer, were you there,  
were you there?

When I needed a healer, were you there?

*And the creed and the colour and the name  
won't matter, were you there?*

<sup>6</sup>Wherever you travel I'll be there, I'll be there,  
wherever you travel I'll be there.

*And the creed and the colour and the name  
won't matter, I'll be there.*

Sydney Carter (1915-2004)

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Gruneisen Road, London N3 1DZ <[www.stainer.co.uk](http://www.stainer.co.uk)>

### *Let us pray.*

Creator God who gives the harvest,

With thanksgiving, we pray for farmers,  
beekeepers, for factory workers. For the  
bakers, the butchers, and greengrocers. For  
the shop assistants, the long-distance truckers  
and delivery drivers.

Lord God, we thank you for all the many  
people who play their part in growing,  
producing, and making it possible for food to  
reach our tables.

With thanksgiving, we pray for engineers,  
scientists, for mechanics and medics. For  
those with practical skills, for innovators and  
creative artists.

Lord God, we thank you for all the many  
people who play their part in developing,  
mending, and making things for our needs and  
for those inspiring through art.

With thanksgiving, we pray for teachers,  
trainers, for administrators who help and  
facilitate growth in knowledge, skills and  
organise positive developments in people.

Lord God, we thank you for all those who use  
language to communicate care, support, and  
love. For those who build bridges, who build  
community and open access to others in their  
need.

With thanksgiving, we pray for all those in our  
own lives who give of their time, energy, gifts,  
and skills to bless and enriched our lives in so  
many ways.

Lord God, we thank you for the gift of  
relationships with family and friends, with  
neighbours and community.

Living, loving God, at this harvest time, as we  
gather in appreciation to look at all we have, it  
reveals the abundance of your goodness, and  
we give you thanks and praise your holy name.

**Amen.**

### **StF n°130** – We plough the fields and scatter

<sup>1</sup>We plough the fields and scatter  
the good seed on the land,  
but it is fed and watered  
by God's almighty hand;  
he sends the snow in winter,  
the warmth to swell the grain,  
the breezes and the sunshine,  
and soft, refreshing rain.

*All good gifts around us  
are sent from heaven above;  
then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord,  
for all his love.*

<sup>2</sup>He only is the maker  
of all things near and far;  
he paints the wayside flower,  
he lights the evening star;  
the winds and waves obey him,  
by him the birds are fed;  
much more to us, his children,  
he gives our daily bread.

<sup>3</sup>We thank you then, O Father,  
for all things bright and good:  
the seed-time and the harvest,  
our life, our health, our food  
Accept the gifts we offer  
for all your love imparts,  
and, what you most desire,  
our humble, thankful hearts.

Matthias Claudius (1740-1815) translated by Jane Montgomery Campbell (1817-1878)

### **Let us pray for others with confidence and faith in God who is faithful.**

Merciful and gracious God, we see so many in the world who are not experiencing being safely gathered. Near and far, people are suffering, facing daily challenges, and living in danger.

We pray for the people of Ukraine and all those living amid the destruction of war. May the innocent be protected and find safe refuge.

We pray for the people of Pakistan and for those living in the devastation of natural disasters. May hope be known in the rebuilding of homes and communities.

We pray for those living in poverty and all who do not have enough to eat, or enough to heat their home. May compassion be given, and practical love shown by those who can help.

*Drawing to the forefront of our minds eye*, we pray for those whom we hold with care and concern upon our hearts. May their needs be met and the peace of the Lord felt.

We ask all these prayers in the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who said ask and you will receive, seek and you will find, knock and the door will be opened to you.

Lord in your mercy, hear our prayers. **Amen.**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever.  
Amen.

**StF n°124** – For the fruits of all creation.

<sup>1</sup>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.

<sup>2</sup>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.

<sup>3</sup>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)

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May we go not only to those who need us but to those who need us most.  
May we go in the knowledge of the love of God,  
to meet and be met by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

And may the blessing of God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit remain with us always.  
Amen.

***“Judge each day not by the harvest you reap but by the seeds you plant.”***

Robert Louis Stevenson, Scottish writer, 1850-1894