

SERVICE SHEET

11th October - Harvest

Canticle: Benedicite - a Song of Creation

**Bless the Lord all you works of the Lord:
sing his praise and exalt him for ever.**

**Bless the Lord you heavens:
sing his praise and exalt him for ever.**

**Bless the Lord you angels of the Lord:
sing his praise and exalt him for ever.**

**Bless the Lord all people on earth:
sing his praise and exalt him for ever.**

**O people of God bless the Lord:
sing his praise and exalt him for ever.**

**Bless the Lord you priests of the Lord:
sing his praise and exalt him for ever.**

**Bless the Lord you servants of the Lord:
sing his praise and exalt him for ever.**

**Bless the Lord all you of upright spirit:
bless the Lord you that are holy and humble in heart;**

**Bless the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit:
sing his praise and exalt him for ever.**

**Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Collect

Eternal God, you crown the year with your goodness and you give us the fruits of the earth in their season: grant that we may use them to your glory, for the relief of those in need and for our own well-being; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Old Testament Reading.

Deuteronomy 26.1-11

When you have come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, and you possess it, and settle in it, ²you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the LORD your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. ³You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him, 'Today I declare to the LORD your God that I have come into the land that the LORD swore to our ancestors to give us.' ⁴When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the LORD your God, ⁵you shall make this response before the LORD your

God: 'A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. ⁶When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labour on us, ⁷we cried to the LORD, the God of our ancestors; the LORD heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. ⁸The LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; ⁹and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. ¹⁰So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O LORD, have given me.' You shall set it down before the LORD your God and bow down before the LORD your God. ¹¹Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the LORD your God has given to you and to your house.

Psalm 104.26-33

²⁶ O Lord, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom you have made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.

**²⁷ There is the sea, spread far and wide,
and there move creatures beyond number, both small and great.**

²⁸ There go the ships, and there is that Leviathan
which you have made to play in the deep.

**²⁹ All of these look to you
to give them their food in due season.**

³⁰ When you give it them, they gather it; you open your hand and they are filled with good.

**³¹ When you hide your face they are troubled; when you take away their breath, they
die and return again to the dust.**

³² When you send forth your spirit, they are created,
and you renew the face of the earth.

**³³ May the glory of the Lord endure for ever;
may the Lord rejoice in all his works;**

Gospel Reading.

Luke 12.16-31

¹⁶Then he told them a parable: 'The land of a rich man produced abundantly. ¹⁷And he thought to himself, "What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?" ¹⁸Then he said, "I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. ¹⁹And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry." ²⁰But God said to him, "You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?" ²¹So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich towards God.'

²² He said to his disciples, 'Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. ²³For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. ²⁴Consider the ravens: they neither sow nor reap, they have neither storehouse nor barn, and yet God feeds them. Of how much more value are you than the birds! ²⁵And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? ²⁶If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest? ²⁷Consider the lilies, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not

clothed like one of these. ²⁸But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which is alive today and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, how much more will he clothe you—you of little faith! ²⁹And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. ³⁰For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them. ³¹Instead, strive for his kingdom, and these things will be given to you as well.

SERMON

Unless you grow your own fruit and vegetables very few of us these days are in contact with those who produce the food that we eat in all its variety. Even if we do know farmers and producers it is most likely that we buy their produce through a local shop or supermarket. In contrast with our forebears we are much more remote from the land and the harvest, than we used to be – at least in terms of our local community.

And this leads to a paradox. Even though we are more remote from the production of our food – the growing and the harvesting – because of the food supply chain and the way we shop – we are at the same time connected across the world with a vast number of people from different cultures and countries. As we go along the rows of produce in the supermarket – we are offered such a variety of goods that it would be unimaginable to our ancestors. World trade has expanded so much that into an ordinary shopping basket can go; pasta from Italy, green beans from Kenya, spices from India, fish from South America and baked beans from the USA and much more besides.

So, at the same time we are both more separated and yet more connected.

Our Harvest celebration invites us to remember and give thanks for all those who harvest the bounty of the earth and the seas – wherever they are; to give thanks for all those who trade and distribute the goods we so easily pick off the shelf; to remember how dependent we are on the efforts and the skills of others as we enjoy what we have become so used to having.

Our scripture readings, each in their way, take up something of these themes of separation and connection and also thanksgiving.

Centuries ago, in the book of Deuteronomy, God's people are reminded of where their blessings come from. As they settle in the land of promise and the generations pass – it will become all too easy to assume that it is their efforts – their investment – their ingenuity that provides for their food and their prosperity. The temptation is to become separated from the God who makes promises and fulfils them – who gives the land for seedtime and harvest – who sends the sun and the rain – in whose hands is the mystery of life and growth itself.

So, at each harvest they are to take the first fruits – the best of what they have – and make an offering to God in thanksgiving. That offering could easily become a simple ceremony of thanks and acknowledgement that it is God's bounty not their own. But, like all religious festivals there is a greater connection to be made.

