

Declaration

All good things around us are sent from heaven above. O thank the Lord, O thank the Lord for all His love.

Song: by D Zimmer, E Cash, K and K Getty, S Townend

1. You have called us out of darkest night into your glorious light, that we may sing the wonders of the risen Christ.
2. May our every breath retell the grace that broke into our strife with boundless love and deepest joy, with endless life.

May the peoples praise you, let the nations be glad!

All your blessing comes that we may praise, may praise the name of Jesus.

3. All the earth is yours and all within, each harvest is your own, and from your hand we give to you to make Christ known.
4. May the seeds of mercy grow in us for those who have not heard; may songs of praise build lives of grace to spread your word.

Refrain

5. This our holy privilege: to declare your praises and your name; to every nation, tribe and tongue your church proclaims.

Refrain

Holy, holy is the Lord Almighty; worthy, worthy is the Lamb who was slain.
Holy, holy is the Lord Almighty: all creation praise your glorious name.

Refrain

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Scripture

- Genesis 8: 20-22
- Proverbs 3:9-10
- Colossians 3:15-17

Message: Harvest Thanksgiving

The grain trucks have eventually stopped going down the main street of Laura on their way to Gladstone or Crystal Brook. Then back again. It's been so different this time – not the best harvest ever, but still so much better than last season, although prices have been down a bit.

But the hay loads are still trundling through town – a beautiful sight, bales strapped down, golden with a



Herbert Street, Laura, 25 November 2025. Photo by author.

Harvest Thanksgiving

continual stream of chaff floating behind and landing on footpaths and patios, waiting to be swept up or blown away.



Bales ready for transport to China via Balaklava, November 2025. Photo by author.

We are told in Scripture that “while the earth remains, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease.” That’s reassuring. So many voices telling us otherwise. But God has spoken. We can rest in that.

Harvest Thanksgiving used to be a regular feature of many churches up until about 50 years ago. Tables would be set up next to the communion rail and covered in white

tablecloths the day before on Saturday. Designated farmers would bring in a few sheaves of grain which were strategically distributed around. Families would bring a variety of homegrown fruit and vegetables, including beautiful pumpkins of various colours, shapes and sizes, preserves, jams and even specially made cakes and biscuits and scones for the occasion. And jugs of water. Hardly a single shop item would be seen – it would have been so out of place, almost improper. The women would place the items strategically to show them off at their best, but there was often so much that it was inevitable that some would get hidden behind or beneath. Items would have to go on the floor for lack of table space. Grapes would be overflowing their bowls. Peaches and nectarines. Eggs, laid just the day before, in wicker baskets. Loaves of bread.

Then Sunday and the morning service would start. “We plough the fields and scatter the good seed on the land”. Of course for the city churches that always seemed a bit odd to me, but we could always sing on behalf of the farmers. Besides, I thought, we have paddocks, not fields! Then “All good gifts around us are sent from heaven above. Then thank the Lord. O thank the Lord for all his love.” You remember it well. There was even a whole section in that Hymn Book dedicated to “Harvest and Flower Services”. Appropriate Bible Readings and prayers on topic. The choir would sing a specially prepared Harvest anthem. And then “Come ye thankful people come, raise the song of harvest home ... Even so, Lord, quickly come ... come with all thy angels, come!” Then a sermon on John 4:35 (what else!) “Look, I tell you, lift up your eyes, and see that the fields are white for harvest.” Then finishing with “Yes God is good ... For all Thy gifts we bless Thee Lord.” Everything was left there because there was the evening service still to come. Then Monday it would all be packed into



Harvest Thanksgiving at The Shed, St Agnes 2025

Harvest Thanksgiving

cars and taken to the local children's home or care home or distributed to various families that appreciated the surfeit of fresh food.

Then just last Sunday an announcement was made at my own church here in Laura that next Sunday (15 February 26) was to be a Harvest Thanksgiving service. How good!

Maybe it's happening at your church too, or in your town, or nearby. If not, there's always next year. Or maybe next week even!

The emphasis of course was, and is, Gratitude. Thanksgiving. Joy. Delight. Appreciation. And it all looked so wonderful – the colour the variety, the sense of occasion. They were happy services, with an overriding sense of abundance and the goodness of God.

So maybe you have fruit trees, or tomato bushes still fruiting. Are the Lebanese cucumbers finished yet? Do you have a friend with a peach tree? Fresh with ice-cream and cream!

We are blessed with much. Our Lord expects us to be thankful for the good things we have and to use the opportunity that harvest time gives us to be liberal in giving.

Amen.

Prayer for suffering Christians in Eritrea (*from Barnabas Prayer 15/2/26*)

Lord Jesus, protect Your followers in Eritrea, where Christian persecution is among the worst in the world. Give strength to the believers who are arrested and imprisoned in inhumane and torturous conditions, held without charge or trial, never knowing when, or if, they will be freed. Grant them the courage and strength of faith to withstand this brutal treatment. Thank You for the steadfastness of their trust in You, as so many of them cling to their faith through their suffering. Protect those who resist the compulsory and indefinite military conscription, as they risk so much by refusing to fight.

We ask all this in Your precious Name.

Song: *by WH Gill MHB 970 T. Peel Castle* ([listen online here](#))

1. Hear us, O Lord, from heaven Thy dwelling-place:
Like them of old, in vain we toil all night,
Unless with us Thou go, who art the Light;
Come then, O Lord, that we may see Thy face.
2. Thou, Lord, dost rule the raging of the sea,
When loud the storm and furious is the gale:
Strong is Thine arm; our little barques are frail:
Send us Thy help; remember Galilee.
3. Our wives and children we commend to Thee:
For them we plough the land and plough the deep;
For them by day the golden corn we reap,
By night the silver harvest of the sea.

Harvest Thanksgiving

4. We thank Thee, Lord, for sunshine, dew, and rain,
Broadcast from heaven by Thine almighty hand
Source of all life, unnumbered as the sand
Bird, beast, and fish, herb, fruit, and golden grain.
5. Sow in our hearts the seeds of Thy dear love,
That we may reap contentment, joy, and peace;
And when at last our earthly labours cease,
Grant us to join Thy harvest home above.

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Benediction:

Now may the God of peace, who by the blood of the eternal covenant brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good so that you may do his will, working in you that which is pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and ever.

Amen.

This service was prepared by Warren Mack for HopeNet SA