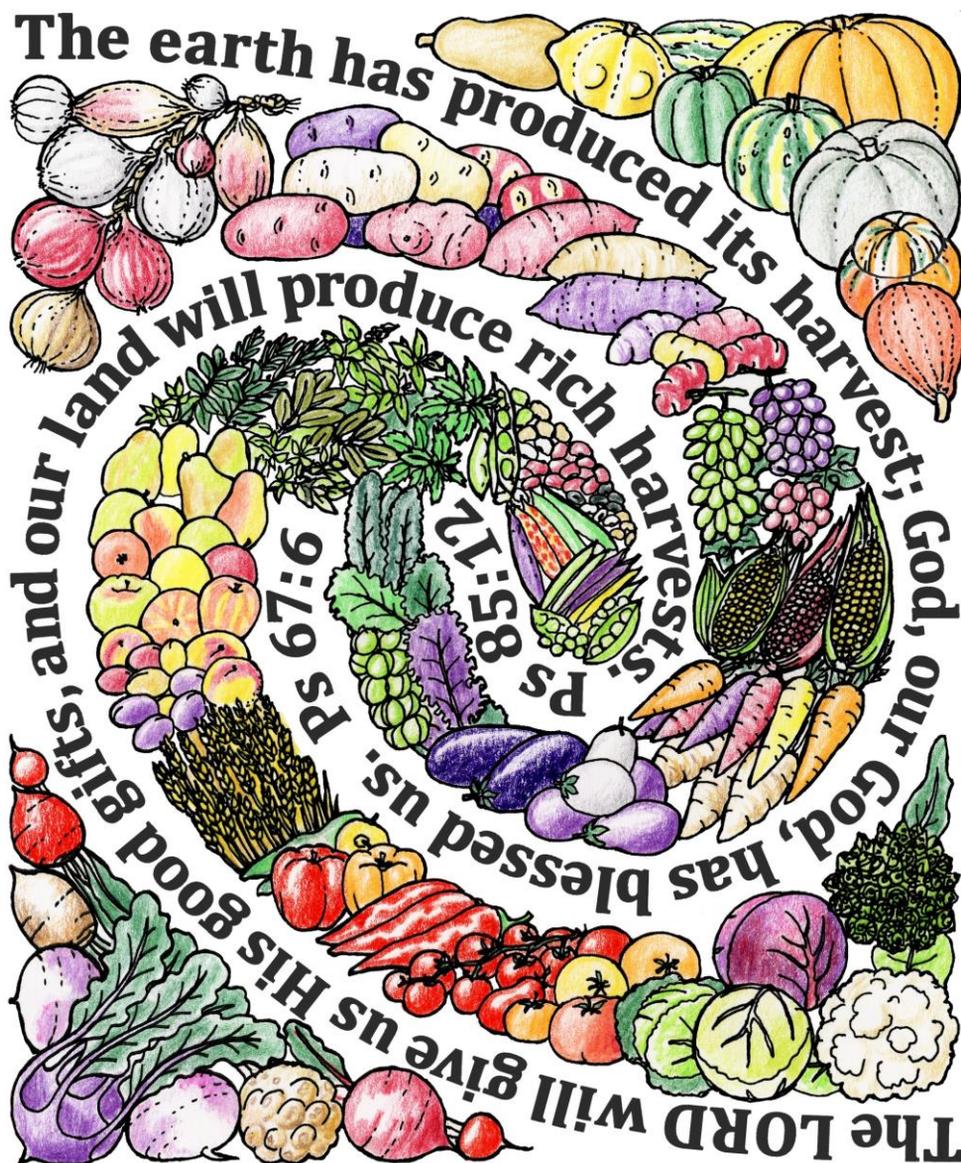
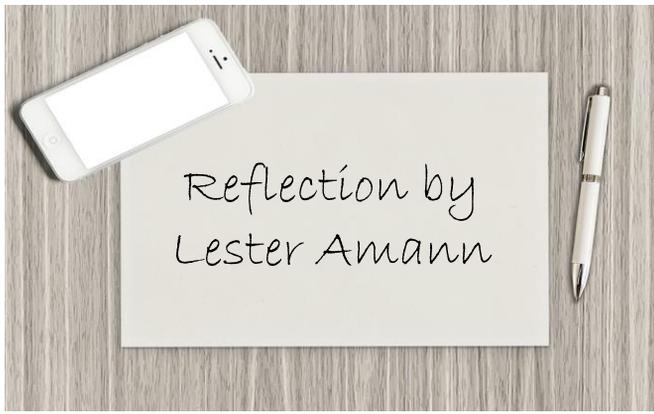




