

Hearsall at Home

Order of Service for 26th September 2021

Harvest

Hello and a very warm welcome to the Hearsall Harvest at Home podcast for the 26th September 2021.

A new voice this week, as the Reverend David is attending his grand-daughter's dedication. My name is Andy Thompson and I usually speak right at the end of the podcast, reading the credits, but promotion this week, as I have been thrust into the spotlight to pick up the reins and guide you through the service. No sermon this week, instead we have a very appropriate feature on Operation Agri which supports rural and urban development projects for poor communities around the world.

So without further ado, some words from Psalm 104, starting at verse 10.

10 He makes springs pour water into the ravines; it flows between the mountains.

11 They give water to all the beasts of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst.

12 The birds of the sky nest by the waters; they sing among the branches.

13 He waters the mountains from his upper chambers; the land is satisfied by the fruit of his work.

14 He makes grass grow for the cattle, and plants for people to cultivate – bringing forth food from the earth:

15 wine that gladdens human hearts, oil to make their faces shine, and bread that sustains their hearts.

16 The trees of the Lord are well watered, the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.

Over the years we have thanked God for a good and plentiful harvest with hymns and songs, and one which always brings back memories of harvests past has been chosen for our first song. Written by Henry Alford, *Come you thankful people come, raise the song of harvest home*, has been a favourite of congregations all around the country, so let's enjoy it now as we listen to the lovely Fran Pritchard and the wonderful Seb Farrell perform it superbly for us.

Hymn Come, Ye Thankful People, Come

Come, ye thankful people, come,
Raise the song of harvest home;
All is safely gathered in
Soon the winter storms begin.
God, our maker will provide
For our wants to be supplied;
Come to God's own temple, come,
Raise the song of harvest home.

All the world is God's own field,
Fruit unto his praise to yield!
Wheat and weeds together sown,
Until joy or sorrow grown;
First the blade and then the ear,
Then the full corn shall appear;
Lord of harvest, grant that we
Wholesome grain and pure maybe!

For the lord our God shall come,
And shall take his harvest home;
From his field shall in that day
All offences purge away,
Give the angels charge at last
In the fire the weeds to cast,
But the fruitful ones to store
In his storehouse evermore.

Even so, Lord, quickly come,
Bring thy final harvest home!
Gather now your people in,
Free from sorrow, free from sin;
There, forever purified,
In your storehouse to abide;
Come, with all your angels come,
Raise the glorious harvest home!

Thank you to Fran and Seb for that excellent performance. Now we come to our time of prayers and Reverend David has recorded these for us earlier this week, thank you David.

Praise and Confession for Harvest, from 'Gathering for Worship'

God of creation,
we praise you.

Once there was nothing,
but now the world teems with life
and the cup of your provision overflows.

Once there was dark emptiness
but now there is sound and colour,
majestic mountains and intricate petals.

Beasts and birds gain their food from you,
and all humankind depends
on the fruitfulness of the earth you have made.

We praise you, faithful provider,
generous and gracious God.

You have made more than enough
and your love and care are prodigal;
but now we confess
that we have been blind to the beauty,
selfish in our stewardship
and arrogant in our taking and using of what is not ours.

Our hands have been closed
when they should have be open in sharing,
our hearts have been cold
when they should have been warm with your love,
and all we have created is chaos and distress.

Forgive us, that our brothers and sisters are hungry;
forgive us, that we have exploited your world
when we should have cared for it.

Send your Spirit to move over amongst us
to make a new creation in Jesus Christ,

in whose name we pray.

Amen

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.

Amen.

Thank you David, and I know that we all hope you have a super time at the dedication. Now we have two songs in quick succession, the first written by Chris Tomlin and performed for us by Nick Leonard and the second written by the hugely talented Graham Kendrick and performed by the no less talented Martin Prue.

Song Give Thanks to the Lord our God and King (Forever)

Way-o Way-o, Way-o Way-o, Way-o Way-o,
Way-o Way-o, Way-o Way-o, Way-o Way-o...

Verse 1

Give thanks to the Lord,
Our God and King,
His love endures forever.
For He is good; He is above all things,
His love endures forever.
Sing praise, sing praise.

Verse 2

With a mighty hand
And an outstretched arm,
His love endures forever.
For the life that's been reborn,
His love endures forever.
Sing praise, sing praise,
Sing praise, sing praise.

Chorus

*Forever God is faithful,
Forever God is strong,
Forever God is with us, forever.*

Verse 3

From the rising to the setting sun,
His love endures forever,
And by the grace of God
We carry on,
His love endures forever.
Sing praise, sing praise,
Sing praise, sing praise.