When they come with the basket of produce, they are not asked to simply to recite a liturgy of praise for God's goodness in the harvest – they are to rehearse before the priest the story of God's mighty acts in liberating them from slavery in Egypt the land of misery – to freedom in a land of promise. In this way their harvest thanksgiving – and ours – is not a separate thing – a once a year event – it is a reminder of the mighty and wonderful acts of God that have been shown to his people down the ages. Harvest is connected to God's blessings in the creation we all share – it is also connected to God's promise of freedom and new life in him – it is connected to our and their call to be God's people in his world.

The reminder of being connected to the whole purpose of God has a very practical outcome too. As they celebrate, they are to do so by sharing the good things they enjoy with others.

Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the Lord your God has given to you and to your house.

Sharing with others – those who are not like them and like us – the stranger – the refugee – the immigrant – the marginalised - this is the true expression of harvest thanksgiving because it reflects the generous sharing of God himself.

The danger to our immortal soul of turning away from thanksgiving and sharing and turning away from the deep sense of the connectedness of everything to God's creating and saving love – is reflected in the parable that Jesus tells of the rich farmer whose fields produce riches in abundance.

Though this story is told against the background of the largely rural society of Jesus's time – the attitude of the rich man is universal – wherever the wealth comes from. It is just as relevant to those of us who make money from money or manufactures or trade or indeed are paid a good wage or a pension for the work we have done.

The man's attitude is a mean attitude which emphasises his fundamental separation from those around him and from God.

I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.

The fact that the rich man refers to himself in terms of his soul is revealing – it emphasises his deep self-satisfaction – it also emphasises his separation – his soul and his possessions are all he needs and like all his other things his soul belongs to him.

That makes God's response even more stark

You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?

There can be no clearer way to remind the rich man and us who are so comfortable in material terms – that we owe our very lives to God – that we are not separate, self-sufficient, self-justifying. Rather we are connected – connected to God and to one another.

Just as the harvest thanksgiving of God's people long ago could not be something simply of the head and the heart – but must be shown in practical openness and generosity. So, we in our harvest this year are making a collection of goods for our local food bank. The food bank is needed as never before as people struggle under the difficulties of the present crisis. We support it regularly, but Harvest is the time for a special effort.

In addition, as we do every year, we raise money to support Water Aid who provide freshwater access for people across the developing world. In supporting them we recognise our connectedness with all God's children wherever they may be. We also acknowledge how much we take for granted such an ordinary thing as clean water.

This harvest time, think how you can show your thanksgiving to God for his generous bounty and your connection in common humanity with others less fortunate than ourselves.

Simon

FOR YOUR PRAYERS

ST MICHAEL

Those newly in need of prayer

Chris Dickerson, Elizabeth Chapman, Nick Rutter, John and Sonia Doidge, Matthew and Emmeline and their parents, Ruth and Andrew Martel

Those in continuing special need of prayer:

Anthony Staples aged 6, Audrey Egleston, Colin Eastwood, Yvonne Harper, Judith Watson, Alison Cox-Toplis, Julian & Wendy, Jamie, Gary and Denise, Sam Bassett, Mark Berry, Dorothy Clayton, Jo Cobb, Dottie Collins, Robert Harris, Bill Hill, James Knight, Marielouise Oliver, Arthur Palin, John Tipper, Sheila Vaughan, Renee Wellings, Felicity Woodfield

Those who have died

Joyce McCormick, Ian Watson, Michael Plimmer, Michael Burns, Peter Forrester & Kathleen Kershaw

ST JOHN

Those who are ill and their carers:

Pat Crowe, Jo Hearn, Ann Kinson, Allan Law

Post Communion

Lord of the harvest, with joy we have offered thanksgiving for your love in creation and have shared in the bread and the wine of the kingdom: by your grace plant within us a reverence for all that you give us and make us generous and wise stewards of the good things we enjoy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

CHURCH NOTICES

11th October 2020

A VERY WARM WELCOME to everyone here today.

AIDS TO WORSHIP

- ~Large print orders of service & hymn books
- ~Hearing Loops at St Michael - Please set your hearing aid to 'T' to listen.
- ~Gluten-free wafers are available.

PLEASE REMEMBER TO...

- **Keep in a group of no more than six people outside. Do not move from group to group.**
- Wear a mask over your nose and mouth before you enter church
- **Sanitise your hands on the way in – sanitisers are available**
- Sit only in seats as indicated
- **Keep a proper distance at all times**
- Children are welcome but there will be no toys or activities provided
- **Take with you the Sunday service sheet when you go**
- Be aware of others at all times

HARVEST FESTIVAL

The special collection at St Michael's today will be for **Water Aid** Please use the designated envelopes marked WaterAid for your donations. If you can giftaid please fill in the front of the envelope, and make all cheques out to 'PCC of St Michael and St Mary Lichfield'.

A HARVEST MESSY CHURCH service will be available from Sunday – search “St Michael’s, Lichfield – Harvest Messy Church” on [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com)

FOODBANK DONATIONS The Foodbank is always happy to receive gifts of

- Tinned meat and fish
- Tinned fruit and vegetables, soup and beans
- Rice pudding and custard
- Instant coffee, tea, sugar, long life milk and fruit juice
- Packets of cereals, biscuits and snacks
- Pasta, rice and pasta sauce
- Jam

Items should be **at least 3 months in date** or the Foodbank is not allowed to issue them.