**Kempston East
Methodist
Church
Newsletter
Issue 126
Sept 18th
2022**

Minister: Rev Michael Giles
Michaelgiles2017@gmail.com
01234 930882





Abiding in Jesus

This is the time of year for many churches to hold their Harvest Festival services. No doubt, there will be displays of food, some bought, with others grown in gardens and allotments. While gardeners can have pleasure growing fruit and vegetables it can be hard work tending to them and dealing with pests.

Jesus knew about the care given to vines. In John 15:1-8 Jesus compared Himself to a vine and referred to God as the gardener. These verses are both challenging and reassuring. In this parable, God is responsible for pruning the vine. He sees what parts are useful and what parts are useless. The unproductive parts are cut away, so that growth is encouraged. Jesus is telling us that God will prune our lives, not to harm us, but to encourage our spiritual growth.

God's pruning cuts away wrong attitudes and wasteful behaviour, all of which serve no useful purpose in our lives. This pruning is required so that we become more fruitful. And the fruit God wants is love, joy, patience etc. (see Galatians 5:22-23) These holy qualities are intended to influence the world to change it from the bad to all that is good.

To encourage its growth a vine has to be regularly cut back. The effect looks drastic, but essential. When God cuts away the dead wood in our lives He does it because He knows how our lives can grow. The pruning knives are in the hands of our Father God who only desires the best for us. This pruning process can be painful, but Jesus says that it is vital if the Holy Spirit is to flow through us to produce the fruit that God wants.

Also in this parable, Jesus said He was the vine and we are the branches. We have no existence apart from Jesus. We can do nothing for God on our own and must be joined to Jesus. In the same way a vine utilises the life-giving sap to flow into the branches, so we need the Holy Spirit to flow His life into us. It is only by remaining in Jesus can He give us the inner resources for an effective fruit-producing life.

Jesus said '*Abide in Me*' (John 15:4 King James Version). Abiding speaks of sustenance, being upheld and supported, enduring and withstanding. So, if we are to reap a harvest of holiness, may we be prepared for God's pruning, and continue to abide in Jesus, our Lord and Saviour.

A Harvest of Peace

As well as our Harvest Festival, today is also Peace Sunday, something that may get lost in the midst of our own Harvest celebrations. So, I'm including here a short article by John Cooper, Director of the Fellowship of Reconciliation and taken from the Churches Together in England website.

“Peace Sunday is a relatively new entry to the church calendar, yet its roots lie in a core question of the Christian message – what does it mean to follow the Prince of Peace in our daily lives? Its place in the calendar reminds us that the Prince of Peace doesn't just appear at Christmas, His message is timeless and we need to respond. It links us with the [United Nations International Day of Peace which falls on 21 September every year](#).



“But what can you say about peace at the moment? [To assist with your reflections a booklet of worship resources has been produced by the Fellowship of Reconciliation \(FoR\)](#). FoR is an ecumenical movement of Christians committed to building peace, seeking justice and transforming the world with a message of nonviolence. It was founded in 1914 and since then has supported people to discover their calling as a peacemaker through campaigns, education and fellowship.

“This year the theme we are encouraging churches to explore is ‘A Harvest of Peace’. We examine some of the links between climate change and peace through prayers and sermon notes.

“This material was produced while the war in Ukraine began. The Fellowship, alongside other peace groups, has coordinated weekly prayers for peace and you are welcome to join us every Friday at 7.30 pm. [Simply register your interest](#). Some of the material used in these prayers will be going on our Peace Sunday website reminding us of the cost of living crisis and the place of money in causing division and conflict in society.

