

## Harvest Home.

**BBC Radio 4 "Thought for the day"**

**by Rt Rev Nick Baines - 02/10/2017**

It's harvest time again, and all over the land churches are desperately trying to find something new to say about creation, cultivation and deprivation. A bit like the vegetables and flowers on display, it's a big challenge to keep it all fresh.

Yet, telling the story afresh assumes that everybody already knows what harvest is about. And I wonder if this assumption might be false.

I grew up in a city where the answer to the question "Where does milk come from?" was likely to get the answer "the supermarket". Then we would get some entertaining, but muddled, account of how we might not actually plough the fields and scatter the good seed on the land", but someone did. And we would be grateful – particularly because we didn't have to do the dirty work. But, harvest goes deeper than this. If all too often our connection with the land has been broken, then we need more than stories to reconnect us to where our food comes from. What most religions offer is ritual – celebrations that remind us of relationships.

Nearly three thousand years ago the recently liberated Jewish people were about to enter the land they believed had been promised to them. Yet, along with words of encouragement and comfort went words of warning like this: When you get established in this land you will soon prosper. You will build your houses, cultivate your fields and grow your wealth. Then you will begin to forget that you once had nothing and could not save yourselves. It won't be long before you start exploiting other people. So, the cycle of each year is going to be shaped by rituals that will compel you to re-member, re-tell and re-enact the story of your dependence ... on God, the earth and each other.

Not very exciting, you might think. But, take just one of these annual rituals – the one that sees you bringing the first ten percent of your harvest to the priest and reciting a creed that begins with the words: "My father was a wandering Aramaean...". In other words, you once were a nomad, dependent on the land and other people. You remember that you inherited creation, not as a commodity to be consumed or traded, but a gift to be cultivated and shared. You don't own it; you are to be responsible for stewarding it for the good of the earth and its people.

And, to rub it in, you must leave the ten percent of crops around the edge of the field so that the travellers, the homeless and the hungry can help themselves to food.

Harvest, then, confronts us with our obligations to the earth and each other. It challenges our ethics and our economic priorities. And it reconnects us with the simple fact of our mortality and mutuality.



This year we will be celebrating Harvest Festival on 15th October as part of our Family Service.

We will be collecting items for the St Matthews Food Bank in Redhill and would appreciate any and all contributions to this important work.

Please visit

[redhillfoodbank.org.uk/shopping-list](http://redhillfoodbank.org.uk/shopping-list)

to find out what items are most needed (and also what they don't need) at the moment.

Thank you.



# October Services

## **Sunday 8th**

10.30am Morning Service. Speaker: Jon Bartlett

## **Sunday 15th**

10.30am Harvest Family Service led by Revd. Jonathan Hardwick.

## **Sunday 22nd**

10.30am Morning Worship. Speaker: Revd. Jonathan Hardwick.

## **Sunday 29th**

10.30am Morning Worship led by Revd. Jonathan Hardwick.

**There is an open invitation for prayer at the end of each morning service. If you would like prayer, with or without the anointing of oil, then please make your way to the front row of chairs during our closing songs.**

**PARENTS:** Could we remind you to collect your children from Sunday School straight after the service. The team need to pack away and cannot assume responsibility for children after the service.

### **Hearing aid users:**

We have a hearing loop so please turn your hearing aid to the setting "T".

### **Children:**

Please note that children are the responsibility of their parents except whilst in Sunday school.

### **Sunday morning messages online:**

You can listen to Sunday morning messages online at [www.earlswoodbc.org](http://www.earlswoodbc.org)

# Other Events and Activities

## **Family Fun @ 3**

Please come along and support this family orientated, community congregation on **September 28th from 3.00pm - 5.00pm**. If you are able to join us as a volunteer “Enabler” it would be great to see you. If you would like some flyers to hand to family or friends then please see Jonathan.

**The following regular activities take place during the week. If you would like more information such as venues, please do ask.**

## **House Groups:**

Two groups meet, one each Tuesday evening at 8pm and one every other Friday morning at 10.30am (8th and 22nd September).

## **Coffee Club:**

Coffee Club meets every other Friday at 10.30am for the more “senior” members of our fellowship and community. There will be tea, coffee, cake, board games and other fun activities. Coffee Club will meet on 13th & 27th October and 10th & 24th November.

## **Prayer meetings:**

- We will be meeting for prayer on Sunday 5th November at 6.30pm.
- Women’s prayer on Wednesday mornings in term-time.

## **“Little Ark” Parent and toddler group:**

Term-time Thursdays, 9.00-11.30am. Speak to Maxine for more details.

## **Spark:**

Spark Infants - 5.30pm - 6.30pm Term time Thursdays. For children in Reception to Yr2.

Spark Juniors - 5.30pm - 6.30pm Term time Fridays. For children in Yr3 - Yr6.

## Halloween Outreach

On October 31st we will again be giving out hotdogs and soup to passers-by outside the church. This was very well received last year and we are excited to do it again. We will be meeting at the church at 5pm to start preparing food and aim to be ready to start the giveaway at 5.30pm.

A big part of this is that we do not hand out leaflets or tracts with the food. We just want to chat with people and bless them.

If you would like to be a part of this exciting opportunity then please let Jonathan know as soon as possible.



### Bring & Share Lunch

Sunday 29th October  
after the morning service.

Please speak to  
Maxine or Jonathan  
for more details

## Coffee Club at Earlswood Baptist Church

Tea, coffee, cake, a chat and some games.

For the over 55's, every other Friday you can meet old friends or make some new friends in a relaxed environment.

(Suggested £1 donation per week)

For more call 07528 461112.

Join us on:

13th & 27th October

10th & 24th November

