**Harvest Praise @ Home 6th October 2024**

**Opening prayer**

Blessed are you, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, you have blessed us with every spiritual blessing; enable us by your power to be true to our calling and live holy and blameless lives before you all our days, through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever. **Amen**

**Confession** Let us admit to God the sin which always confronts us.

**Lord God, we have sinned against you; we have done evil in your sight. We are sorry and**

**repent.** **Have mercy on us according to your love. Wash away our wrongdoing and cleanse us**

**from our sin.** **Renew a right spirit within us** **and restore us to the joy of your salvation,** **through**

**Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen** cf Psalm 51

**Absolution** May the Father of all mercies cleanse us from our sins, and restore us in his image

to the praise and glory of his name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

### Bible Reading

### *Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and curing every disease and every sickness among the people. So his fame spread throughout all Syria, and they brought to him all the sick, those who were afflicted with various diseases and pains, demoniacs, epileptics, and paralytics, and he cured them. And great crowds followed him from Galilee, the Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and from beyond the Jordan. (Matt 4:23–25)*

### News of World Vision

This year at St Nicholas Church we will be supporting World Vision through our Harvest Festival and Coffee Morning. We thought it important to share with you one of the needs that World Vision are currently addressing.

World Vision is a Christian humanitarian organisation dedicated to working with children, families and their communities to reach their full potential by tackling the root causes of poverty and injustice. World Vision serves all people, regardless of religion, race, ethnicity or gender.

International aid agency World Vision has expressed its deep concern for children who are most at risk of dying from a more deadly variant of mpox which is now currently increasing in intensity across Central and West Africa. In DR Congo of the 7,851 reported [Mpox cases](https://www.who.int/emergencies/disease-outbreak-news/item/2024-DON522), 39% are children aged under 5, including 240 deaths (62% of the total)*.*

National Director of World Vision Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Aline Napon said “Children are particularly vulnerable to mpox, especially in low and middle-income countries, including those suffering humanitarian crises and where health and social services are weak or non-existent.  Children are especially at risk where they are living in refugee camps, overcrowded urban settlements, and where malnutrition, a lack of clean water and sanitation, and poor health services exist."

The World Health Organisation has declared mpox an international health emergency in response to a growing outbreak in Africa. The DRC is currently worst impacted, with thousands of children either infected or at risk of infection from the virus. Conflict in DRC is putting populations there at increased risk as displaced people are forced to live in crowded camps, and because sexual violence levels are high.

“The type of contact reported by cases in DRC includes sexual contact, non-sexual direct contact, as well as household and healthcare facility contact. The level of the disease can increase in camps where displaced people are living, due to high levels of sexual violence. These environments encourage the rapid spread of infectious diseases such as smallpox, where close physical contact is almost inevitable. Children living in the DRC, where conflict, displacement and natural disasters are all taking place are in real risk of this serious and rapidly spreading disease,” said Napon.

The child-focused NGO is calling upon the international community to respond immediately, put systems in place to halt the spread of this deadly virus, roll out vaccinations, support the sharing of accurate health messaging to reduce misinformation and stigma and urgently treat those who have been infected.

“World Vision’s experience in tackling Ebola and COVID in humanitarian situations tells us that there is no time to waste. People in DRC and other impacted countries need immediate free treatment for mpox. There must also be an immediate immunisation programme set up to prevent further infection and mortality. We cannot stand by while children die from this deadly but preventable disease,” said Napon.

### Affirmation of faith

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son, who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

**We believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known in the world?

**We believe and trust in him. This is the faith of the Church.**

**This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Amen**

**Prayers of intercession led by Sue**

Lord God, thank you for the many blessings which have touched our lives this past week and as we give thanks for the work and growth which has led to our Harvest Thanksgiving. Now may you lean our hearts towards the needs of your world as we come before you in prayer.

*LORD IN YOUR MERCY*: **HEAR OUR PRAYER.**

**Creator God**,

* We thank you for the beauty of the planet you asked us to look after. We pray for your wisdom as we look towards better ways of caring for the environment, even when they cut across the ways we have always done things. Please inspire we, who have so much, to reach out: to those devastated by wild fires, as in Brazil; those starving because of drought, such as in Sudan; those having to move because altered rainfall patterns and sea level rises are flooding them out – all the result of human impacts on a carefully balanced ecosystem. Please energise governments to be compassionate to the displaced and long-sighted in their quest to safeguard our natural resources.
* Lord, we long for justice and love to replace resentment and aggression as nations in the Middle East cause further harm to each other’s civilian populations. We lift up to you those starving and without sufficient medical aid in Gaza; those displaced by shelling and military advances on either side of the Israel/Lebanon border; all who live in fear and distress. Please strengthen your people to support the dispossessed, to comfort the fearful and confront evil-doers. We also pray for your wisdom to characterise the negotiations held between the leaders of those nations who have influence in the region.
* As autumn advances and the temperature drops, we pray for the homeless of Ukraine, and those living in areas where attacks on infrastructure have taken out reliable energy, food and water supplies. May communities pull together in offering relief and encouragement to one another. Please work your will to bring victory and peace for the vulnerable and an end to Russia’s invasion.
* We pray against the forces of far right nationalism in Europe and America which seek to denigrate the worth of others. May you empower those who will need to govern alongside those recently elected so that a more caring way forward can be implemented in practice.

*LORD IN YOUR MERCY*: **HEAR OUR PRAYER.**

**Jesus**,

* Please strengthen your body here on earth, that it may truly express your character. We lift up to you archbishops, bishops and church leaders, asking that you empower them to lead with courage, wisdom and grace. We also pray for our local diocese whose leaders gathered together to work out a way forward this week, that they may know your guidance and be encouraged in their ministry.
* In washing your people clean of sin, you also called them to be holy in their conduct. We pray for the worldwide Anglican communion as it seeks to uphold the Bible in cultures (including ours) which have created their own moral rules. We pray that your Word prevails and that your Spirit enables all to humbly submit their agendas to yours – which is that all should come together in love and worship as renewed people of God.
* Please help us to build the sort of relationships in this community where we can honour you and openly share our faith. At harvest time may we recognise not only the physical gifts you’ve given us, but also your spiritual gifts, which you long for us to share. Please empower us to offer the living water of your spirit and the food of your living word. Help us know where to start and how best to connect in each different situation we encounter, trusting that you will give us the words.

*LORD IN YOUR MERCY*: **HEAR OUR PRAYER.**

**Holy Spirit**,

* We lift up to you those facing the ending of earthly life and families coping with sadness for this and other reasons. Help us to draw alongside them in practical care, and hold out to them the hope that the resurrection and ascension of Christ proclaims.
* We pray that you comfort those who are struggling with caring responsibilities, and those we know facing repeated challenges to their physical and mental health, mentioning in our hearts those known personally to us……
* We lift up ourselves to you, praying that you will refresh weary souls and bodies by a new infusion of your love and power. Help us to work effectively together for the good of the parish.

*LORD IN YOUR MERCY*: **HEAR OUR PRAYER.**

Father, Son and Spirit, having given us so much, you call us to live wholeheartedly for you. May your generosity be reflected in *our* lives this week, whatever the cost.

Merciful Father, **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen**

**The Lord’s Prayer** As our Saviour taught us, so we pray

***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 today 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***

**Closing prayer**

God give you grace to become the people He has called you to be, that you may live and work to his praise and glory, and the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us and remain with us always. **Amen**

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **In the name of Christ. Amen**