“All of this sits against a backdrop of [the global communion of churches gathering in Germany for the World Council of Churches](#). The WCC was founded with a commitment to eradicating war and standing up for peace. To that end, the International FoR and other peace-minded movements are running [a number of peace-focussed fringe events](#) alongside the wider WCC programme. Therefore we also encourage you to include prayers for peace between churches and in the world among your Peace Sunday reflections.

“You could also watch the special recording of Graham Kendrick's [‘O Lord, the clouds are gathering’](#) which we commissioned with Matt Beckingham, Graham Kendrick and the National Methodist Choir of Great Britain.”

Reduce food waste

Last week I told you about an app called OLIO. This connects people and businesses with each other so that unwanted, but perfectly edible, food can be shared.



As a Fellow of the Institute of Food Science and Technology, I receive their journal. The latest issue arrived through the door last week and there were some interesting figures in there about the amount of food we waste.

The bottom line is that we are getting better at reducing food waste with a 16% increase in food being saved and redistributed in 2021 compared with the previous 5 years.. In 2021 over 106,000 tonnes of surplus food were redistributed, enough for over 253 million meals. 69% of this was through charitable channels (an increase of 40% compared with 2015). In total between 2015 and 2021, 426,000 tonnes of surplus food have been redistributed, enough for more than a billion meals.

Good news – but it could be even better because 200,000 tonnes of perfectly good food ends up going to waste each year. Some of this is food that we waste, some is from retail, some from manufacturers and some from foodservice (restaurants etc). Either way there's still a long way to go,

Maybe you've got some food (canned, bottled) that is still well within its shelf life and you wonder 'why on earth did I buy that?' Don't just ditch it. Make sure it does still have a reasonable amount of life in it and bring it to church on Sunday as part of your harvest gifts – along with some that you've bought specifically to add to the gifts we will be sending to Bedford Foodbank. Thank you.

Reaping and harvesting

Sometimes a law of nature is very similar to a law of the spirit. Take the process of harvest, or 'sowing and reaping'. The Bible tells us: 'A farmer who plants just a few seeds will get only a small crop, but if he plants much, he will reap much.' (2 Cor 9:6)

It has been said that probably the most sensitive nerve on our body is the one that runs to our cheque book! Money represents our time, our security and our hard work. It gives us independence and power. So, when God begins to talk to us about giving more of our money to Him – sowing it in His service – we can feel very alarmed.

The seed a farmer sows in a field may sometimes be lost, but not the seed that we give to God. What we sow with regards to our time, gifts and money in service to others, God will make sure we one day reap – in a harvest of spiritual riches that we can never lose.

Harvest Weekend

This weekend is our Harvest Weekend. Although the newsletter is officially due out on Sunday, Richard does send it out a day or two earlier. So, I can mention that on Saturday September 17th it will be our Harvest Supper at 6.30 pm.

On Sunday September 18th, our friend Paul Cooper will lead our Harvest Festival celebrations at 10.30am.

As part of our thanksgiving at the Harvest Festival we invite you to bring gifts which can be placed on a table at the front of the church before the service begins.

As we did last year, the gifts will be sent to the Bedford Food Bank and so we ask that you bring tins, packets etc as well as fresh food. They are grateful for all that is given.



Samaritan's Purse Appeal

The date for collection of Samaritan's Purse boxes this year is November 6th. If anybody would like to have any pre-printed boxes, please let me know. I am also happy to have any gifts of money or things to go in the boxes if you don't want to fill a box.

Barbara G (301685)

Macmillan World's Biggest Coffee Morning

**Saturday 24th September,
10am until noon
Priory Methodist Church**

Come and have a drink and cakes with friends. If the weather is good, there will be some tables outside – a good witness in the community. All proceeds will go to Macmillan Cancer Support. Please come and support this worthy cause.





Our Church Family



Please remember in your prayers:

- The Royal Family on the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II
- Martin and Margaret T
- Vivienne, Graham and Alice Miles
- The people of Pakistan affected by the monsoon floods
- All those in the UK who are worried about the rising cost of living

This Week at Kempston East

Tuesday Sept 20 th	2.00pm	Tibbs Dementia meet in the New School Hall
Friday Sept 22 nd	9.30am	Parents and Toddlers meet in the Halls
Saturday Sept 23 rd	4.00pm	Soup Kitchen in the Church Garden

Thanks from....

