

# Church Together

Sowing Seeds For Kingdom Growth

6th October 2024

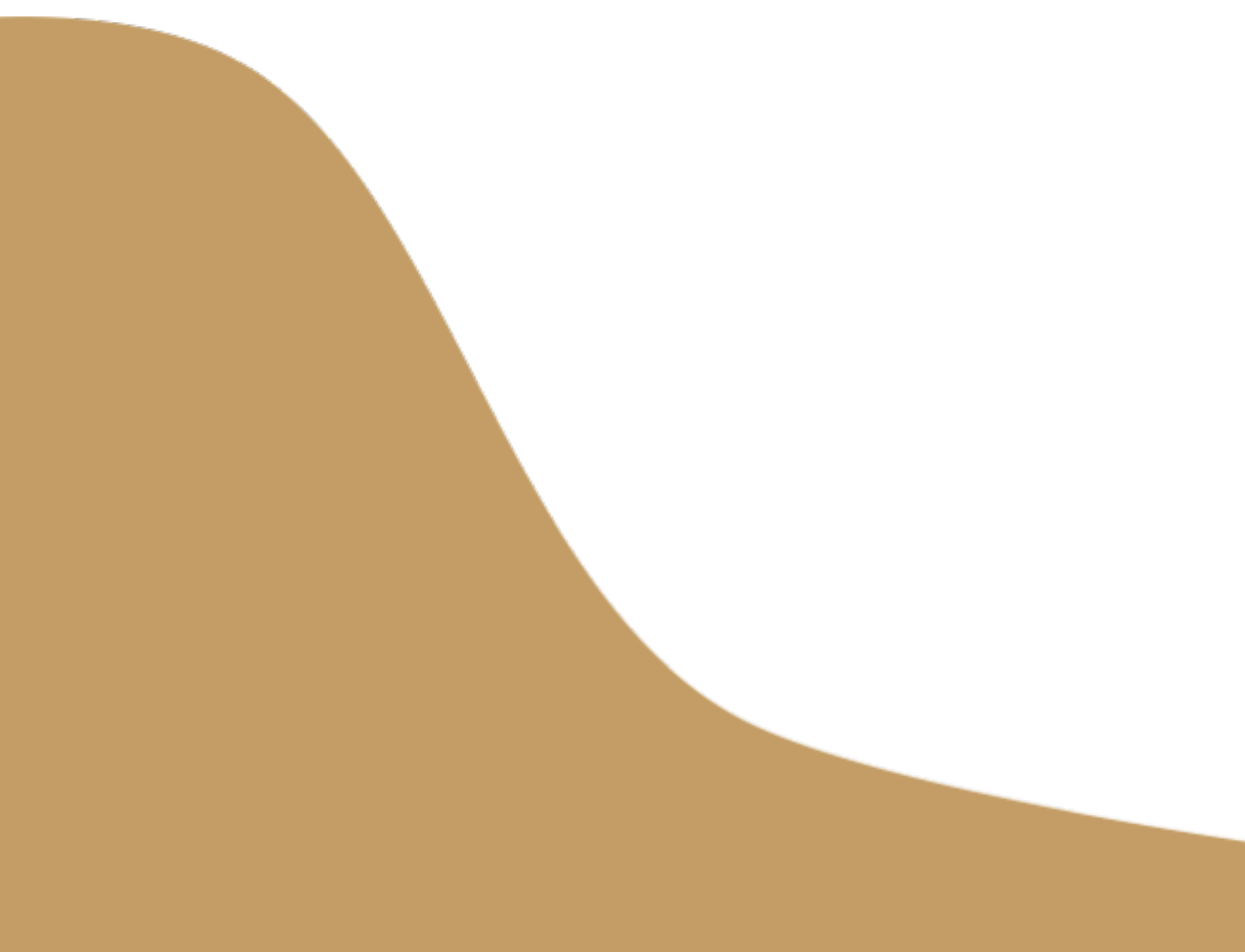


# Welcome

In today's Service we will be looking at: **Luke 8 v. 4 - 15**

The theme for our service today is: **Sowing Seeds For Kingdom Growth**

We hope that you will be able to engage with everything that has been produced for today's service and that you would be able to **Know That You Are Part Of God's Growing Kingdom At this Harvest Time**



# Call To Worship

## **Psalm 95 v. 1 – 7 NLT**

Come, let us sing to the Lord!

