

Reflection

Earlier this week I visited our near neighbours at Exeter Foodbank. It was humbling to read some of their client testimonies, written up voluntarily and anonymously in books in the waiting area. These handwritten pages told stories of illness, disability, redundancy, homelessness, family breakdown, addiction, and all sorts of other circumstance that had led people to food poverty.

It made me reflect on how fragile life is. In the UK, around half of working adults live paycheque to paycheque, and unexpected circumstances can quickly interrupt our financial security. And, of course, food security is far more precarious for most in our world than it is for us in the UK.

Today's gospel reading warns against the myth that we are self-reliant. The rich man stores up a harvest for himself in enormous barns, without acknowledging his reliance on God. Yet, the birds of the air and the lilies of the field have an instinctive sense of God's day-to-day provision. Getting food on our table relies on a myriad of factors – from farmers throughout the world, to those who transport and process goods, to factory and shop workers. It relies on the sun and the rain, and good soil for growth. Harvest is a moment to pause and give thanks for those things which we might otherwise take for granted, and acknowledge our reliance on others, and on the natural world, and above all on God, for the good things we have.

Rev Hannah



NEXT SUNDAY 11.10.26 Trinity 19
10.30am in the Church



OT Isaiah 25: 1-9
NT Philippians 4: 1-9
GOSPEL Matthew 22: 1-14

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St Thomas, Exeter

4th October 2026

Harvest Festival

10.30am in the Church

Today

Sung Eucharist

Hymn Numbers

101 Come ye thankful people come

21 All things bright and beautiful

534 We plough the fields and scatter

557 Who put the colours in the rainbow

Wednesday 7th October

10am Walsingham Mass

Thursday 8th October

9.30-11am St Thomas Tots

10.30-12noon Knit & Natter at Jenny
Tuckett's house

Friday 9th October

9.45am Morning Prayer

10.15am Staff Meeting

Saturday 10th October

9am St Thomas Breakfast in the Sawyers.
All welcome.



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**

Deuteronomy 8: 7-18

Moses said to all Israel: The LORD your God is bringing you into a good land, a land with flowing streams, with springs and underground waters welling up in valleys and hills, a land of wheat and barley, of vines and fig trees and pomegranates, a land of olive trees and honey, a land where you may eat bread without scarcity, where you will lack nothing, a land whose stones are iron and from whose hills you may mine copper. You shall eat your fill and bless the LORD your God for the good land that he has given you. Take care that you do not forget the LORD your God, by failing to keep his commandments, his ordinances, and his statutes, which I am commanding you today. When you have eaten your fill and have built fine houses and live in them, and when your herds and flocks have multiplied, and your silver and gold is multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied, then do not exalt yourself, forgetting the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, who led you through the great and terrible wilderness, an arid waste-land with poisonous snakes and scorpions. He made water flow for you from flint rock, and fed you in the wilderness with manna that your ancestors did not know, to humble you and to test you, and in the end to do you good. Do not say to yourself, 'My power and the might of my own hand have gained me this wealth.' But remember the LORD your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth, so that he may confirm his covenant that he swore to your ancestors, as he is doing today.

2 Corinthians 9: 6-15

The one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. And God is able to provide you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may share abundantly in every good work. As it is written, 'He scatters abroad, he gives to the poor; his righteousness endures for ever.' He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us; for the rendering of this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many thanksgivings to God. Through the testing of this ministry you glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others, while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing grace of God that he has given you. Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

Luke 12: 16-30

Jesus told the people a parable: 'The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, "What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?" Then 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. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry." But 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?" So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich towards God.' Jesus 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. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing. Consider 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! And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life? If then you are not able to do so small a thing as that, why do you worry about the rest? Consider 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. But 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! And do not keep striving for what you are to eat and what you are to drink, and do not keep worrying. For it is the nations of the world that strive after all these things, and your Father knows that you need them.'

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**

Notices

There is also an **Open Table trans Pride** gathering on the evening of **Sunday 4th October**. All welcome.

Harvest Festival you are invited to bring along items from the priority list suggested by Exeter Food Bank.

Tinned Meat. Tinned Vegetables. Tinned Potatoes
Tinned Fruit. Noodle Snacks (i.e. Pot Noodle / Mug Shot / Pasta'n'Sauce (etc) Small jars of Coffee

On Sunday 18th October we will be launching a new evening service. More details to follow.