**READINGS**

**Old Testaments**

**Deuteronomy 8.7-18**

7For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land, a land with flowing streams, with springs and underground waters welling up in valleys and hills, 8a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, 9a land where you may eat bread without scarcity, where you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron and from whose hills you may mine copper. 10You shall eat your fill and bless the Lord your God for the good land that he has given you.

11Take care that you do not forget the Lord your God, by failing to keep his commandments, his ordinances, and his statutes, which I am commanding you today. 12When you have eaten your fill and have built fine houses and live in them, 13and when your herds and flocks have multiplied, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, 14then do not exalt yourself, forgetting the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, 15who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, an arid wasteland with poisonous snakes and scorpions. He made water flow for you from flint rock, 16and fed you in the wilderness with manna that your ancestors did not know, to humble you and to test you, and in the end to do you good. 17Do not say to yourself, “My power and the might of my own hand have gotten me this wealth.” 18But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today.

**PSALM 65**

 I will give you this on Sunday.

**New Testament**

**2 Corinthians 9.6-end**

6The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. 9As it is written,

“He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor;
    his righteousness endures forever.”

10He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness.11You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; 12for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. 13Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, 14while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that he has given you. 15Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

**Gospel** Fr John will read this.

**Luke 12.16-30**

16Then [Jesus] told them a parable: “The land of a rich man produced abundantly. 17And he thought to himself, ‘What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?’ 18Then he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. 19And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’ 20But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’ 21So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God.”

22He said to his disciples, “Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. 23For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. 24Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! 25And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? 26If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest? 27Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not clothed like one of these. 28But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith! 29And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. 30For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them.

**Talk**

Over two hundred years ago, in the days long before combine harvesters, a hymn was written to celebrate the harvest.

It is now very well-known and formed part of our worship today. Although originally it had 17 verses!

The hymn starts with the words: 'We plough the fields and scatter the good seed on the land'.

What can we tell from those words? How was the seed sown?

The words suggest the seed – or at least some of it – was sown by throwing it by hand (*you could demonstrate this action*). The seed would have been thrown after the field had been prepared with a horse-drawn plough.

When it came to harvest time the same horses would pull the reaper or cutter ready for the crop to be gathered in.

But what happens in the next line of the song hasn't changed.

Can anyone remember the next line? What happens next (*it may be helpful to sing the first line as a prompt, stopping at the word ‘but’*).

*We plough the fields and scatter the good seed on the land*

*But…*

The answer, of course, is: 'But it is fed and watered by God's almighty hand'.

Once the seed is sown, we rely on the sun and the rain and the nutrients in the soil – everything that comes from creation.

In fact, we rely on these things for all of our food – even that which comes in tins and bags and bottles.

Harvest time teaches us how much we rely on God. In fact, we depend on him.

We depend on him for everything he gives us. For our food, our families, our homes and schools and work.

Everything is a gift from God. Even our own lives.

And so at Harvest, there is one thing we can say to God:

THANK YOU.

THANK YOU.

I now invite you to bring forward your harvest gifts,

In the same way that we now line up for communion. Please remember to keep your distance from each other. A server will receive your offering.

Music plays…

**Prayers**

In the power of the Spirit and in Union with Christ let us pray to the Father:

Heavenly Father,

as we celebrate this season of thanksgiving

we give thanks for the blessings of food, provision and nourishment.

Please grow in us

a harvest for the world.

Come sow a seed of hope within our souls Lord,

that we might yield goodness, patience and kindness in abundance.

Sow a seed of peace in our lives Lord,

that we might bear the fruits of forgiveness, compassion and righteousness.

Come sow a seed of love in our hearts Lord,

that others would reap the blessings of family, friendship and community.

May each seed of hope, peace and love grow within us

into a harvest that can be feasted on by all.

Lord in your mercy.

**Hear our prayer.**

Loving God, during this pandemic

be close to those who are ill, afraid or in isolation.

In their loneliness, be their consolation;

in their anxiety, be their hope;

in their darkness, be their light;

Lord in your mercy.

**Hear our prayer.**

Loving and healing God,

we bring before you

all who are sick.

We especially pray for ­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­­\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

and all who are not well*.*

We pray that your healing hand will touch them.

May they be comforted

by an experience of your presence.

Lord in your mercy.

**Hear our prayer.**

Eternal loving and comforting Father,

we remember in our hearts

all those who have died,

particularly the tens of thousands

who have died of COVID-19 in England.

Father God,

please console those who are mourning,

please let them experience

your loving and tender Spirit

in these moments of deep sadness.

**Merciful Father,**

**accept these prayers**

**for the sake of your Son,**

**Jesus Christ,**

**our Lord.**

**Amen**