

The Smestow Vale Team Ministry

St Benedict Biscop and the Venerable Bede

Keeping in Touch with our Church Family

Sunday 26th September 2021

Harvest



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.
Amen.

A reading from the book of the prophet Joel

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

Joel 2:21-27

Jesus sees the wonder of the natural world

Jesus said to his disciples: '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.'

Matthew 6:25-33

A reflection for Harvest from Revd Preb Paul Brown.

In a remote and wild part of Cornwall where the scenery is both dramatic and beautiful there is a strange tea shop with very strange chimneys. Each Chimney is shaped like a church tower and they are all different. The Tea shop was once a Vicarage and it was the product of one of the more colourful characters amongst the 19th century Cornish clergy.

The Tractarian Stephen Hawker who married a wealthy wife some twenty years older than himself and accepted a living that hadn't had a resident Vicar for over 100 years. Hawker was good if rather eccentric parish priest. He lived among his people watching their foibles and trying to guide them in Christian Discipleship. His part of Cornwall has high, rocky cliffs and in the 19th century was particularly treacherous for ships. Many came to grief on the rocks and when they did Hawkers parishioners were out for what they could get, salvaging and pillaging anything of value that was washed up on the shore.

The Churches of the Smestow Vale Team Ministry Bobbington Himley, Swindon, Trysull and Wombourne

Hawker didn't like what he saw and as his was a rural community he reflected on some of the passages in the Old Testament that encouraged the Jews, farmers and herdsmen, to offer their first fruits back to God as a thank offering.

Hawker saw the sense of it and in 1843 he encouraged his flock to bring wheat and corn and some of what ever they had grown to Church for what became the first Harvest festival. A Festival first of thanksgiving of all that God had given them and secondly an opportunity to share through what today we would call a harvest supper. The idea soon took off and was adopted by others and I wonder What Hawker would have thought if he had known that 160 years later we would be following his example. But we are, even though few of us grow our food, even though for most of us comes it from our local supermarkets. We are, because it is still important, firstly to say thanks you and secondly to share. Harvest makes us stop and think. It challenges our selfishness and it reminds us that thanks and sharing should flow out into every part of our lives.

Paul

Prayer during the Week

Sunday

Thank God that he provides for all our needs.
(Matthew 6:23b)

Monday

Pray that women and girls in Afghanistan will have their human rights restored.

Tuesday

Pray for all minority groups in Afghanistan, especially those wishing to leave.

Wednesday St Michael and All Angels

Pray for the welfare of children in this dangerous world. (Matthew 18:10)

Thursday

Pray for refugees arriving in this country, that they will find a welcome.

Friday

Pray for the victims of the continuing war involving Tigray in Ethiopia

Saturday

Pray for godly wisdom for our new Cabinet in all the decisions they make.

Please remember those who have asked for our prayers

Joy Waistell, Sarah Aldridge, Geoff Truby,
Olly Cadman, Miriam Hackett, Ann and Barrie Taylor,
Olga Barrow-Collins and Andrew.

Those who have died

Mary Carpenter and June Morgan

Please send requests for prayer to the Parish Office

This weeks Services

At St Benedict's

8.00am Holy Communion

10.30am Parish Communion

3.00pm and 4.00pm Holy Baptism

Tuesday 9.30am Holy Communion

Wednesday 10.15am Mary Carpenter's funeral

At the Ven Bede

9.00am Parish Communion

Monday 10.00am Little Fish

Thursday 11.00am Holy Communion

Congratulations

To Alan and Barbara Moss on their 70th Wedding Anniversary.

Harvest

Our Harvest charity is Water Harvest which works with some of the poorest families in Rajasthan India. If you can sue a gift aid envelope or if you place your donation in an envelope with your name on and have made a gift Aid decoration we can reclaim the tax for the charity.

Children's Society

Carol Porter has kindly agreed to become our link person for the Children's Society. Boxes can be brought to and then collected from church on a Sunday. Carol will collect boxes if requested.

Sue Watson

Sue will retire from her work in the Team Ministry on the 3rd of October. If you would like to contribute to a leaving gift contributions can be made online to the parish account marked Sue or given to Joan Parker ASAP

Pastoral Visitors

Our course for those who are thinking about Pastoral visiting has its third session this Tuesday at 7.30pm at St Benedict's.

