



Dore Methodist Church

Weekly Update

2nd October 2020.



Message from Gail.

Come you thankful people come raise the song of harvest home!

The hymn writer invites us to join the celebration of harvest with joyful and thankful hearts and despite the many restriction of the past six months there is still much we can be thankful for.

This is a festival which has been celebrated ever since human beings first planted seeds, cut the heads of grain and stored them to use through the times of scarcity. When the children of Israel entered the Promised Land and left their nomadic existence in the wilderness, there was much thanksgiving about the potential of new life. So Harvest is a wonderful opportunity to remind us that society, our environment, health and food are all connected with God and it's an opportunity to pray for and support those in our local community and the wider world who are struggling.

God delights in lavishing his grace, goodness and love upon us; and as an expression of all we receive, we want to respond with thankful hearts by helping others. Despite the many things we have not been able to do together these past six months, this is the one thing we are still able to do.

The story of the feeding of the 5,000 is the Gospel reading which is at the heart of our worship today. It is one of transformation from the ordinary to the extra ordinary, it is a story which demonstrates the potential of a small seed and it is a story of hope. Our printed worship sheet which we will be using for our "harvest at home" this year has been produced by All We Can, the Methodist relief and development agency. And we want to support them in their work, alongside the local food bank, as an expression of our thankfulness to God for all his great goodness to us..

Harvest this year is being celebrated in a time like none other, but by the grace of God seeds of hope are being planted, and I pray you will find a blessing from God through this season and I leave you with a final word from St Paul " *So here is what I want you to do, God helping you: take your everyday, ordinary life – your sleeping, eating, going to work, and walking around life – and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for Him*"

Details of how you are able to support our harvest projects are in the update news sheet.

Pause for thought and prayer



“Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again”

From the earliest days of the Church, Christians developed short simple summaries of faith and these statements became known as creeds.

Two creeds which have been used through many generations are the *Apostles Creed*, named as such because it was thought to contain the essential teaching of the twelve disciples, and the *Nicene Creed*, which is a more detailed outline of what the whole Church believes. These summaries bind followers together in local fellowships and across different traditions, and both have the same three fold structure. When we say the creed we are joining with Christians who have repeated this affirmation of faith down the centuries, and with Christians across the world. At the core of these statements, is the understanding that: “*We believe in God the Father who made the world. We believe in Jesus Christ his Son, who redeemed human kind. We believe in the Holy Spirit, who gives life to all people.*”

During this week as a start to your prayers each day, read **Psalm 145: 3-4** and pray through this ancient profession of faith, pausing at each of the three statements to give thanks to God for being creator, redeemer and life giver.

Gail.

Harvest Worship at Home.

Our Harvest worship material has been produced by Twelvebaskets in partnership with All We Can. This service material has also be developed as part of the Big Church Sing in partnership with All We Can and the National Methodist Choir. If you have internet access you can join the Big Church Sing over on the Methodist Church Youtube channel live at 4pm on Sunday 4th October: https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCTeKtVcU_BVasnmfWVZk1JA

Be part of a huge Harvest singing festival like never before as we worship together globally with acclaimed Christian musicians such as the world famous worship leader Graham Kendrick, the incredible Scottish folk band Celtic Worship, globally recognised boys choir Libera, internationally acclaimed London Community Gospel Choir, award-winning singer/songwriter Chelsea Amber featuring Central Heights Church, and The Methodist Association of Youth Clubs (MAYC) Orchestra & Singers, OneSound & The National Methodist Choir GB of over 1,400 singers across the world. There is also a special Harvest reflection on a season of change featuring the Reverend Richard Teal, The President and Vice-President of the Methodist Conference.

Grace Food Bank.

Once again, many thanks to everyone who contributed to last week’s foodbank collection. Our next collection will be our Harvest Collection. However, even though it is Harvest the food bank has requested that we do not send fruit and vegetables as they have no facilities to store perishable goods. So, it’s just the tins, cans, packets and boxes as usual.

The next collection will be on **Monday 5th October**. If you would like me to collect from you please phone me on 0114 473 1998 (or email me at peter.ann.smith@gmail.com) and then leave a bag outside your front door for collection by 9 a.m. on Monday 5th October.

Thank you.

Peter

How to support “All we Can”.

Several ways that you can financially support “All we Can”

- If you have internet access you can give via the “Just giving page” that Gail has set up. This can be found at <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/gail-hunt1>
- Or you can donate by cheque (made payable to Gail Hunt) and either send it direct to her or put it in an envelope and push it through the letterbox on the side door of the church.