Chorus x2

Way-o Way-o, Way-o Way-o, Way-o Way-o,
Way-o Way-o, Way-o Way-o, Way-o Way-o.

Sing praise, sing praise, sing praise, sing praise.

Song (WT 104) **From the Sun's Rising**

Verse 1

From the sun's rising unto the sun's setting,
Jesus, our Lord, shall be great in the earth,
And all earth's kingdoms shall be His dominion;
All of creation shall sing of His worth.

Chorus

*Let every heart, every voice,
Every tongue join with spirits ablaze;
One in His love, we will circle the world
With the song of His praise.
O let all His people rejoice,
And let all the earth hear His voice!*

Verse 2

To every tongue, tribe and nation He sends us
To make disciples, to teach and baptise,
For all authority to Him is given.
Now as His witnesses we shall arise.

Chorus

Verse 3

Come, let us join with the church from all nations,
Cross every border, throw wide every door,
Workers with Him, as He gathers His harvest,
Till earth's far corners our Saviour adore!

Chorus

Ending

*O let all His people rejoice,
And let all the earth hear His voice!*

Thank you guys for both of those songs, and if you want to see Martin, Nick and their backing group the Hearsallettes performing live, just drop into Hearsall Baptist on a Sunday morning at 10:30am, details on the website.

Now this is the point when we will offer back to God a portion of the good things he has given us this week, and remembering that it is harvest time we think of the farmers who have been working so hard to gather their produce before the autumn frosts.

Loving Lord, we offer to you now our gifts and we know that we would have nothing without you and your all-encompassing love. We thank you for the harvest and ask you to bless all those who work so hard to bring the food to our tables. Amen.

Now, as promised, a feature on Operation Agri who celebrate 60 years of providing help and support to poor communities throughout the world

Operation Agri in Uganda.

I did not have much on my farm, not enough food, not enough money. Even buying salt was a problem. On the radio, I heard Pastor Kyalimpa Paul speaking. He gave his phone number. I called him and requested to join the SAFI project.

When SAFI began here, we started with training the small scale farmers and SAFI stands for Sustainable Agriculture Farming Initiative. Small scale farmers were very, very poor, because their production was very low. Before we joined SAFI, as you can see, it is sloping down, there was run off of water, it was being washed away. We were cultivating, working hard digging and planting crops but because the soils were poor, we had very poor yields, and this was very stressing, but with time a friend of ours introduced SAFI program. And we've been training these Community Farmer Trainers in each phase for two years. We're in the fourth phase, and the project is doing well, helps the farmers to increase production and income.

The training I had from Paul Kyalimpa became a very big blessing to me. Now at last I have learned how to farm. As a bonus we were given donkeys, which is a great help for carrying water. I planted tomatoes, cabbage and eggplant, and SAFI gave bananas to plant. They grow really well.

As a requirement of the programme, we are supposed to have an animal to give us manure. So for us, we decided to have rabbits. It has been very, very good. So we hang the food, we don't put it down, because when you put it down, they will urinate on it, they will not eat it and it will be wasted. This also helps them exercise. The animals depend on the plants, and the plants depend on animals. We learn how to make compost manure, manure from the rabbits.

I trained with SAFI for two years; this support was free without having to pay fees. When I started with the project, they gave me a goat. The goat had kids and I sold

some of them to pay for my children's school fees. Now we have plenty to eat and to sell at the market. Every day I have money coming in to support my children.

Because of the knowledge that you have learned from SAFI, you will find many crops. Operation AGRI has supported SAFI and SAFI has trained us to be what we are now. Long live SAFI!

I thank God for the SAFI project, for the knowledge it gave me. Now I have enough to eat. On my land I grew food; I have coffee beans, and many other things. So I thank Operation AGRI for the support it has given me through SAFI.

Please support Operation AGRI, Christian Love in Action.

If you feel that you would like to give to Operation Agri, or just learn a little more about their work, you can see them on-line at operationagri.org.uk or write to them at 361 Firs Lane, Palmers Green, London. N13 5LX.

Well, now we have one of my favourite songs, and hopefully one of yours. Written by Chris Bowater and performed with a smashing reggae beat by Martin Prue, that great worship song, *Here I am, wholly available*.

Hymn Here I am, wholly available

Chorus x 2

Here I am, wholly available;

As for me, I will serve the Lord.

Verse 1

The fields are white unto harvest

But oh, the labourers are so few.

So Lord, I give myself to help the reaping,

To gather precious souls unto You.