If anyone wishes to donate but is unable to shop for Foodbank, we shop most weeks and would be able to buy items for them. Just let us know 01543 255308

Maggie and David

MACMILLAN CAKE SALE Thank you to all who supported ST Michael’s Cake Sale. after some further generous donations the total for the cake stall is now **£417.30 (Gift Aid to be added)** for Macmillan

WORSHIP BY ZOOM will be on the first and third Sundays of each month. The next service is on.

Sunday 18th October 6.00pm

You can join the service from 5.45pm. The service will last about 40mins. ***If you have not had a link by Friday at 11am please contact the office*** office@stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk

ALL SOULS Services will be on **Wednesday 4th November at 6.30pm** at both St Michael’s and St John’s.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

The 10.00am service at St Michael's on **Sunday 8th November** will be a shortened service of Holy Communion with an Act of Remembrance outside around the war memorial starting at 10.50 and including the silence at 11.00am

ST MICHAEL'S & ST JOHN'S CHRISTMAS BAKE AND DELIVER SCHEME We are hoping to spread some good cheer (and delicious treats!) and reach out to our church and wider parish community with a new Bake and Deliver initiative this Advent. **Would you be willing to help by baking or delivering?** You can volunteer to do as little or as much as you feel able to do - we would be very grateful to have your help! For further details please speak to Revd Mel (revdr.melclark@gmail.com), the churchwardens, or the clergy team.

WARNING!!!

If you receive an email from: **Revd Preb Simon Baker** and the email address is either:

onlinechurch954@gmail.com

churchvicar8@gmail.com

Please do not reply or open any attachments. I never use that title in any emails I send and these are not my email addresses.

If you receive any email that asks you to spend any personal money on my behalf please delete it at once.

Simon

ST MICHAEL'S APCM 2020 We are intending to hold the APCM on **Sunday 18th October 2020** immediately after the 10am service at St Michael's, at approximately 10:45. Straight after the APCM the new PCC will meet to appoint Officers for 2020/21. Plans may have to change should the current guidelines change. Nomination forms are now available on the Parish Web Site for the positions of Churchwarden, Deanery Synod Representative and Lay Member of the PCC. These forms are in Microsoft Word Format so that they can be completed electronically and sent to me by email. If a form cannot be completed in this way then please telephone the nomination to me. **Nominations should be with me by Wednesday 14th October.** Many thanks - Phil Clayton Honorary Secretary to the PCC. phil@phil-clayton.uk 01543 682141

ST MICHAEL'S CHURCH ROOF APPEAL. We urgently need money to repair the roof on the southside of the church. If you can donate please use the blue envelopes, fill in the front if you can gift aid and make all cheques payable to the 'PCC of St Michael and St Mary, Lichfield'. Please mark the envelope 'Church Roof'. This will really help the count team Many thanks *Brenda Liptrot*

TUESDAY CLUB. Ordinarily Tuesday 13 October would have been the launch of our 2020-21 Tuesday Club programme. On this occasion arrangements have been made for anyone interested to hear an Historical Association podcast on 'The Saintly Landscape'. It will become available at **2.00 pm on 13 October** but obviously you can listen to it when you wish. If you want to check that you are on Trevor's distribution list, please contact him on 258434.

CHURCHES TOGETHER New item on the website www.stmichaelmaryjohn.org.uk/churches-together.html

BIBLE STUDY The Book of Acts Wednesday 14th October Between now and the beginning of Advent we will be looking at the Book of Acts. The book tells the story of the early church and spread of the gospel. It raises all kinds of themes worth thinking about and discussing. If you would like to join in our Bible Study please contact Angie in the office for the zoom link. Anyone is welcome and we already have a variety of people who attend, including those who simply enjoy listening to what is going on!

PARISH DIARY

Sunday 11th October

8:00am	Holy Communion	St Michael's
10:00am	Harvest Holy Communion	St Michael's
10:00am	Harvest Holy Communion	St John
11:30am	Private Prayer	St John

Monday 12th October

8:15am	Morning Prayer	St Michael's
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Tuesday 13th October

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
2:30pm	Tuesday Club	Online Podcast

Wednesday 14th October

All day	Private Prayer	St John
8:15am	Morning Prayer	St Michael's
10.30am	Bible Study	Zoom
12:45pm	Burial: Michael Burns	St Michael's
2:30pm	Funeral: Peter Forrester	St Michael
6:30pm	Choir Rehearsal	St Michael's

Thursday 15th October

OFFICE CLOSED

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
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Friday 16th October

8:15am	Morning Prayer	Zoom
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Saturday 17th October

Sunday 18th October

8:00am	Holy Communion	St Michael's
10:00am	Holy Communion	St Michael's
10:00am	Holy Communion	St John
10:45am	APCM	St Michael's
11:30am	Private Prayer	St John
6:00pm	Evening Worship	Zoom