

October 2024

October is the season of harvest festivals and we will be celebrating in four out of five of our churches – Adstone held their service in September. The wet spring this year means that harvest has run later than usual but hopefully by October all will be ‘safely gathered in’ as the hymn puts it. The harvest festival tradition pre-dates Christianity - the name derived from the Old English word ‘Haerfest’ meaning ‘Autumn’ - and it only began to be celebrated as we know it in earnest in 1843 when the Reverend Robert Hawker invited his parishioners to a special harvest thanksgiving service in church in Morwenstow, Cornwall.

The gospel passage which we shall be hearing at our harvest festivals this year reminds us ‘do not worry, saying ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ ... indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things’ (*Matt 6:31,32*, and most of us reading this probably don’t need to worry. As a country we have become less reliant on home grown produce and can readily obtain food from anywhere in the world. But when we hear of the reliance on foodbanks locally and see pictures of starving children from countries such as Sudan it makes me wonder how those people who genuinely do have concerns about their food supply might feel when they hear those biblical words. But later in Matthew’s gospel Jesus challenges us, saying it’s up to us who have plenty to do something to help (*Matt 25:31-40*).

So with that in mind please come along to your harvest festival to give thanks for the harvest and the many blessings we enjoy and if you would like to, please bring some packaged food or tins for the foodbank or the Hope Centre and help those who need it. The services will all be very family-friendly and suitable for everyone. – I look forward to seeing you there.

God bless

Revd Sue

If you would like to talk please contact me on 01327 341307 or stanley.thehole@btinternet.com