Chorus x 1

Verse 2

The time is right in the nation
For words of power and authority.
God's looking for a people who are willing
To be counted in His glorious victory.

Chorus x 1

*Here I am, wholly available;
As for me, I will serve the Lord.*

Verse 3

As salt, are we ready to savour?
In darkness, are we ready to be light?
God's seeking out a very special people
To manifest His truth and His might.

Chorus x 2

As for me I will serve the Lord.

Now our first Bible reading is from the book of Ruth, chapter 2, verses 1-13 and it is being read by my lovely wife Anne, but first I think I had better tell the story so far. Naomi, her husband and two sons move from their home town of Bethlehem into the country of Moab as there is famine in Judah. After settling down again, both sons marry local girls but disaster strikes the family when not only her husband, but both sons die. Naomi decides to go back to Judah and sets out on the road with her daughters-in-law. After a while she sends them back and one daughter-in-law decides to stay in Moab, but the other one, called Ruth, travels with Naomi back to her homeland and they arrive at harvest time. We now find Ruth going out into the fields to collect leftover grain. Let us join Anne as she reads the passage to us.

Ruth 2: 1-13

Ruth Meets Boaz in the Grain Field

Now Naomi had a relative on her husband's side, a man of standing from the clan of Elimelek, whose name was Boaz.

And Ruth the Moabite said to Naomi, "Let me go to the fields and pick up the leftover grain behind anyone in whose eyes I find favour."

Naomi said to her, "Go ahead, my daughter." So she went out, entered a field and began to glean behind the harvesters. As it turned out, she was working in a field belonging to Boaz, who was from the clan of Elimelek.

Just then Boaz arrived from Bethlehem and greeted the harvesters, "The Lord be with you!"

"The Lord bless you!" they answered.

Boaz asked the overseer of his harvesters, "Who does that young woman belong to?"

The overseer replied, "She is the Moabite who came back from Moab with Naomi. She said, 'Please let me glean and gather among the sheaves behind the harvesters.' She came into the field and has remained here from morning till now, except for a short rest in the shelter."

So Boaz said to Ruth, "My daughter, listen to me. Don't go and glean in another field and don't go away from here. Stay here with the women who work for me. Watch the field where the men are harvesting, and follow along after the women. I have told the men not to lay a hand on you. And whenever you are thirsty, go and get a drink from the water jars the men have filled."

At this, she bowed down with her face to the ground. She asked him, "Why have I found such favour in your eyes that you notice me—a foreigner?"

Boaz replied, "I've been told all about what you have done for your mother-in-law since the death of your husband—how you left your father and mother and your homeland and came to live with a people you did not know before. May the Lord repay you for what you have done. May you be richly rewarded by the Lord, the God of Israel, under whose wings you have come to take refuge."

Thank you Anne, and now for our second reading we visit the book of Deuteronomy Chapter 24 verses 17-24 which describe how we should be generous and thoughtful towards those who are in need. Lin Wallace reads this passage, and see if you can relate these words to a modern day setting.

Deuteronomy 24: 17-24

Do not deprive the foreigner or the fatherless of justice, or take the cloak of the widow as a pledge. Remember that you were slaves in Egypt and the Lord your God redeemed you from there. That is why I command you to do this. When you are harvesting in your field and you overlook a sheaf, do not go back to get it. Leave it

for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow, so that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work of your hands. When you beat the olives from your trees, do not go over the branches a second time. Leave what remains for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow. When you harvest the grapes in your vineyard, do not go over the vines again. Leave what remains for the foreigner, the fatherless and the widow.

Now it is the time when we pray for other people, we intercede for all those who need our prayers. Remember, that you are not praying on your own, but you are part of a huge network of people praying together - leading the power of group prayer this week is Jan Clemons.

Prayers of Intercession

As part of our Harvest service and before I begin our prayers of intercession, I would like to explain the concept of the human food supply chain and how we all depend on its smooth running, especially in times of crisis.

Energy from the sun is captured by plants during photosynthesis and passed onto animals by eating. A food supply chain describes how plant or animal food from a farm ends up on our tables and that each step of this supply chain requires human and/or natural resources such as sunlight, water, fertilisers, manpower, machinery, food processing plants and transportation. If any part of the food supply chain is affected, the whole food supply chain is affected, which can result in surpluses, shortages and changes in costs.

Let us pray:

Dear Lord, as we celebrate Harvest this year, we reflect upon the impact of COVID-19 and climate change on food security across the globe. Having reliable access to nutritious food is something many of us take for granted, but for smallholder farmers in rural communities across the world, a good harvest is essential for their livelihoods. Also, in the past year many parts of Africa have been affected by an unprecedented locust outbreak which, in addition to COVID-19 and climate change, have put additional pressure on regional food systems.

