

**East Durham Methodist Circuit**  
**Online Service for 26th September 2021**

**Prepared by Jean Shotton**

**Theme: Harvests in Crisis**

**Call to worship:**

Verses from Daniel 3: **A Song of Creation**

1. Bless the Lord all you works of the Lord: **sing his praise and exalt him forever.**
2. Bless the Lord you heavens: **sing his praise and exalt him forever.**
3. Bless the Lord you angels of the Lord: **bless the Lord all you his hosts;**
4. Bless the Lord you waters above the heavens: **sing his praise and exalt him forever.**
5. Bless the Lord sun and moon: **bless the Lord you stars of heaven;**
6. Bless the Lord all rain and dew: **sing his praise and exalt him forever.**
7. Bless the Lord all winds that blow: **bless the Lord you fire and heat;**
8. Bless the Lord light and darkness: **sing his praise and exalt him forever.**
9. Bless the Lord the creatures of the earth: **sing his praise and exalt him forever.**
10. O people of God bless the Lord: **sing his praise and exalt him forever.**
11. Bless the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit: **Sing his praise and exalt him forever.**

**Hymn: All creatures of our God and king** St Francis of Assisi **StF 99 / H&P 329**

1. All creatures of our God and king,  
lift up your voice and with us sing  
Alleluia, alleluia!  
Bright burning sun with golden beam,  
soft shining moon with silver gleam,

**O praise him, O praise him,  
Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia!**

2. Swift rushing wind so wild and  
strong,  
white clouds that sail in heaven along,  
O praise him, alleluia!  
New rising dawn in praise rejoice,  
you lights of evening find a voice;

**O praise him...**

3. Cool flowing water, pure and clear,  
make music for your Lord to hear,  
Alleluia, alleluia!  
Fierce fire so masterful and bright  
giving to us both warmth and light,

**O praise him...**

4. Earth ever fertile, day by day  
bring forth your blessings on our way,  
O praise him, alleluia!  
All fruit and crops that richly grow,  
all trees and flowers God's glory show;

**O praise him...**

5. Let all things their creator bless  
and worship him in lowliness,  
Alleluia, alleluia!  
Praise, praise the Father, praise the

Son,  
and praise the Spirit, Three-in-One,  
**O praise him...**

**A Harvest Prayer:**

Creator God, We thank you for the gift that is creation. For the beauty of the earth and how you have created us to care for it. We are sorry for the ways we have neglected this, Help us to work together to repair the world.

**Lord of the Harvest, hear our prayers.**

Generous God, We thank you for the gift of food. For how it brings us together and nourishes us. We pray for those whose harvests and store cupboards are empty, Help us work together to share the world's resources so that everyone can be fed.

**Lord of the Harvest, hear our prayers.**

Sustaining God, We thank you for those who farm and prepare our food. For their labour, their innovation and their care. We pray that everyone will be able to work with dignity, that there will be no more poverty. May we work towards a just and fair system of pay and working conditions.

**Lord of the Harvest, hear our prayers.**

All-powerful God, We thank you for the gift that is creation. For the beauty of the Earth. How you have created us to care for it. We are sorry for the ways we have neglected this, Help us to work together to repair the world.

**Lord of the Harvest, hear our prayers.**

**Amen**

We ask these prayers in the name of Jesus who taught us to say:

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.  
Thy Kingdom come; Thy will be done - on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.  
For Thine is the Kingdom, the power and the glory,  
For ever and ever.**

**Amen**

**Hymn: God in his love for us lent us this planet** Fred Pratt Green **StF 727**

1. God in his love for us lent us this  
planet,  
gave it a purpose in time and in space:  
small as a spark from the fire of  
creation,  
cradle of life and the home of our race.

2. Thanks be to God for its bounty and  
beauty,  
life that sustains us in body and mind:  
plenty for all, if we learn how to share  
it,  
riches undreamed of to fathom and  
find.

3. Long have our human wars ruined its harvest;  
long has earth bowed to the terror of force;  
long have we wasted what others have need of,  
poisoned the fountain of life at its source.

4. Earth is the Lord's: it is ours to enjoy it,  
ours, as his stewards, to farm and defend.  
From its pollution, misuse, and destruction,  
good Lord, deliver us, world without end.

### **Readings:**

**In our readings and the hymns** there is a great appreciation and understanding of creation: where the birds nest, where the mountains soar, the ocean waves swirl and the vast array of creatures living in our seas. All speak of how nature fits together.

### **Deuteronomy 24: 19**

When you are harvesting your crops and forget to bring in a bundle of grain from your field, don't go back to get it. Leave it for the foreigners, orphans, and widows. Then the **LORD** your God will bless you in all you do.

### **Ruth 2** selected verses **Ruth Works in Boaz's Field**

Ruth said to Naomi, "Let me go out into the harvest fields to pick up the stalks of grain left behind by anyone who is kind enough to let me do it." The foreman was asked if she could gather grain behind the harvesters. She was hard at work with just a few minutes' rest in the shelter." Boaz went over and said to Ruth, "Stay right here with us when you gather grain; don't go to any other fields. Stay right behind the young women working in my field. See which part of the field they are harvesting, and then follow them. I have warned the young men not to treat you roughly. And when you are thirsty, help yourself to the water they have drawn from the well."

<sup>10</sup> Ruth fell at his feet and thanked him warmly. "What have I done to deserve such kindness?" she asked. "I am only a foreigner." <sup>11</sup>"Yes, I know," Boaz replied. "But I also know about everything you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband. I have heard how you left your father and mother and your own land to live here among complete strangers. <sup>12</sup> May the LORD, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge, reward you fully for what you have done."