.....Joyce and Peter for all the greetings, cards, flowers and good wishes they received on the occasion of their 65th Wedding Anniversary. Among them was a card from HM Queen Elizabeth II.

Answers to last week's crossword

ACROSS: 1, Lawyer. 4, Balsam. 8, Caleb. 9, Jehoram. 10, Sparrow. 11, Exile. 12, Excellent. 17, Act in. 19, Endemic. 21, Slavery. 22, Galal. 23, Silent. 24, Tarsus.

DOWN: 1, Locust. 2, Welfare. 3, Ember. 5, Athlete. 6, Sarai. 7, Member. 9, Jewellery. 13, Condemn. 14, Temples. 15, Causes. 16, Scales. 18, Trail. 20, Dogma.

WORSHIP AT EAST

This week, our Harvest Festival service this morning at 10.30am will be led by Paul Cooper from Upper Caldecote Methodist Church

We will be live-streaming the service again this week so those of you who connect in by YouTube will be able to watch the service online. An audio recording on CD will be available to those who normally receive these.

Future Services at Kempston East

Sunday September 25 th	10.30am	Local Worship led by the Worship Leaders
Sunday October 2 nd	10.30am	Glynne Rowlands
	3.00pm	Rev Michael Giles – Baptism
Sunday October 9 th	10.30am	Geoff Talbot

Summary of Guidelines for Covid-safe Services at Kempston East

Although you are no longer legally required to wear a face covering while in the church and halls, we will still be reserving the back three rows of the church for people who do not wish to sit with those without a face covering so, **please do not sit in those rows if you have an uncovered face!**

Other than that, you can sit anywhere but, from a courtesy point of view, please ask if it's Ok to sit next to or close to someone at the table or row you're heading for.



News from Bedford Borough Council

Book of Condolence

A Book of Condolence opened on September 10th at the Harpur Suite in Bedford. The premises will remain open from 8am to 5pm until the day after the Queen's funeral for those who would like to sign it. A virtual book of condolence has also been set up by The Royal Family, which you can sign on [the Royal website](#).

Floral Tributes

We're inviting people who live and work in the Borough to lay flowers at the Russell Park designated floral tribute area, located at the entrance nearest to The Embankment at the western end of the park. We ask that flowers are taken out of cellophane wrappers where possible, and that no naked flames or candles are left.

Introducing Susan Masih, our new steward

Hello everyone,

I would like to thank Kempston East for including me in the team of stewards.

For people who do not know me well my name is Susan Masih, I have lived in Bedford for 48 years so I attended school in Bedford, left school when I was 16 and started work in Meltis (chocolate factory) in Bedford with my mum and a lot of the Asian community Aunties.

I got married in 1992 to David and had my first Son (Henry) also in 1992. I had my second son (Adam) in 1995 and my third son (Ashley) in 1998. While my children were growing up I did part time jobs.

While doing my part time job at Weller Wing (the psychiatric unit at Bedford Hospital) I did further education in social care. I then went to full time education in 2006 to study psychiatric nursing and completed this in 2009 and qualified as a registered mental health nurse.

From 2009 to the present day I work full time in my role which has combined with working in hospital settings and now currently in the community.

This is a snippet of me and please feel free to approach me if you are curious to know more and if I can help in advice in relation to my profession.

Many regards

Susan Masih

Mini Science & Faith Course for BELIEF Bedford on Zoom

Saturday 24th September:

Revd Dr Dave Gregory (Science & Faith for children) - "Wonder, Play and Connections – Science and Faith Across the Generations".

The event will run for two one-hour sessions separated by a break, from 10.30am to 1pm. You can order tickets individually free on Eventbrite

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/335254885387>

To find out more about the speakers, go to <https://beliefbedford.weebly.com/>

If you have any prayer requests, thanks and, indeed, any other items and news that you would like to go into the weekly newsletter then please email these to Geoff Talbot (geofftal@btinternet.com) as soon as possible and ideally by the previous Wednesday.

If you know of someone who would like to receive this emailed newsletter could you please send their email address to richard.ward4@btinternet.com. Equally, if you would like to be removed from the distribution list, please let Richard Ward know.