

Poole Bay Methodist Circuit Worship
Sunday 4TH October 2026

Rise up its Harvest Time with Deacon Gill Judge

Introductory Song: [It's Harvest Time, Praise Africa](#)

'It's Harvest Time, Praise Africa'
'Rise up, its harvest time
The fields are white, the time is right
The call is yours and mine, no time to play let's work today
The labourers are few, it's up to me and you
Look around and see the signs
Rise up its harvest time.'

Unfortunately I was not able to find a copy of the words for the whole contemporary hymn, 'It's Harvest time' sung by a choir from South Africa. But the chorus which I have read is the theme for this Harvest Festival, **'Rise up its harvest time.'**

Welcome... A very warm welcome to our Harvest Festival Worship Service. I am Deacon Gill Judge and it's been ages since I have had the joy of preparing an online service. I have to say I have enjoyed preparing the service and I pray you will enjoy the service but also be challenged by it. I would like to begin with a poem by Susan Wagstaff which, beautifully puts our service in context.

All things bright and beautiful,
All creatures great and small
We gather here at Harvest time
to celebrate them all.
We watch the nights start drawing in
And feel the autumn breeze
As branches sway from side to side
They drop their golden leaves
We plough our fields and scatter Lord
The good seed on the land
And watch it grow from seed to plants
Protected by Your loving hand
We've filled a box with lots of food
And know that when our box is gone
Each item bought and given with love
For people who have none.

Let us Pray: Loving God, we come this day to Praise You, to celebrate Your great goodness. We come with thanksgiving, joy and wonder, reminding ourselves of the richness of Your creation, and acknowledging Your faithfulness in providing for all our needs and far beyond: we gladly rejoice.

For the beauty of the seasons, the constant cycle of day and night, and the vital gifts of rain and sunshine, we praise You.

For the miracle of growth, the wonder of life, and the incredible variety of harvest, we bring You our thanksgiving.

Receive then our worship, accept our offerings, bless our celebration, and fill us thankfulness for all You have given. Lord Jesus Christ in Your name we pray from grateful hearts. **Amen.**

Hymn: StF 99 - [All creatures of our God and King](#)

- 1 All creatures of our God and King,
lift up your voice and with us sing,
alleluia, alleluia !
O burning sun with golden beam,
and silver moon with softer gleam :

*O praise him, O praise him,
alleluia, alleluia, alleluia !*
- 2 O rushing wind that is so strong,
and clouds that sail in heaven along,
O praise him, alleluia !
O rising morn, in praise rejoice ;
and lights of evening, find a voice :
- 3 O flowing water, pure and clear,
make music for your Lord to hear,
sing 'Praise him, alleluia !'
O fire, so masterful and bright,
giving to all both warmth and light :
- 4 Dear mother earth, who day by day
unfolds rich blessings on our way,
O praise him, alleluia !
The flowers and fruits that bloom and grow,
let them his glory also show :
- 5 And all who are of tender heart
forgiving others, take your part,
sing, 'Praise him, alleluia !'
All who long pain and sorrow bear,
praise God, and on him cast your care :
- 6 And now, most kind and gentle death,
waiting to hush our fading breath,
O praise him, alleluia !
You homeward lead the child of God,
and Christ the Lord the way has trod :
- 7 Let all things their creator bless,
and worship him in humbleness ;
O praise him, alleluia !
Praise, praise the Father, praise the Son,
and praise the Spirit, Three in One :

St Francis of Assisi (1182–1226) | *translated* William Henry Draper (1855–1933) (*alt.*)

Prayers of Adoration: Our prayer of adoration comes from Psalm 95:1-6

Come, let us sing for joy to the Lord; let us shout aloud to the Rock of our salvation. Let us come before him with thanksgiving and extol him with music and song. For the Lord is the great God, the great King above all gods. In his hand are the depths of the earth, and the mountain peaks belong to him. The sea is his, for he made it, and his hands formed the dry land. Come, let us bow down in worship, let us kneel before the Lord our Maker; For He is our God, our Lord and our God.

Prayers of Confession: Heavenly Father, for the times we have forgotten to love You and give You thanks for all Your goodness. Lord forgive us... **Lord forgive us and help us.**

For the times we have unkind or forgotten to love those around us. **Lord forgive us... Lord forgive us and help us.**

Gracious God, please forgive us and help us to love You with all our hearts and our neighbours as ourselves. Lord Jesus in Your name we pray with thanksgiving.

For our prayer of thanksgiving we are sing the wonderful hymn, ‘Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.’

Hymn: StF 51 - Great is thy faithfulness oh God our Father

- 1 Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
there is no shadow of turning with thee ;
thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not ;
as thou hast been thou for ever wilt be :

*Great is thy faithfulness ! Great is thy faithfulness !
Morning by morning new mercies I see ;
all I have needed thy hand hath provided.
Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.*

- 2 Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
sun, moon and stars in their courses above,
join with all nature in manifold witness
to thy great faithfulness, mercy and love :
- 3 Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide ;
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside !

Thomas O. Chisholm (1866–1960)

Let us join our prayers spoken and sung together by praying the prayer Jesus taught to His disciples...

The Lord’s Prayer *Traditional Form*

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 this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory,
For ever and ever. Amen.

Before we read our Scripture reading from **Matthew 9** let us pray for the reading, hearing of God’s Word and for its message to us.

Prayer for the Message: Living God, please teach us to read Your Word not as some record of past events but as a message that goes on being understood in new ways today, both in our lives and in the lives of others, by the grace of Christ. **Amen.**

Scripture Reading: Matthew 9:35 – 10:1 (New International Version – UK)

The workers are few: ³⁵ Jesus went through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom and healing every disease and illness. ³⁶ When he saw the crowds, he had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. ³⁷ Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. ³⁸ Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into his harvest field.'

Jesus sends out the Twelve: 10 Jesus called his twelve disciples to him and gave them authority to drive out impure spirits and to heal every disease and illness. **'This is the Word of our Lord.'** **'Thanks be to God.'**

The Message: 'Rise up! It's harvest time.'

A ministry that I have trained in is something called, 'Godly Play.' It is a ministry aimed at children and young people, but a few of the stories, especially around Easter and Christmas are definitely for *All Ages*. There are a group of stories that we tell that are *precious, very old and are a gift for everyone* and these stories are the parables that Jesus told, like the parable often told at harvest time, **'The Parable of the Sower.'** After the telling of each story the storyteller helps those listening to the story to think about the story by asking them questions like, **'I wonder what part of the story did you enjoy most?'** OR, as with the **Parable of the Sower** the storyteller would ask, **'I wonder what the farmer was doing while the seed he sowed was growing?'**

What do you think the farmer was doing while the seed he sowed was growing? I wonder if he is keeping his eye on weather, I wonder if he wasn't doing what Jesus urges His disciples then & NOW to do prior to the gathering of the **harvest** and that is to **PRAY**.

The harvest that Jesus was referring to was not wheat or corn, olives or grapes, BUT people; the multitude of people He saw as ***he went about all the cities and villages, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the gospel of the kingdom, and healing every sickness and every disease among the people.***

Our harvest as Christ's disciples today, His witnesses wherever we are is PEOPLE, people who do not yet know the Lord Jesus Christ.

As Jesus looked at the multitudes we are told by Matthew that ***He was moved with compassion for them, because they were weary and scattered, like sheep having no shepherd,*** they did not yet know ***the Good Shepherd*** described in **Psalm 23** and in the **Gospel of John chapter 10**, the Shepherd Who feeds, walks on before His sheep and protects His sheep. The Shepherd Who is with His people when life is going well AND when life isn't great, then He is with us to comfort us.

- ❖ They did not yet know ***the Good Shepherd*** Who would soon lay down His own life for the sheep
- ❖ They had not heard the Good News of the kingdom that the promised and long-awaited Messiah, Jesus Christ had finally come.

What do we see as we go about our lives, do we notice the people around us in our neighbourhoods, the supermarket, those who care for us, maybe clean for us, deliver our post, do they look weary, troubled, bewildered, despondent? Do they look lost, without a purpose, trying to live their lives apart from God Who created them for the very purpose of living **IN** relationship with Him? Are we moved with compassion for them?

Jesus realises that the multitude following Him do not know God, the Pharisees, the religious leaders of the day had failed in their mission to talk to people about God. And so, Jesus commands the disciples accompanying Him, ***to PRAY the Lord of the Harvest/pray to God to send out labourers.***

'To send out labourers' is a very mild translation of the verb, because what it should really say is, ***PRAY the Lord of the Harvest/pray to God to force out and thrust labourers into His harvest.*** Is that you and I? Do

we need a good shove to encourage us to speak about Jesus OR allow the light of Jesus within us to shine from us?

Having said that Jesus then, in **chapter 10 verse 1** does just that, He equips His disciples, instructs them AND then sends them out, *ALL His disciples*, not just the prominent disciples like Peter, James, John, Matthew and Philip, BUT also Bartholomew, Thomas and both disciples named Judas – everyone who believes in Jesus Christ is a labourer in God's **harvest**, YOU and ME!

In **Romans 10** Paul asks us 3 questions...

- ✓ Firstly, he asks, **how can people call on Jesus if they do not believe**
- ✓ Secondly, he asks, **how can they believe in Jesus if they have not heard about Him**
- ✓ And thirdly, Paul asks, **how are they to hear about Jesus if no one speaks to them about Jesus?**

I wonder how we would respond to Paul?

Mission, any mission, should be motivated by hearts that beat to the same rhythm as the heart of Jesus, **Jesus was moved with compassion**. AND the strength of mission, any mission, is prayer, both individual and corporate prayer.

A statement I heard that has remained with me said, '**Speak to God about people before speaking to people about God.**' (REPEAT) **PRAY the Lord of the Harvest to send out labourers** – we need to be speaking to God about the people we would like to come to faith in Him, our family, our friends, our neighbours, the postie. We need to look around and see the signs, notice those who may not know Jesus and 'Rise up its harvest time.'

