

St Clement's Monthly News

October 2025

On Sunday 5th October we are celebrating Harvest Thanksgiving in our parishes with special harvest services. Harvest still captures the imagination of many people. Most primary schools mark harvest in some way; often collecting food for foodbanks or supporting an eco project.

For those of us who don't work on the land (i.e. most of us!) harvest helps us to recognise our reliance on God and others for our daily bread. It's good to give thanks each year for the bounty of creation. Certainly, in recent years we have seen how war and climate change can threaten supply chains across the world. Food costs continue to rise. For many this can be a matter of life and death.

In the Church we have a rich heritage of agricultural festivals which reconnect us with God, the earth and one another. One of the oldest of such festivals was 'Plough Sunday' which goes back to medieval times. Plough Sunday usually fell on the first Sunday of Epiphany. A plough was brought into Church and blessed as a way of commending the year's agricultural work to God.

Another moment in the year when the Church asks for God's blessing on the work of those who work on the land or sea is 'Rogationtide'. This falls on the three weekdays before Ascension Day. Rogation comes from the Latin word *rogare*, which means 'to ask'. It is a moment when the Church 'asks' for a good harvest and God's blessing on those who work to provide us with our food. In some parishes people 'beat the bounds' of the parish at Rogationtide by walking as a group around the boundary of the parish and praying for the land and the people who live in it.

On 1st August there's a festival called 'Lammas Day' which comes from an Anglo-Saxon word *Hlafmaesse* which means 'Loaf Mass'. It's a day of thanksgiving for the first fruits of the wheat harvest. A newly baked loaf would often be presented in Church at 'Mass' as a way of giving thanks to God for the abundance of the earth.

Finally, 'Harvest Thanksgiving' has developed from a celebration which took place on the first Sunday in October in a parish in Cornwall in 1843. Harvest Thanksgiving quickly spread to other parishes and has been widely celebrated ever since. From rural parishes to urban parishes, Harvest Thanksgiving still thrives as a festival where we give thanks to God for our daily bread, where we give thanks for those who produce it, and where share what we have with those who don't have enough.

Festivals such as these help us to reconnect us with the earth, with the seasons of the year, and with the patterns of our lives. Plough Sunday is about commending a new project to God, and asking him to bless our work. Rogationtide is about asking God for what we need. Lamastide is about giving back to God the fruits of our labours in thanksgiving. Harvest Thanksgiving is about giving thanks for God's provision, and sharing what we have with others. Such festivals are a rich blessing. May many be blessed this Harvest-tide.

Rev'd Matthew

Diary for October

Wed 1 st	10.15am	Holy Communion
	11.00am	Welcome Coffee Morning
Thurs 2 nd	7.30pm	Study Course Session 3
Fri 3 rd	7.00pm	Choir Practice
Sat 4 th	7.00pm	Quiz Night in the church
Sun 5th	10.30am	Harvest Festival
		Eucharist Parish Church
	10.30am	Harvest Festival Branch Church
	12.00noon	Auction of Produce Branch Church
Mon 6 th	9.00am	Walking for Health
	4.00pm	Handbell Ringing
Tues 7 th	9.30am	Morning Prayer
Wed 8 th	10.15am	Holy Communion
	11.00am	Welcome Coffee Morning
Thurs 9 th	7.30pm	Study Course Session 4
Fri 10 th	7.00pm	Choir Practice
Sun 12th	10.30am	Eucharist Parish Church
Mon 13 th	9.00am	Walking for Health
	4.00pm	Handbell Ringing
Tues 14 th	9.30am	Morning Prayer
Wed 15 th	10.15am	Holy Communion
	11.00am	Welcome Coffee Morning
Thurs 16 th	2.00pm	Mothers' Union
	7.00pm	Men's Group
Fri 17 th	7.00pm	Choir Practice
Sat 18 th	9.30am	Morning Prayer
	10.00am	Work morning (Tidying the grounds)
Sun 19th	10.30am	Eucharist Parish Church
Mon 20 th	9.00am	Walking for Health
	4.00pm	Handbell Ringing
Tues 21 st	9.30am	Morning Prayer
Wed 22 nd	10.15am	Holy Communion
	11.00am	Welcome Coffee Morning
Fri 24 th	7.00pm	Choir Practice
Sat 25 th	11.00am	Jumble Sale and Good as New in the church
Sun 26th	10.30am	Eucharist Parish Church
Mon 27 th	9.00am	Walking for Health
	4.00pm	Handbell Ringing
Tues 28 th	9.30am	Morning Prayer
Wed 29 th	10.15am	Holy Communion
	11.00am	Welcome Coffee Morning
Fri 31 st	7.00pm	Choir practice

THE BRANCH CHURCH HUMPHREY PARK COMMUNITY CENTRE

Harvest Festival Service
10.30am Sun 5th October
12 noon Auction of produce
in aid of The Booth Centre

Brownies 6.00pm Every Tues
Meeting in the Parish Hall
Contact Samantha
Surmstonbrownies@gmail.com

QUIZ NIGHT

Sat 4th October in church

Tickets £10

Contact Rose on 07954489235

QUIZ : BINGO : RAFFLE

PIE & PEAS SUPPER + PUDDING

TEA & COFFEE

**Bring your own drinks if
preferred**

If you wish to donate
to St Clement's Church
please scan the QR
Code and follow the
instructions

