

October 2025

Following an exceptionally dry spring, this year saw the harvest gathered in very early and it seems to have been quite a wait to celebrate harvest festivals in our parishes!

The harvest festival celebrations that we know today were introduced in the Cornish parish of Morwenstow in 1843 by Rev Robert Hawker. He invited his parishioners to a Harvest service as he wanted to thank God for providing such plenty and to counter the festivities of more ancient pagan celebrations. The Christian Harvest celebrations were based on what Hawker saw in the Old Testament, and he drew on the Jewish festival of Sukkot: "You shall keep the Feast of Harvest, of the first fruits of your labour, of what you sow in the field. You shall keep the Feast of Ingathering at the end of the year, when you gather in from the field the fruit of your labour." Exodus 23:16

And today it is still an opportunity to give thanks for God's provision and an opportunity to share the riches we have received. Paul was very clear in his second letter to the Corinthians (9:5-7) that generosity begins in our hearts and is a reflection of the gratitude we have towards God for what he has done for us. Generosity is not something we have to be coerced into but instead it is something freely given. We perhaps need this reminder because our wealth and belongings ultimately belong to God, and we are simply stewards of what we have.

Our harvest services should reflect this attitude of generosity because it points to what is at the heart of our faith - that God has given us new life in Jesus freely and without condition. This is the grace of God at work in our lives.

God bless,

Revd Sue

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