Margaret Vaughan.

We are very sorry to tell you that Margaret Vaughan died suddenly at the end of last week. Please remember her family members at this time. Her funeral will be at Hutcliffe Wood Crematorium on Monday 12th October at 3-30 p.m. Numbers are restricted, but if anyone would like to attend please contact Rita on 01306 711359 to check if space is available and give your contact information for “Track and Trace” purposes.

Re-opening for Worship.

The Church Leadership Team met this week and discussed re-opening for worship against the deteriorating local and national coronavirus situation. We decided to continue with our preparations for starting a small midweek act of worship towards the end of October, **but all of this is dependent upon there being no significant changes to the rules within which we are obliged to operate.** Our over-riding priority is to protect the health of those who may attend.

Please send any contributions for our Weekly Update to the Baileys by TUESDAY evening, by phone (2351085) or email (john.bailey23a@btinternet.com)

The Vine at Home / Big Church Sing at Home 4th October 2020.

Harvest Festival – 27th Sunday in Ordinary Time .

Call to worship

Sing joyfully to the Lord, you righteous; it is fitting for the upright to praise him.
Praise the Lord with the harp; make music to him on the ten-stringed lyre.
Sing to him a new song; play skilfully, and shout for joy.

For the word of the Lord is right and true; he is faithful in all he does.
The Lord loves righteousness and justice; the earth is full of his unfailing love.

Amen.¹

¹ Psalm 33:1-5

Hymn: 123 STF – Come ye thankful people come

- 1 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!
- 2 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.
- 3 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.
- 4 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 Reproduced from Singing the Faith Electronic Words Edition, number 123 Adaptation: (c) In this version, Administered by The Jubilate Group, Kitley House, St Katherines Road, Torquay TQ1 4DE <copyrightmanager@jubilate.co.uk> Used by permission. CCLI 554990.

Opening Prayers

Here we are Lord, your thankful people.

We come, grateful for all we have received.

Even amongst this strangest of harvest season, and with all our grief and loss and frustration, we come to give thanks for what we have received.

Here we are Lord, a people in need of forgiveness.

We come, knowing we have not always got it right and we have not earned our place at your harvest-supper table.

But we come all the same, knowing that you are a God of grace and you accept us just as we are.

We come, come Lord Jesus.

Here we are Lord, come amongst us by your grace,

Come amongst us by your Spirit,

As we worship, move us, transform us and inspire us to do your will. **Amen.**²

We will now say the Lord's Prayer

Readings: Psalm 112 Blessings of the Righteous

¹ Praise the Lord! Happy are those who fear the Lord, who greatly delight in his commandments.

² Their descendants will be mighty in the land; the generation of the upright will be blessed.

³ Wealth and riches are in their houses, and their righteousness endures forever.

⁴ They rise in the darkness as a light for the upright; they are gracious, merciful, and righteous.

⁵ It is well with those who deal generously and lend, who conduct their affairs with justice.

⁶ For the righteous will never be moved; they will be remembered forever.

⁷ They are not afraid of evil tidings; their hearts are firm, secure in the Lord.

² Taken from John Birch – A Harvest Liturgy

⁸ Their hearts are steady, they will not be afraid; in the end they will look in triumph on their foes.

⁹ They have distributed freely, they have given to the poor; their righteousness endures forever; their horn is exalted in honour.

¹⁰ The wicked see it and are angry; they gnash their teeth and melt away; the desire of the wicked comes to nothing.³

John 6:1-15 Feeding the Five Thousand

6 After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias.^[a] **2** A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. **3** Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. **4** Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. **5** When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, “Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?” **6** He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. **7** Philip answered him, “Six months’ wages^[b] would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little.” **8** One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to him, **9** “There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?” **10** Jesus said, “Make the people sit down.” Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they^[c] sat down, about five thousand in all. **11** Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. **12** When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, “Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost.” **13** So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. **14** When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, “This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world.”

15 When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.⁴

Reflections on the readings

Harvest is a season of change, and today we have a Gospel of change at the heart of our harvest festival.

In John 6, there is this moment when Jesus is preaching, and then suddenly there are lots of people listening, gathered around. And with this gathering comes a practical need: there are lots of hungry people. All We Can is committed to meeting the practical needs of people around the world – are their ways your church could be meeting practical needs of the people in your communities and beyond? Who is going hungry?

