



HARVEST 2020 Collect and Readings

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 our Lord,
Who is alive and reigns with you,
In the unity of the Holy Spirit,
One God, now and for ever.
Amen.

PSALM 65

- 1 Praise is due to you, O God, in Zion; ♦
to you that answer prayer shall vows be paid.
- 2 To you shall all flesh come to confess their sins; ♦
when our misdeeds prevail against us,
you will purge them away.
- 3 Happy are they whom you choose
and draw to your courts to dwell there. ♦
We shall be satisfied with the blessings of your house,
even of your holy temple.
- 4 With wonders you will answer us in your righteousness,
O God of our salvation, ♦
O hope of all the ends of the earth
and of the farthest seas.
- 5 In your strength you set fast the mountains ♦
and are girded about with might.
- 6 You still the raging of the seas, ♦
the roaring of their waves
and the clamour of the peoples.
- 7 Those who dwell at the ends of the earth
tremble at your marvels; ♦
the gates of the morning and evening sing your praise.
- 8 You visit the earth and water it; ♦

you make it very plenteous.

9 The river of God is full of water; ♦
you prepare grain for your people,
for so you provide for the earth.

10 You drench the furrows and smooth out the ridges; ♦
you soften the ground with showers and bless its increase.

11 You crown the year with your goodness, ♦
and your paths overflow with plenty.

12 May the pastures of the wilderness flow with goodness ♦
and the hills be girded with joy.

13 May the meadows be clothed with flocks of sheep ♦
and the valleys stand so thick with corn
that they shall laugh and sing.

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2 Corinthians 9.6-15: God loves a cheerful giver

6 The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And 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. 9 As it is written, "He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures forever." 10 He 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. 11 You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; 12 for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. 13 Through 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, 14 while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that he has given you. 15 Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

Luke 17.11-19: The importance of offering our thanks to God in gratefulness

11 On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. 12 As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, 13 they called out, saying, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!" 14 When he saw them, he said to them, "Go and show yourselves to the priests." And as they went, they were made clean. 15 Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. 16 He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. 17 Then Jesus asked, "Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? 18 Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?" 19 Then he said to him, "Get up and go on your way; your faith has made you well."

Harvest Reflection, from Mary-Lou

Harvest is a time to say thank you! Speaking personally, stuck in isolation for so long, we want to say thank you to all our family and friends who've cared for us. But in times like these, we can so easily focus just on the awfulness of it – and why not?? I hate this virus! I'm sure you do too.

But Harvest gives us a time to stop and remember the amazing gifts and blessings of life that are there too – and to recall that everything we have, is ultimately a gift from God.

It's so easy to forget to be grateful when times are hard. Stopping to count our blessings and to express thanks to God is one of those heart-habits we need to cultivate in ourselves. It's good for us!

Most importantly, being thankful puts God back in God's rightful place, as the source of all life and the centre of our lives.

It doesn't stop there. Because gratitude grows generosity. When our hearts are in the right place, when we recognise that all we have has been given to us so abundantly by God, we stop holding on tightly to everything. We start wanting to share the abundance of God's gifts and to do so generously.

God pours out his blessings on us abundantly. God provides for us. God is interested in every part of our daily lives. And God loves that our hearts turn to him as we express our thanksgiving, never forgetting the ultimate gift of God's precious Son, Jesus. When our hearts are turned to God in thankfulness, we too will offer a harvest – a harvest of generous giving, to those who are poor, to those who do not have enough. Giving speaks of the very heart of the gospel. When we give, full of thankfulness for all we have received, other people can catch a glimpse of what the good news of Jesus Christ means to us, and it will lead them to praise God for themselves.

So let's remember to say thank you. And let's share the amazing gifts we have been given, for love of the God who loves us so much, provides for us and blesses us so abundantly.

I've had the words of the wonderful hymn *Great is thy faithfulness* running through my head as I've been thinking about Harvest time:

*All I have needed, thy hand hath provided,
Great is thy faithfulness, Lord unto me!*

May the God of the Harvest bless you and keep you always.

And if you'd like to hear as well as read the Harvest Reflection, you can do so by

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1. Sharing the Light in the Loop – phone 01743 298285
2. Watching our Harvest Celebration online! <https://youtu.be/XGcLFOIG1TM>.