

Harvest and prayer

As the season begins to turn and we see the vibrant colours of autumn emerging it can be a good time to take stock. This Sunday we celebrated Harvest and it felt very different not being in the church building together, and yet it was lovely to see all the different fruit and vegetables that people have been growing being waved in the little Zoom windows. Many of us have been able to take more time this year in gardens and allotments or being able to pay attention to creation around us in the local parks. I think many have felt more connected to the cycle of the seasons, the environment around us, and how our food and supply chain works. These are all pointers to being part of a bigger story. And as Christians we believe that bigger story is God's story.

During this time of living through a global pandemic, we have perhaps experienced a sense of deeper connection to God through prayer, with our immediate neighbours as communities have drawn together, and with families and friends as we have been able to share our vulnerabilities and concerns. Ironically, this time has also fractured our connections as we have lost time spent with family and friends, doing activities that we love, and worshipping together in our church building in the normal way. I have found myself thinking a lot about what it means for us to be living connections with Jesus. How we live out our faith day-to-day, and how we reveal God through the way we make connections between our story and God's story. Some of the reports coming back from the SAS have been of the families wondering why we are doing this or wondering how we can feel hopeful or joyful in the current situation. It has been a great opportunity to share the good news of a God who enters into darkness and suffering, promises to journey with us, and offers hope and the possibility of changed lives.

Harvest time is the opportunity to step back and look in gratitude at all that God has given us. And it is also a time to reflect on the cycle of life that does involve change, grief and death, times of rest and waiting. From mid-October we will have prayer spaces set up in the church building that will give the opportunity to reflect on some of the uncertainty and anxiety of this time, to grieve the losses that we have all experienced, but also to encourage us to connect these experiences to God and receive courage and hope for the time ahead. I do hope that you will take the opportunity to come by yourself, or with a friend, or as a family to spend time praying in this different way, and so strengthen your connection with God.

God bless you in this season and may you know the peace and presence of God with you.

Every blessing

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