<sup>15</sup> When Ruth went back to work again, Boaz ordered his young men, "Let her gather grain right among the sheaves without stopping her. <sup>16</sup> And pull out some heads of barley from the bundles and drop them on purpose for her. Let her pick them up, and don't give her a hard time!" <sup>17</sup> So Ruth gathered barley there all day, and when she beat out the grain that evening, it filled an entire basket. <sup>18</sup> She carried it back into town and gave it to her mother-in-law, Naomi. Ruth also gave her the roasted grain that was left over from her meal. <sup>19</sup> May the LORD bless the one who helped you!"

### **Hymn: There's a spirit in the air**

Brian Wren

**StF 398 / H&P 326**

1. There's a spirit in the air,  
telling Christians everywhere:  
'Praise the love that Christ revealed,  
living, working, in our world!'

2. Lose your shyness, find your tongue,  
tell the world what God has done:  
God in Christ has come to stay.  
Live tomorrow's life today!

3. When believers break the bread,  
when a hungry child is fed,  
praise the love that Christ revealed,  
living, working, in our world.

4. Still the Spirit gives us light,  
seeing wrong and setting right:  
God in Christ has come to stay.  
Live tomorrow's life today!

5. When a stranger's not alone,  
where the homeless find a home,  
praise the love that Christ revealed,  
living, working, in our world.

6. May the Spirit fill our praise,  
guide our thoughts and change our  
ways  
God in Christ has come to stay.  
Live tomorrow's life today!

7. There's a Spirit in the air,  
calling people everywhere:  
praise the love that Christ revealed,  
living, working, in our world.

**Message: Harvest? A Climate in Crisis!**

Here are some things for you to think about. We all have loads of equipment...

**TOOLS:** Trowel \* Home phone or radio (Alarm) \* Calculator \* Kitchen scales \*  
Smartphone / Laptop

What is the Link? Where has the produce come from? Where is it going to?

In Matthew 22:37 - 40, Jesus tells us that God's greatest commandments are to love God and to love our neighbours.

In the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), Jesus shows us we are called to be good neighbours to anyone who needs our help – whether they live next door or across the world.

We can help share the load of the climate crisis with our global neighbours this harvest. Your neighbour's harvest is empty. Deadly droughts, made worse by the climate crisis, means another season of hunger looms. But it doesn't have to be this way. The climate crisis is hitting people in poverty the hardest – the ones who have done the least to cause it. It is leading to more frequent and more severe disasters. Farmers have seen the land become barren and empty due to prolonged drought. The crops have died, families are hungry.

The climate crisis is a daily burden for many people. The time to act is now. The church cannot ignore this urgent crisis. As nations gather at the UN Assembly, climate change features again, perhaps the biggest stumbling block facing our world right now. From green energy to recycling PPE, we can all play our part; can we also be brave at holding our leaders and corporations to account for their part in making this world the best it can be for everyone? If greed is at the root of many of these issues, is that the kind of barrier Jesus meant lies between us and God?

The climate crisis has been brought home this week, with the risk to supplies reaching our supermarket shelves, limited gas supplies and energy prices soaring, Universal Credit payments being reduced

**Prayers of Intercession: for the climate crisis:**

God of justice, we lift up people around the world who are suffering the effects of the climate crisis. We think of those in Bangladesh, the Philippines, Mozambique and

Central America who have recently faced deadly cyclones and floods. We think of those who are facing prolonged droughts in Burkina Faso, Brazil, Ethiopia and Zimbabwe. Those who have done the least to cause this crisis are suffering. Lord, protect them and give them hope for the future.

Lord, we ask that you bless churches and charities who are responding to this crisis; equip them and give them wisdom. Lord, you ask us to work with you to protect our neighbours; may we grasp the urgency of the situation, so that as the church we can stand up for those in need, raise awareness and call for change. And Lord, when the issue feels too big or overwhelming, keep our eyes fixed on you who can do more than we can ask or imagine. In Jesus' name we pray,

All-loving, ever-present God, we pray for the people we know and love, and for those we have never met. We pray for our neighbours, for the people across the street, and for those on the other side of the world, for the people who look and sound like us, and for those who are different.

We pray for everyone who is struggling, for those who are marginalised and oppressed. Help us, God, to be good neighbours, to look outward instead of inward, to follow Jesus' call to action.

**Amen**

**Hymn: Lord of creation to you be all praise** Jack Copley Winslow **StF 449 / H&P 699**

1. Lord of creation, to you be all praise!  
Most mighty your working, most  
wondrous your ways!  
Your glory and might are beyond us to  
tell,  
and yet in the heart of the humble you  
dwell.

2. Lord of all power, I give you my will,  
in joyful obedience your tasks to fulfil.  
Your bondage is freedom, your service  
is song,  
and, held in your keeping, my  
weakness is strong.

3. Lord of all wisdom, I give you my  
mind;  
rich truth that surpasses my knowledge  
to find;  
What eye has not seen and what ear  
has not heard  
is taught by your Spirit and shines from  
your Word.

4. Lord of all bounty, I give you my  
heart;  
I praise and adore you for all you  
impart:  
your love to inspire me, your counsel to  
guide,  
your presence to shield me, whatever  
betide.

5. Lord of all being, I give you my all,  
if I should disown you, I stumble and  
fall;  
but led in your service your word to  
obey,  
I'll walk in your freedom to the end of  
the way.

**Blessing:**

Lord God, bless us and keep us. And may we be a blessing to others in all we think  
and say and do.

**Amen.**