



Link Up!

‘Let us not become weary in doing good, for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up.’

Galatians 6 v 9

Looking forward to October:

Our Harvest Thanksgiving service is on Sunday 11th October. We will once again be asking for donations of food for Poole Lifecentre and Foodbank. We are also taking an offering for the work of the Farming Community Network for which envelopes are available.

On Sunday 18th October we will look at what the Bible has to say about The Environment.

And on 25th October, Ken will complete our series on Hot Topics by looking at the topic of ‘Suffering’.

One of my first jobs as a teenager was working on a dairy farm in Swanage. Silage is the winter food for cattle and is really important. It can be made of pretty much any grass-type crop; it is harvested, chopped, compacted, covered, and left to ferment. The problem is the moisture content has to be just right, too little or too much and the fermentation process won’t happen properly and the fodder is spoilt.

Every year, the farmers in Swanage would pool together to hire a combine harvester to collect silage. All the farmers and all the farm labourers would go to each other’s fields and help harvest and process the silage. The days were long, and there was a real sense of urgency to ensure that the grass was compacted and covered before it rained.

Jesus used a lot of agricultural metaphors in his teaching, metaphors that the first hearers and readers would have been far more familiar with than we in the highly developed West are today. At the beginning of Luke 10, Jesus selects 72 disciples to go out ahead of him to the towns and villages he planned to visit. He says to them “The harvest is plentiful, but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.” Those disciples would have understood a number of things from the word ‘harvest’; it is hard work – you are out in the fields from sunrise to sunset. The harvest becomes your sole concern whilst you are bringing it in - there’s no time to be distracted by anything else. There is a sense of urgency - the crop has to be harvested and processed before it spoils. You have to work together - even with today’s modern technology, labourers are required to harvest and process the crop.

Other Notices:

On Saturday 21st November we will be holding our annual concert for Poole Lifecentre and Foodbank with Bournemouth Male Voice Choir. between 4 – 5pm. Tickets are free but we ask that those attending either bring items from the Foodbank Christmas Parcels list or donate towards the running cost of the Foodbank. Tickets can now be ordered either from our church website or from our Facebook page. If you have a problem doing this then see Kim or Janet to order tickets.

On Sunday 29th November the Baptist Churches in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole are holding a Cluster Advent service at Christchurch Baptist Church at 7pm. If you would like to go to that event but need transport, then please see one of the leadership and we will see what we can arrange.

Martyn Brown, Alec's stepson, passed away on 1st October. Pray for Lizzie and Adam his wife and son and Jill & Dick Dyke and Alec and all the family.

It's no wonder the workers are few, when you consider the hard work, commitment, time and effort that harvesting demands. Jesus, of course, wasn't referring to gathering in silage, rather to gathering people into his kingdom; a perhaps even more daunting task. As we consider our role in this 'harvest of souls' we must bear in mind this metaphor of harvest. It is hard work, it requires commitment, it requires a sense of urgency, and perhaps, most importantly, we must work together. The kingdom of God is no place for 'Lone Rangers', going out and doing their own thing without any reference to a church or accountability.

The good news is that we are not expected to gather in this harvest by ourselves or in our own strength. In Matthew 10, just after he has spoken this harvest metaphor, Jesus sends out his twelve disciples and 'gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and sickness.' In Luke 10 the seventy two return to Jesus and are amazed proclaiming "Lord, even the demons submit to us in your name."

We are the few harvesters, called to the fields. As daunting and challenging as the task may be, we go in the name of the Lord of the Harvest.

Rev Ken Adolphe