We pray today for *Operation Agri*, a Baptist founded charity that has been working

with often remote, rural communities around the world for over 60 years. Give them the strength, Lord, for the good work they do to support these communities who have been particularly hard hit this year by the pandemic and are irretrievably falling into a vicious circle of terrible poverty, as they struggle to access clean water, medicines, vaccines and basic foodstuffs.

Dear Lord, help us to realise that we in the developed world are relatively fortunate and as Christians it is our duty to help and support those less fortunate than ourselves, not just in our local communities, but all over the world through Christian charities like Operation Agri.

Lord, we pray for all these people and their families in places like Nicaragua, Uganda, Bangladesh, Nepal and Malawi where charities like *Operation Agri* can transform the lives of people, especially as charitable gifts and donations have dipped during the pandemic.

As the world warms, with more floods and droughts, these communities will need to adapt to new methods of farming. We pray that by the grace of God, people in the developing world can with our help learn new ways of sowing, nourishing and protecting their crops. This may include installing irrigation pumps, using nature-based solutions to alleviate flooding and training to grow new and novel crops all year round.

Dear Lord, we pray for the people of Afghanistan, especially for the plight of women who are prevented, in some cases, access to learning in schools and universities, and to their careers and representing their people politically. Please intercede on their behalf for a fairer society in this troubled country where standing up for your human rights is a daily struggle.

We pray for our country, Lord, as problems and new challenges confront us on a daily basis. The problems in social care, transportation and logistics are worrying and we pray that our politicians, both nationally and locally, will find ways of relaxing the rules to make it easier to recruit workers from overseas, to tackle not only the staffing crisis in care homes but that our supermarkets do not have gaps on their shelves. We especially pray for all those affected by the end of the universal credit uplift and those facing fuel poverty, and that they are not marginalised and their mental health is not forgotten about. Dear Lord, please give our leaders wisdom and

understanding, not just for political advantage, but for the wellbeing of the people they represent.

We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ who sought to prepare the way for effective peace-making and responsible stewardship of this precious world that God the father bequeathed to us all and to future generations.

We will now silently pray for our own individual concerns and for those people we care about.

Finally, at Harvest time we pray for all those involved in the human food supply chain from farmers and agriculturalists, scientists, distributors, retailers, customers and charities such as *Operation Agri*. Amen.

Thank you Jan for those thoughtful prayers.

Now I didn't pick any of the songs this week and yet this final song is another of my favourites. Written by Keith and Khristyn Getty and Stuart Townsend, the song weaves together the story of creation, fall, redemption and consummation in three great verses and a powerful chorus, played and sung by Martin Prue.

Song Creation Sings the Father's Song

Verse 1

Creation sings the Father's song;
He calls the sun to wake the dawn
And run the course of day
Till evening falls in crimson rays,
His fingerprints in flakes of snow,
His breath upon this spinning globe.
He charts the eagle's flight,
Commands the new-born baby's cry.

Chorus

Hallelujah!

Let all creation stand and sing,

Hallelujah!

Fill the earth with songs of worship;

Tell the wonders of creation's King.

Verse 2

Creation gazed upon His face,
The ageless One in time's embrace,
Unveiled the Father's plan
Of reconciling God and man.
A second Adam walked the earth,
Whose blameless life would break the curse,
Whose death would set us free
To live with Him eternally.

Chorus

Verse 3

Creation longs for His return
When Christ shall reign upon the earth.
The bitter wars that rage
Are birth pains of a coming age.
When He renews the land and sky,
All heaven will sing and earth reply
With one resplendent theme:
The glory of our God and King!

Chorus x 2

Hallelujah!

Let all creation stand and sing,

Hallelujah!

Fill the earth with songs of worship;

Tell the wonders of creation's King.

Ending

Fill the earth with songs of worship;

Tell the wonders of creation's King.

And now we close as we say the grace together:

The Grace

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ;

And the love of God;

And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit

Be with us all, evermore.

Amen

Finally, the moment you have been waiting for, our sung grace. Okay Nick take it away.

Sung Blessing

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you

Wherever he may send you;

May he guide you through the wilderness;

Protect you through the storm;

May he bring you home rejoicing

At the wonders he has shown you;

May he bring you home rejoicing

Once again into our doors.

Thank you for being with us this week for Hearsall Harvest at Home, may you feel the presence of God with you this week and we look forward to worshipping with you again next week.