

2022-10-02 ... 6.30pm Harvest Evensong ... Revd Canon Judy Hunt

Genesis 1: 26 – 31; Philippians 2: 1 – 8

'Harvest Evening'

Introduction ...

"I see fields of green, red roses too ..."

O what a wonderful world!

Our Christian tradition – developing in this respect from that of Judaism ... views this world as 'good' ... as 'very good' ... and as a wonderful gift to us from God.

Everything is provided ... the world can be fruitful. Our Old Testament reading reminded us of that.

And if we look around us, we can still be amazed each day at what we can see.

Trees laden with apples ...

Cows giving plentiful milk ...

The sea yielding a harvest of fish ...

Thanking ...

Think about when another person gives you a beautiful gift ... the normal first reaction is to say 'thank you' ... and that's partly what Harvest, Harvest Festival, Harvest Services ... are about. We gather to thank God.

That's the normal first reaction.

What comes next?

Taking Care ...

Usually – taking good care of that gift. OK – if it's perishable that might include drinking or eating within the 'best by' date – and recycling the container.

If it's not perishable – cherishing it, protecting it, appreciating it.

That's a suitable, indeed a necessary, second response about having received the gift of our natural world ... to cherish, protect and appreciate it.

What about a third reaction to a wonderful gift?

PTO

To use it well ...

Suppose it's a really skilfully crafted violin given to a young and talented violinist ...

First reaction – thank you – yes

Second reaction – cherish, protect, appreciate – yes

Third reaction – to use it well ... to understand its purpose and act accordingly – to bring beautiful music to as many people as possible.

That reaction is appropriate for our world too – with proper protection, appreciation and use – there could be food for all ... including the wild animals.

We can no longer celebrate Harvest without being aware of how we use the world – as a whole human race. We need – as in our New Testament reading – to have the attitude of Christ-like service.

Here's a quote from Madeleine L'Engle:

Half the world is starving to death

The other half is on a diet

We are not privileged because we deserve to be

Privilege accepted needs to mean responsibility accepted too

That is why from this church at Harvest we support our Local Farmers through the Farming Community network.

We support those around us in need through the Foodbank and the Community Hospital.

And we look further afield with Water Aid:

- Clean water to drink for people and animals
- and irrigation for parched land to return it to health and fruitfulness.

Please do give generously.

Amen.