Let us shout joyfully to the Rock of our salvation.

Let us come to him with thanksgiving.

Let us sing psalms of praise to him.

For the Lord is a great God,

a great King above all gods.

He holds in his hands the depths of the earth  
and the mightiest mountains.

The sea belongs to him, for he made it.

His hands formed the dry land, too.

Come, let us worship and bow down.

Let us kneel before the Lord our maker,  
for he is our God.

We are the people he watches over,  
the flock under his care.

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# Song Suggestion

We Plough The Fields And  
Scatter





# LORD OF THE HARVEST

# Psalm Of Praise

**Read the following verses from Psalm 104 (GNB translation).**

**The congregation respond with the words in italics.**

Praise the Lord, my soul! O Lord, my God, how great you are!

You are clothed with majesty and glory; you cover yourself with light.

You spread out the heavens like a tent and built your home on the waters above.

Lord you have made so many things!

***How wisely you made them all!***

You make springs flow in the valleys, and rivers run between the hills.

They provide water for the wild animals; there the wild donkeys quench their thirst.

In the trees near by, the birds make their nests and sing.

From the sky you send rain on the hills, and the earth is filled with your blessings.

Lord you have made so many things!

***How wisely you made them all!***

You make grass grow for the cattle and plants for man to use,

so that he may grow his crops and produce wine to make him happy,

olive oil to make him cheerful and bread to give him strength.

Lord you have made so many things!

***How wisely you made them all!***

You created the moon to mark the months; the sun knows the time to set.

You made the night, and in the darkness all the wild animals come out.

The young lions roar while they hunt, looking for the food that God provides.

When the sun rises they go back and lie down in their dens.

Then people go out to do their work and keep working until evening.

Lord you have made so many things!

***How wisely you made them all!***

**Praise the Lord, my soul! O Lord, my God, how great you are!**

# Why Do We Celebrate Harvest?

Harvest festivals are believed to date back to ancient Britain when most people planted and grew their own food in fields and farmers would give thanks for a good harvest.

Farmers gave thanks for a good harvest during the full moon closest to the autumn equinox, it was important to them because it meant they could store the food and eat well through the hard winter months.

Harvest Festival celebrates the time of year when crops have been gathered from the field and people can reflect on the food that they have.

The celebrations became popular again in Victorian times as a kind of 'thanksgiving' service, including prayer and church services.

While we don't all grow our own food anymore, Harvest festivals are still considered an important way to learn about the process of how food gets from farms to our tables, as well as being a key date in the calendar of different religions.



# Harvest Prayers Of Praise And Thanksgiving

Creator God, we thank you for all the signs of your goodness that we see around us.

Thank you for food to eat, for the beauty of flowers, for the seasons and for the rhythm of the natural world. Lord God, you have made so many things, how wisely you have made them all.

**Amen**



You crown the year with your bounty,  
and your carts overflow with abundance.

*Psalm 65:11*

# Harvest

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# Song Suggestion

All Things Bright And Beautiful



# Tithes, Gifts & Offerings

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No matter wherever you are, whatever you do, whoever you are, together we can grow as Church Together here at Salendine Nook.

If you feel that your are able to, then please keep on giving with a cheerful and grateful heart, praising God for all that he has given to you and share in the finances of the church.

# Bible Reading

## Luke 8 v. 4 – 15 NIV

4 While a large crowd was gathering and people were coming to Jesus from town after town, he told this parable: 5 “A farmer went out to sow his seed. As he was scattering the seed, some fell along the path; it was trampled on, and the birds ate it up. 6 Some fell on rocky ground, and when it came up, the plants withered because they had no moisture. 7 Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up with it and choked the plants. 8 Still other seed fell on good soil. It came up and yielded a crop, a hundred times more than was sown.” When he said this, he called out, “Whoever has ears to hear, let them hear.”

9 His disciples asked him what this parable meant. 10 He said, “The knowledge of the secrets of the kingdom of God has been given to you, but to others I speak in parables, so that, ““though seeing, they may not see; though hearing, they may not understand.’

11 “This is the meaning of the parable: The seed is the word of God. 12 Those along the path are the ones who hear, and then the devil comes and takes away the word from their hearts, so that they may not believe and be saved. 13 Those on the rocky ground are the ones who receive the word with joy when they hear it, but they have no root. They believe for a while, but in the time of testing they fall away. 14 The seed that fell among thorns

stands for those who hear, but as they go on their way they are choked by life's worries, riches and pleasures, and they do not mature. 15 But the seed on good soil stands for those

# Responsive Harvest Prayers Of Confession

Each harvest we have to face the fact that although God has provided for our needs, we have often been greedy and selfish in our response.

