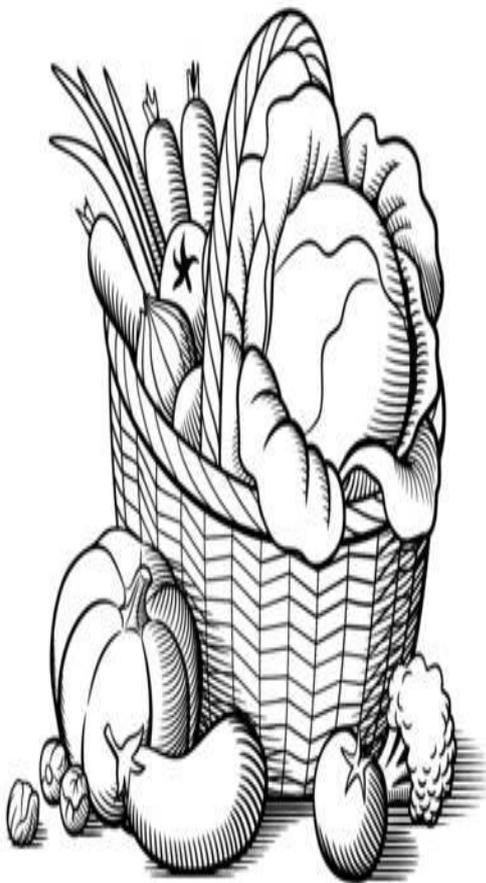


Wilbraham St Ninian's United Reformed Church

*Egerton Rd South, Chorlton-cum-Hardy,
Manchester, M21 0XJ*

October 2018



¹¹ You crown the year with your
bounty;
your wagon tracks overflow with
richness.

¹² The pastures of the wilderness
overflow,
the hills gird themselves with joy,
¹³ the meadows clothe themselves
with flocks,
the valleys deck themselves with
grain,
they shout and sing together for
joy.

Psalm 65:11 - 13

Interim Minister

Rev Alan Poolton

Secretary

Kath Lacy

0161 860 4717



The Origins of the Harvest Festival

This month we have our Harvest festival service.

The word "Harvest" comes from the Anglo-Saxon word *hærfest*, "Autumn". It then came to refer to the season for reaping and gathering grain and other grown products. An early Harvest Festival used to be celebrated at the beginning of the

Harvest season on 1 August and was called *Lammas*, meaning 'loaf Mass'. Farmers made loaves of bread from the fresh wheat crop. These were given to the local church as the Communion bread during a special service thanking God for the harvest. Christians had always given thanks for the harvest, but it was not until 1843 that the Reverend Robert Hawker devised the Harvest Festival as we know it today.

Robert Stephen Hawker was born in 1803, the son of a Cornish curate. The family was so hard up that Robert could only pay his way through Oxford by marrying a woman with a private income who was 20 years his senior. He was ordained priest in 1831, and was thrilled when the Bishop of Exeter offered him *Morwenstow* in Cornwall.

On his travels round the parish, he wore a pink fez and a poncho made from a yellow horse blanket, which he claimed was the ancient habit of *St Pardarn*. Rev Hawker was a High Churchman who believed that the air was thick with invisible angels and demons - but then he also had a fondness for opium. He claimed that he had a special relationship with *St Morwenna*, the fifth century princess after whom his church on the north Cornish coast was named. She would talk to him as he knelt praying in the tiny hermit's hut he had built on the clifftop out of shipwreck flotsam, though he never revealed what she said.

On September 13, 1843, Rev Hawker put up a notice informing his flock that, from then on, a special Sunday would be set apart for thanksgiving, and that the old custom of making Eucharistic bread from the first corn would be revived. It read: "Let us gather together in the chancel of our church, and there receive, in the bread of the new corn, that Blessed Sacrament which was ordained to strengthen and refresh our souls."

In 1864, the year after the death of his first wife aged 81, he married Pauline Kuczynski, the daughter of a Polish count. The marriage brought him some happiness, three daughters and great anxiety about money. His increasing depression took peculiar forms, including a phase of eating only clotted cream. He returned to his old opium habit and predicted that it would not be long before he rested in Morwenstow churchyard. But he never did. His photograph hangs in the church - now a minor tourist attraction because one of Cornwall's best tea-shops stands next door - but he is buried in Plymouth, having been taken ill on a visit there.

Lying paralysed in bed, Hawker sprang one last surprise on the Church of England. After years of doubts about the authenticity of Anglican orders, he was received into the Roman Catholic Church just before he died. 100 years later, Michael Ramsey, the retired Archbishop of Canterbury, preached at an ecumenical service in his honour. He was, he said, "a beyond man in a beyond place", to whom all English Christians should be grateful.

So, when find ourselves singing about the joys of gathering in the harvest, let's spare a thought for the eccentric old parson who conjured this lovely tradition out of the Cornish air.

Every blessing,

Mel

News Round up

Family News

October always brings news of our young people moving to a new stage of their lives. Over the summer, **Alex** and **Rosa Hall** worked with the National Citizen Service (NCS) “The Challenge” as Senior Mentors to groups of 16 – 17-year-olds for 4 weeks, doing outdoor activities, business and personal skills, and charity campaigning and fundraising. **Rosa** is going to be working with them again in late October /early November. She has also begun a part-time Masters in Human Resource Management. This will take two years to complete and will also give her a qualification from the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development. **Alex Hall** has begun her second year studying Theology and Religious Studies at Nottingham University and will be sharing a house with 6 other girls this year!

Rosa Pearks finished her degree and is working at an internship in a mill in Barnoldswick, learning about industrial weaving. She won a prize to take her designs to Paris Fashion Week and sold a couple of them! She is off to Milan very soon – who knew weaving could be so glamorous?

