

Reflection for Harvest – straight lines and circles

The reading from the prophet Joel speaks of the abundance of creation; a good theme for our harvest celebrations today. He reflects upon the generosity at the very heart of God's nature, with the fig tree and vine giving their full yield, abundant rain and threshing floors full of grain.

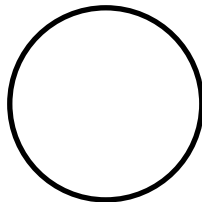
Yet harvest is also a time of recognising that the earth's resources are not evenly distributed. Parts of our planet are more hostile to human flourishing, and even within affluent societies there are many people who lack the most basic provisions.

Over the past few weeks I have been pondering St Peter's words as he proclaims that Jesus is the Messiah, and the challenge for us as members of Christ's body, as we envision what our own corner of the kingdom of God might look like in the future. One of my tentative conclusions is that instead of a straight line with winners and losers at each end, it might look more like a circle of welcome which demonstrates Christ-like radical hospitality.

Today that hospitality will be seen in the gifts of food to be shared within St Thomas, the donations of money to enable others around the world to access safe sanitation, our sharing of bread and wine together, and then our refreshments in the hall.

How else might we show God's generosity and welcome?

Revd Sarah



Codes for the Zoom worship at 5pm on the FIRST Sunday of each month
(5th September, 3rd October and 7th November)
Meeting ID: 817 4532 4542
Passcode: 574847
Telephone numbers: 0203 481 5237,
0203 481 5240, 0131 460 1196

NEXT SUNDAY 10.10.2021 Trinity 19

SERVICES 10.30am in Church.

READINGS OT Amos 5: 6-7,10-15
NT Hebrews 4: 12-end
GOSPEL Mark 10: 17-31



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St Thomas, Exeter

Sunday 3rd October 2021

Harvest Festival

10.30am Mass in Church

5pm Zoom

Welcome to St Thomas and welcome to Harvest—you are welcome to the spiritual and literal refreshment we can provide!

However we all have different roles in feeding one another, and if one part of this is missing, then it's likely someone goes hungry. So my plea for **volunteers** is repeated and extended: for people to welcome us on Sunday at the door, for people to keep the Church clean, for those who prepare and serve refreshments—back in the Hall starting this week. This is one of our main challenges coming out of Covid.

4 October is the feast of **St Francis of Assisi**.
Lord Jesus Christ, who when the world was growing cold to the inflaming of our hearts by the fire of your love, raised up blessed Francis bearing in his body the marks of your passion; mercifully grant to us your people, true penitence and grace to bear the Cross for love of you ...

Fr David



Collect

Eternal God, you crown the year with your goodness and you give us the fruits of the earth in their season: grant that we may use them to your glory, for the relief of those in need and for our own well-being; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Joel 2: 21-27

Do not fear, O soil; be glad and rejoice, for the Lord has done great things! Do not fear, you animals of the field, for the pastures of the wilderness are green; the tree bears its fruit, the fig tree and vine give their full yield. O children of Zion, be glad and rejoice in the Lord your God for he has given the early rain for your vindication, he has poured down for you abundant rain, the early and the later rain, as before. The threshing-floors shall be full of grain, the vats shall overflow with wine and oil. I will repay you for the years that the swarming locust has eaten, the hopper, the destroyer, and the cutter, my great army, which I sent against you. You shall eat in plenty and be satisfied, and praise the name of the Lord your God, who has dealt wondrously with you. And my people shall never again be put to shame. You shall know that I am in the midst of Israel, and that I, the Lord, am your God and there is no other. And my people shall never again be put to shame.

1 Timothy 6: 6-10

Of course, there is great gain in godliness combined with contentment; for we brought nothing into the world, so that we can take nothing out of it; but if we have food and clothing, we will be content with these. But those who want to be rich fall into temptation and are trapped by many senseless and harmful desires that plunge people into ruin and destruction. For the love of money is a root of

all kinds of evil, and in their eagerness to be rich some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pains.

Matthew 6: 25-33

‘Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air; they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? And why do you worry about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, 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. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you—you of little faith? Therefore do not worry, saying, “What will we eat?” or “What will we drink?” or “What will we wear?” For it is the Gentiles who strive for all these things; and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But strive first for the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Post Communion

Lord of the harvest, with joy we have offered thanksgiving for your love in creation and have shared in the bread and the wine of the kingdom: by your grace plant within us a reverence for all that you give us and make us generous and wise stewards of the good things we enjoy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

NOTICES

Please note that because this Sunday is the first of the month, there is also a **Zoom service at 5pm** with the theme of Harvest. For our services in Church, mask wearing is still advised by the Church of England. On most Sundays you can also be seated with some social distancing if you wish.

Coffee and tea will be offered after the 10.30am Mass. It will be served from the Servedy in the North Transept. If the weather is good, there will be seats outside the North Transept to gather for fellowship. If the weather is poor, we will serve in the Nave. **There are gaps in the rota. Volunteers are urgently required. No helpers, no refreshments!**

Knit and Natter October 2021 We shall meet as follows this month: Thursday 7th October at 34 Lichfield Road by kind invitation of Anne and Martin. Thursdays 14th, 21st and 28th at 19 Maple Road. Details as usual from Jenny on 01392 498725

House Group. Tuesdays at 7.30pm. We are studying the book of Revelation. Zoom details from Ian Totterdell. Next **meeting on Tues 5th October**, new people very welcome!

Community Larder The Community Larder will be collecting on **Tuesdays** from 10am-12noon. The collecting point is in the Choir Vestry via the Tower door. Please continue to be generous.

Evensong 10 October 4pm in the Cathedral Fr David has a very limited number of tickets available for this event when he is going to be made a Prebendary. Please speak directly to him if you wish to come.

Macmillan Coffee Morning. A big **THANK YOU** to everyone who helped, in any way, to make it a great success. To date we have raised the total of £152.00. (This includes the Coffee morning at Tots on Thursday and the event in Church on Friday.) Once again, thank you. Pat Metford.