Even though we say the words, 'O Lord, how great you are!', we often forget that God is the Creator of each harvest and provides all the food we eat.

Generous God,

**forgive us and help us to live responsibly.**

Lord God, you make springs gush forth in the valleys, yet we have polluted the water with rubbish and poisoned the rivers and seas.

Generous God,

**forgive us and help us to live responsibly.**

You provide us with bread and wine, but we have been greedy and let other people starve.

Generous God,

**forgive us and help us to live responsibly.**

You have made the moon to mark the seasons and the sun for day and night, yet we have ignored this provision

and overworked ourselves and others.

Generous God,

**forgive us and help us to live responsibly.**

**Amen**



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# Song Suggestion

Praise God From Whom All  
Blessings Flow



# Church Together

# Thought

## THE FARMER

As the farmer walked along, he scattered the wheat seeds. Lots of grains of wheat fell to the ground. (**Demonstrate again.**)

A generous supply was sown with the potential to grow into healthy wheat plants.

What happened to the seeds depended on where the seed fell. Some of it fell on the path and got eaten, some of it was choked by other plants as it grew, and the seed which fell on rocks started growing but then shrivelled up.

However, some seeds that germinated went on to grow tall and strong, producing a great harvest!

## GOD'S MESSAGE

What happens to the seed, Jesus said, is like what happens to God's word, his message to us:

God is a generous God and he has '**scattered**' his word in abundance; he has not held back

from making sure his message is heard. He is not ruled by cost - benefit analysis but by a huge outreaching generosity of his love and compassion for all who would believe in him.

What happens to the seed - God's message - depends on how it is received. This story is not just about the seed, but also about the soil it falls into. For

example, God's word may be lost because our hearts are not centred on God; God's word may not last - when the going gets tough, it withers away; God's word may be squeezed out by cares or worries that we have, or because of our desire for pleasures or riches.

## **GOOD SOIL**

The seed that fell on good soil however, produced tall plants, which grew strongly and bore much fruit. This, Jesus said, is a picture of the sort of people who hear the word of God and respond to God's message; hold on to it with an honest and good heart; and keep going until they bear fruit as we read in **Luke 8 v. 15**.

So, in the same way as harvest reminds us of our need to respond to God, this parable points us to respond to what he says, that we need to let the word of God fall into our hearts and lives, so that we become fruitful people of God.

## **HOW TO BE FRUITFUL**

To be fruitful people of God, fulfilling our potential and pleasing God we need to do the following:

Hear what he says - this means being prepared to listen when we hear the Bible read or read it for ourselves.

To mull over what we read or hear, thinking out what it means to us, honestly and sincerely.

Go on following God's word, even when life becomes difficult or we feel we are just plodding on.

**To sum up, we are to firstly, hear it, secondly, we need to**

**think about it and finally, we  
must live it out in the lives that we live.**

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# Song Suggestion

I, The Lord Of Sea And Sky



# Prayers Of Thanksgiving And Response

Invite people to take the green leaf shape that they were given and to write Prayers of Thanksgiving on them. As a promise to God that you intend to hear his word and think about it and live it, you are invited to come up and place the leaves that you have written on, onto the table at the front of church. There will be time for you to bring your leaf to the front and then we will say a prayer together.

**Generous God, we thank you for harvest and for giving us your word.**

**We pray that you will help us to listen to you; to consider carefully what you teach us and to live it out, even when we find life difficult.**

**We ask this through Jesus Christ who showed us just how generous you are.**

**Amen.**

# The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in Heaven  
Hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come, thy will be done,  
On earth as it is in Heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
As we forgive those who trespass against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
But deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power  
And the glory, forever and ever.  
**Amen**





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# Song Suggestion

Come You Thankful People  
Come



# Blessing

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We give you thanks at the end of our time together today for all the ways that you bless our lives: for the beauty and abundance of nature, the love of family and friends, the joy of knowing you as our Lord and Saviour and hearing your word.

Send Your Holy Spirit among us so that we might dream your dreams and see visions of the world as you created it to be. Guide our thoughts and actions. Bring us closer to you so that we might do your will and dwell in your house forever.

**Amen**