The key to reaping a bountiful harvest, to having a successful mission is firstly to grow closer to Jesus' heart for people and to pray. Whatever else we do as disciples of Jesus Christ may we have compassion for the multitude and pray without ceasing, and then may we all speak to people about God.

We were chatting about sharing our faith on Monday evening and someone said I don't know enough about the Bible to talk to people about God. But we all know the difference knowing God has made in our lives, and that is what we need to share with people, our faith story not Abrahams or the Apostle Pauls, but our own faith story. And of course God will enable us, God will equip us, because no one loves the multitude as much as God does, for after all He gave His Son for each one of them.

So let us '**Rise up! Its harvest time.**'

'Lord Jesus Christ, teach us when to speak of You and when to remain silent, when to share our faith and when to leave things in your hands. Help us to know when each time may be, and to respond accordingly, to the glory of Your name. **Amen.**

Let us pray... Lord of the harvest, the harvest of people,
you need workers. What can I do?

I can try at home, and in my leisure time,
to see others as you see them; to welcome them as you welcome them;
to love them, as you love them.

Lord of the harvest the harvest of people, you need workers Will I do?
Amen.

As we sing or read the words of our next hymn let us think of all the things we would like to say thank you to God for.

Hymn: StF 100 - [All things bright and beautiful](#)

*All things bright and beautiful,
all creatures great and small,
all things wise and wonderful,
the Lord God made them all.*

- 1 Each little flower that opens,
each little bird that sings,
he made their glowing colours,
he made their tiny wings:
- 2 The purple heathered mountain,
the river running by,
the sunset, and the morning
that brightens up the sky:
- 3 The cold wind in the winter,
the pleasant summer sun,
the ripe fruits in the garden,
he made them every one:
- 4 He gave us eyes to see them,
and lips that we might tell
how great is God Almighty,
who has made all things well:

Cecil Frances Alexander (1818–1895)

Intercessions: Loving Lord, we pray for those who have no harvest to celebrate, no crops to gather, or labour to pursue. We pray for those who live on land that is hard to farm, scratching out a living in a hostile soil, amidst rocky ground and scorching earth. We pray for those who scratch no living from the earth, where the whole world seems to squeeze the life from their bodies. We pray for those who have left their homes, driven by war or want, to become refugees, aliens dependent on others. We pray for those without work: women and men made redundant by changing needs, children living off their wits in the streets of sprawling cities. We pray for those with no energy for praise, whose bread is bitterness and whose water is tears. We confess our part in the sin of the world and pray that you might grant us a vision of justice as well as charity and strengthen our readiness to change as well as to help; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn: STF 167 - [Colours of Day](#)

- 1 Colours of day dawn into the mind,
the sun has come up, the night is behind.
Go down in the city, into the street,
and let's give the message to the people we meet.

*So light up the fire and let the flame burn,
open the door, let Jesus return.
Take seeds of his Spirit, let the fruit grow,
tell the people of Jesus, let his love show.*

- 2 Go through the park, on into the town;
the sun still shines on; it never goes down.
The light of the world is risen again;
the people of darkness are needing a friend.

- 3 Open your eyes, look into the sky,
the darkness has come, the sun came to die.
The evening draws on, the sun disappears,
but Jesus is living, his Spirit is near.

Sue McClellan (b. 1951), John Paculabo (b. 1946) and Keith Ryecroft (b. 1949)

Before we pray our concluding prayer, I need to ask if anyone desperately would like to sing, 'We plough the fields and scatter'? Why I ask is because my first congregation in England was very upset that at our harvest festival I had not included 'We plough the fields and scatter'. So, from that time forth I offer the opportunity to sing it. The YouTube link and the words are below of Singing the Faith 130 'We plough the fields and scatter'. Maybe we can consider the 'ploughing of fields' our prayers for those who have not heard and the 'scattering' the words we speak and the kindness we show.

Hymn: StF 130 - [We plough the fields and scatter](#)

- 1 We plough the fields, and scatter
the good seed on the land,
but it is fed and watered
by God's almighty hand;
he sends the snow in winter,
the warmth to swell the grain,
the breezes and the sunshine,
and soft, refreshing rain.

*All good gifts around us
are sent from heaven above;
then thank the Lord, O thank the Lord,
for all his love.*

- 2 He only is the maker
of all things near and far;
he paints the wayside flower,
he lights the evening star;
the winds and waves obey him,
by him the birds are fed;
much more to us, his children,
he gives our daily bread.

- 3 We thank you then, O Father,
for all things bright and good:
the seed-time and the harvest,
our life, our health, our food.
Accept the gifts we offer
for all your love imparts,
and, what you most desire,
our humble, thankful hearts.

Matthias Claudius (1740–1815) | *translated by* Jane Montgomery Campbell (1817–1878)

We go out: As we go into the world, may God help us to live our lives as people of the harvest. To share and to give, to bless and to love, through Jesus, our Friend and Saviour. **Amen.**

May the Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ – the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all now and forever. Amen.