

Wooler United Reformed Church

"Here to worship God and to serve Him in the community"



Harvest Thoughts by Sue Armstrong

We all have our own ideas, associations and memories of what Harvest means to us personally. For me, I am always reminded of the presentation we gave in the English and Drama department at the end of our course at St Hild's College Durham. As part of our graduation show, we focussed on presenting the spiritual aspects of the natural world through words, poetry, music and dance. This amazing poem by Gerard Manley Hopkins was my favourite piece.

Hurrahing in Harvest

Summer ends now: now, barbarous in beauty, the stooks rise
Around; up above, what wind-walks! What lovely behaviour
Of silk-sack clouds! has wilder, wilful-wavier
Meal-drift moulded ever and melted across skies?
I walk, I lift up, I lift up heart, eyes,
Down all that glory in the heavens to glean our Saviour;
And eyes, heart, what looks, what lips yet gave you a
Rapturous love's greeting of realer, of rounder replies?
And the azurous hung hills are his world-wielding shoulder
Majestic - as a stallion stalwart, very-violet-sweet!
These things, these things were here and but the beholder
Wanting; which two when they once meet
The heart rears wings bold and bolder
And hurls for him, O half hurls earth for him off under his feet.

The theme of *Hurrahing in Harvest* is an experience of union with Christ as we meet with Him, alive and vividly present in the natural world. The idea of Nature as an outward and visible expression of the presence of Christ is found in the New Testament where Christ is described as 'the Son who is the radiance of his Father's splendour and the full expression of his being; all creation depends for its support on his enabling word (Hebrews 1:3)

In the energy and radiance of a golden day at the end of summer, with the season turning to Autumn, the poet Hopkins meets his Christ whose fire, beauty and energy suffuse all created forms. Christ is seen by the poet as embodied in the power and beauty of the hills, in the proud stallion and the modest violet. The full power and beauty of a scene of Nature are released most fully when a human witness arrives there; then this power and beauty lends wings to the human heart which almost leaves behind earthly existence and soars upwards to the sky in a mood of ecstasy and rapture. I think we would all strongly identify with this glowing enthusiasm and the upsurge of joy we feel when we see and experience Christ manifested in the natural world around us here in this glorious countryside.

But what does this special time Harvest mean to us in the ever turning rhythm of the seasons? Not as just an agricultural event, or a date in the church calendar, but something that has meaning and resonance in our life. A time to gather in - but what would we want to gather? A time to store up - all the memories and experiences of the year so far. A time to prepare and look ahead to winter? Perhaps a time to reflect back and give thanks. To consider taking our cue from the natural wisdom of the seasons and confront things in our lives that need to change or be laid down. What important lessons did fruitful, sunny spring and summer teach you that you might want to harvest and store up for the darker months ahead? A lot for each one of us to consider and reflect on there!



On Sunday, 7th July, people from all over Glendale and beyond, gathered at the Cuddystone Hall in the glorious College Valley for the annual ecumenical service. Led by Rev Suzanne Cooke, we sang our hearts out, listened to some beautiful poetry and readings and were challenged by a powerful video reflection by Rev Tom Wright, on realising that, in God's redemptive plan for humankind when, at the last, there will be a new heaven and earth (Revelations), we all have a part to play here and now, in the present and what we do today will contribute to that great plan.

On Sunday, 1st September, we will have great delight in welcoming seven folk to membership of Cheviot Street. They are Robert and Sue (long-time supporters of this church), Maurice and Frances, Helen, and Kevin and Rebecca (who have all joined us from Erskine, Belford). It's been wonderful to have them join us in fellowship and become part of the Wooler family!





The Reverend Trevor Jamison is the minister at St Columba's United Reformed Church, North Shields and is coming to preach in Wooler on Sunday, 8th September. Also, 25% of his time is given to work as Northern Synod "Green Apostle". In this role Trevor encourages congregations within the Synod to make caring for God's creation an integral part of their life and witness. Among other things he commends the Eco Church scheme as a

tool to help congregations develop their spiritual practices, their decision making, and their community engagement with regard to ecological issues. Prior to coming to Northern Synod in June 2018, Trevor was the Environmental Chaplain for Eco-Congregation Scotland, working ecumenically across Scotland. Between 2001 and 2006 he was Adult Education Officer for Northern Synod. During that time he visited Wooler URC, once to run a session for people called upon to preside at communion, and once to lead worship. On the latter occasion, some members of the congregation were rumoured to have stayed at home to watch TV instead, in the hope of seeing Jason Askew running in the London marathon; but Trevor's a very forgiving person!



The transformation of the 'Back Room' into the Wooler Warm Hub is moving along apace and it's exciting to see it develop day by day. The official 'Opening' will be on Saturday, 26th October with an Open House in the afternoon with refreshments served and a concert in the evening featuring local musicians. Further details to be announced.



Our Annual Harvest Festival weekend is on Saturday, 12th and Sunday 13th October. Volunteers are welcomed to help decorate the church on the Saturday. If you can help, it would be really appreciated, and great fun working together as a team. If you can help, please see Jean Armstrong. Our Harvest Supper will be on the Saturday evening, starting at 6.30pm, in the Glendale Hall. Supper will be provided, as usual. Please bring your own cutlery. Entertainment will be on offer and it would be really lovely to have some new people taking part so if you're up for a song, a poem, a joke, anything really, please have a word with either Patrick or Paulette. It's all very relaxed so don't worry about looking silly - Patrick and I do it all the time!!! On the Sunday, we will be welcoming Rev Harold Stuteley from Stamfordham, who will be leading our morning worship. Please note that, this year, there will be NO evening service.

Prayer Corner: Join with us in praying for people living in the following streets.

Week beginning:

- 1st September - Cottage Road & South Road
- 8th September - Brewery Road, Bridgend Park & Riverside
- 15th September - Ryecroft Way & Magdalene Court
- 6th October - Station Road & Berwick Road
- 13th October - Fenton Drive & Whitsun View
- 20th October - Victoria Road & Queen's Road
- 27th October - Fiveacres & Glendale Road



Even though, for whatever reason, you maybe unable to join us in worship, we still

On Saturday, 5th October, Wooler URC will be welcoming people from all over the North East as we hold the next session of Synod in our church. All are welcome but only Synod representatives can vote. The day begins at 10am, with people gathering for coffee before the opening act of worship. Then down to business before breaking for lunch, finishing with another short act of worship.

Sunday morning service leaders:

- 1st Sept - Rev Mary Taylor (Communion)
- 8th Sept - Rev Trevor Jamison
- 15th Sept - Rev Bob Jones
- 22nd Sept - Rev Bill Eugster
- 29th Sept - Rev Joan Grindrod-Helms
- 6th October - Rev Jane Rowell
- 13th October - Rev Harold Stuteley
- 20th October - Patrick Sheard
- 27th October - Warm Hub Team

Saturday Coffee mornings

- 10am in the Glendale Hall
- 7th September - Ilderton Hall
- 14th Sept - Eglington & Old Bewick churches
- 21st September - Wooler Football Club
- 28th September - Nepal Leprosy
- 5th October - NO coffee morning (Synod)
- 12th October - Cubs & Beavers
- 19th October - Kirknewton Church
- 26th October - Christmas Lights