We send our best wishes for a speedy recovery to **Enid Woods**, who has been unable to get to church lately. She is in respite care at Gorton Parks Nursing and Residential Home, Delamere House, 121 Taylor Street, Gorton M18 8DF

Ian Meadowcroft has been discharged from Wythenshawe Hospital still wearing a thoracic brace. Ian is now resident at Morris Feinmann Care Home, 178 Palatine Road, Didsbury M20 2UW.

Both Ian and Enid would welcome visits or cards.

Joyce Henry's husband, John, is now home from hospital and is walking with a frame. We wish John a speedy recovery, and we wish for Joyce the patience of a saint!

Church News

The inaugural **Missional Partnership Steering Group** for our group (Group A) took place at Levenshulme Inspire on 20th September. Wilbraham St Ninian's was represented by Kath Lacy and Walt Johnson. Group A currently has no paid ministers and so it is the first partnership to advertise vacancies. 8 churches have submitted their church profiles, and so far, there have been two expressions of interest in the ministerial posts. The next Steering Group Meeting will be at Wilbraham St Ninian's on Thursday October 4th.

All members of the congregation have been sent a copy of Mark's gospel to help them 'Walk the Way of Jesus' in our congregation and the Synod. You may be interested to know that these were funded from a special fund set aside for Missional Discipleship. Please see Kath Lacy if you have not yet picked up your copy.

The **Church Meeting on September 16th** was mainly concerned with the Manse Fund. After prolonged and lively debate, the Meeting voted by a majority to support the resolution from Synod that (I paraphrase) we should give our Manse Fund to the Synod, subject to receiving 35% of the value as a grant from NW Synod. The wording of the Synod resolution caused some concern, and the Church Secretary was asked to seek clarification on this matter.

Our friend **Rev Dr Walter Houston** has been elected Chair of the Society for Old Testament Study. He will be the society's 96th president, serving in 2020. 'I am honoured,' he said. We say "Congratulations!" and hope that this will not prevent his preaching to us occasionally!

If you would like your family news included in the Bulletin, then please contact Mel (mel.j.hall@btinternet.com) or Kath (kmlacy@btinternet.com), by email or in person or in writing. Thank you

Dates & Rotas

September 30	Rev Alan Poolton United Service with the Methodists at Wilbraham St Ninian's
October 4	Open Church for quiet reflection and prayer 10:00am – 12:00pm
October 7	Worship Group led by Mel Hall Harvest Festival Service
October 11	Open Church for quiet reflection and prayer 10:00am – 12:00pm
October 14	Rev Dr Walter Houston
October 18	Open Church for quiet reflection and prayer 10:00am – 12:00pm
October 21	Rev Alan Poolton
October 23	Elders' Meeting 7.30 pm Church Vestry
October 28	Rev Valerie Davies
October 30	Open Church for quiet reflection and prayer 10:00am – 12:00pm
November 4	Worship Group led by Ella Burton



TEA ROTA: Volunteers wanted

Please sign up for the tea rota at the back of the church if you are able to help after the services

Readers & Readings

Taken from "Roots on the Web" 2018 Revised Common Lectionary Year B

September 30	Chris Burton	<i>Numbers 11:4-6, 10-16, 24-29; Psalm 19:7-14; James 5:13-20; Mark 9:38-50</i>
October 7	Joyce Henry	<i>Genesis 2:18-24; Psalm 8; Hebrews 1:1-4; 2:5-12; Mark 10:2-16</i>
October 14	Susan Posada	<i>Amos 5:6-7, 10-15; Psalm 90:12-17; Hebrews 4:12-16; Mark 10:17-31</i>
October 21	Ella Burton	<i>Isaiah 53:4-12; Psalm 91:9-16; Hebrews 5:1-10; Mark 10:35-45</i>
October 28	Barbara Williams	<i>Jeremiah 31:7-9; Psalm 126; Hebrews 7:23-28; Mark 10:46-52</i>
November 4	Sian Richards	<i>Deuteronomy 6:1-9; Psalm 119:1-8; Hebrews 9:11-14; Mark 12:28-34</i>

**** Please check readings with the preacher in good time before the service ****

Thank you to Kath Lacy for producing the Readers' Rota.

HARVEST FESTIVAL SERVICE

Sunday 7th October at 10:45 am

Please bring items for the Food Bank:

Tinned foods: Peas, baked beans, red kidney beans, carrots, fruit, tomatoes, potatoes, tuna, meat pies

Dry goods: rice, pasta, sugar, tea bags, coffee

Toiletries – soap, toothpaste, roll-on deodorants, razors

“for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink”

Commitment for Life 2018



Commitment for Life is the world development programme of the United Reformed Church. It is the main programme through which the Church carries forward its work for justice throughout the world. Participating churches are encouraged to take action, pray and give for people across the world but especially in the four partner countries/region of Bangladesh, Central America (Honduras, Guatemala, Nicaragua and El Salvador), Israel and the occupied Palestinian territory and Zimbabwe. Commitment for Life works in partnership with Christian Aid and Global Justice Now and has raised millions of pounds.

Commitment for Life envelopes will be distributed at our Harvest Festival Service on October 7th and collected at the service on October 21st, where there will be a short act of commitment.

Here's a prayer for October from the Commitment for Life "Prayer Partners"

Rejoice, people of God!
Celebrate the life within you,
And Christ's presence in your midst.
Our eyes shall be opened!
The present shall have new meaning,
And the future
Will be bright with hope.
Rejoice people of God!
Bow your heads before the One
Who is our wisdom and our strength.
We place ourselves before our God,
That we may be touched and cleansed by the power of God's spirit.

Amen