And so Philip comes to the Lord, practical, urgent and anxious: ‘where are we going to buy bread for all these people?’ Philip is one of those people who is carrying the clipboard to the demonstration, isn’t he? The spreadsheet-disciple. Thinking practically and making a list. For much of human history, we have thought about international development (and perhaps all ‘charitable work’) in the way that Philip thinks about it here: how much money do we need to meet the need? This is the model many of us default to when we want to support the very poorest people in our communities, and the world.

³ & ⁴Bible Text is from New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved.

Then, in the story, we get the Jesus moment. Jesus inverts Philip's model on its head. Jesus asks, 'what have they already got?'

Instead of us, coming into their context, pretending we have the ideas and that it is up to us to come up with the solutions to their practical needs – why don't we ask them if they have ideas, resources or materials they'd like to use? Any food they would like to share?

And the little boy, the illustration of so many Sunday school sermons, steps forward with his offer of his loaves and fish. And the miracle happens. A miracle of generosity – where suddenly everyone is sharing their food and all fed. Everyone is satisfied. There is plenty left over – twelve baskets, in fact.

The boy offers something very ordinary, and in Jesus' hands it is changed into something extraordinary.

What about us? What do we have to share?

And what about our communities, the people we are trying to 'reach', the people who live around our churches, the very people of whom we often ask: 'why don't they come to our services'. What do they have to share? Have we asked? Perhaps we shouldn't assume we have all the answers to other people's problems. Perhaps we shouldn't assume that we are somehow 'in', and they are somehow 'out'.

The loaves and fish, something ordinary, in Jesus' hand's becoming extraordinary.

So, to finish, we will just think about one more ordinary thing: the bicycle. This harvest, at All We Can, 'change begins with a bicycle'. For us here in the UK, we probably think of a bike as very ordinary, or something that we have lying around in the shed, perhaps underused...

In Uganda, All We Can's work is enabling the ordinary bicycle to become something extraordinary – to become a tool for transformation. In poor, rural villages like Butagaya in Uganda, people often live a long way from the facilities they need, including the local schools. They don't have any access to a motor vehicle, and public transport is either non-existent or unsafe.

5

In that context, the bicycle is an ordinary, simple thing, that brings transformation. All We Can is working with a local organisation in Uganda to enable young people in these poor communities to access bicycles and use them to get to school, to invest in their own future, to break the cycle of poverty...

Will you stand alongside them, presenting what you have – something ordinary – and seeing it become extraordinary?

And what about you? What do you have, what does each of us have, that we could place in the hands of the master today? What gifts, ideas, energy, time could we offer to Jesus – and see our ordinary day-to-day lives become something extraordinary?

You can support All We Can's Change Begins with a Bicycle campaign at allwecan.org.uk/bike

Let's close with The Message translation of Romans 12: "So here is what I want you to do, God helping you: take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering. Embracing what God does for you is the best thing you can do for him." **Amen.**⁵

⁵ Reflection provided by All We Can

Prayers of intercession

Heavenly Father,

We pray for the students and teachers in our communities.

We bring before you the children who will be able to access education because of the extraordinary gift of a bike.

Lord of transformation,

Turn the ordinary into the extraordinary.

We pray for those who are living in poverty in our midst. We pray that the work of All We Can and their partners would break the cycle of poverty in Uganda and bring change.

Lord of transformation,

Turn the ordinary into the extraordinary.

Help us all to fulfil our God-given potential. May these bikes be a starting point for children to live life to the maximum and see their hopes and dreams become a reality.

Lord of transformation,

Turn the ordinary into the extraordinary.

We pray for our heads of government and those in positions of power. We ask for them to be motivated to eradicate injustice and inequality.

Lord of transformation,

Turn the ordinary into the extraordinary.

[An opportunity to pray for those dealing with illness from amongst your congregation]

We thank you for the NHS and the amazing staff that keep it running. We pray for communities like around the world where access to healthcare is difficult and limited.

Lord of transformation,

Turn the ordinary into the extraordinary.

We thank you for the opportunity to keep learning and growing. We pray for the young people in Uganda learning to be bike mechanics and pray that these skills will help sustain them and give them security.

Lord of transformation,

Turn the ordinary into the extraordinary. Amen.⁶

Hymn: 130 STF – We plough the fields and scatter

- 1 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.
- 2 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.
- 3 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) (alt.)
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Blessing

Go in peace, and serve the Lord.
Go in love, and seek a better world where we see the ordinary transformed into the extraordinary,
in Jesus' name.
Go in grace, and know that the God of the harvest goes with you. **Amen** ⁷

⁷ Additional prayer by Tim Baker