

NEWSLETTER

**for the Churches of St Arvans, St Mary, Penterry,
St Deiniol, Itton, St James, Devauden & Holy Cross, Kilgwrrwg
forming part of the Severn Wye Ministry Area**

IMPORTANT - PLEASE NOTE

St Arvan's Church is open during the day both for worship and private prayer,
Our live-streamed services are as follows: Sunday Eucharist at 10. a.m.,
They can be accessed on the St Arvans Parish Group page on Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/vicaragecello1/>
and are available to watch at any time
The St Arvans Parish website can be found here:
<http://www.starvanschurch.org.uk/>

Please help to keep us informed of anyone who is in need or is isolated over the next weeks and months, and anyone in need of our prayer and support
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12th October 2025 The Seventeenth Sunday after Trinity Harvest Thanksgiving at St Arvans

The Collect

Eternal God, you crown the year with your goodness and you give us the fruits of the earth in their season: grant that we may use them to your glory, for the relief of those in need and for our own well-being; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **AMEN**

A reading from the book Deuteronomy

Moses spoke to the people, saying: When you have come into the land that the LORD your God is giving you as an inheritance to possess, and you possess it, and settle in it, you shall take some of the first of all the fruit of the ground, which you harvest from the land that the LORD

your God is giving you, and you shall put it in a basket and go to the place that the LORD your God will choose as a dwelling for his name. You shall go to the priest who is in office at that time, and say to him, 'Today I declare to the LORD your God that I have come into the land that the LORD swore to our ancestors to give us.' When the priest takes the basket from your hand and sets it down before the altar of the LORD your God, you shall make this response before the LORD your God: 'A wandering Aramean was my ancestor; he went down into Egypt and lived there as an alien, few in number, and there he became a great nation, mighty and populous. When the Egyptians treated us harshly and afflicted us, by imposing hard labour on us, we cried to the LORD, the God of our ancestors; the LORD heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. The LORD brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm, with a terrifying display of power, and with signs and wonders; and he brought us into this place and gave us this land, a land flowing with milk and honey. So now I bring the first of the fruit of the ground that you, O LORD, have given me.' You shall set it down before the LORD your God and bow down before the LORD your God. Then you, together with the Levites and the aliens who reside among you, shall celebrate with all the bounty that the LORD your God has given to you and to your house.

[26; 1 - 11]

*Reader/ This is the Word of the Lord
Response / **Thanks be to God***

Psalm 100

**R/ Give thanks to the Lord
and call upon his name**

O be joyful in the Lord, all the earth;
serve the Lord with gladness
and come before his presence
with a song.
Know that the Lord is God;
it is he that has made us and we are his;

we are his people and the sheep
of his pasture.

**R/ Give thanks to the Lord
and call upon his name**

Enter his gates with thanksgiving
and his courts with praise;
give thanks to him and bless his name.
For the Lord is gracious;
his steadfast love is everlasting,
and his faithfulness endures from
generation to generation.

A reading from the letter of St Paul to the Philippians [4; 4 - 9]

Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

*Reader/ This is the Word of the Lord
Response / **Thanks be to God***

Gradual hymn

Alleluia, alleluia!
Those who are sowing in tears
will sing when they reap.
Alleluia!

The Lord be with you:
And also with you

Listen to the Gospel of Christ
according to St. John

Glory to you, O Lord

When they found Jesus on the other side of the sea, the crowd said to him, 'Rabbi, when did you come here?' Jesus answered them, 'Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal.' Then they said to Jesus, 'What must we do to perform the works of God?' Jesus answered them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.' So they said to him, 'What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, "He gave them bread from heaven to eat." Then Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.' They said to him, 'Sir, give us this bread always.' Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.'

[6; 25 - 35]

This is the Gospel of the Lord
R/ Praise to you, O Christ.

Ordinary time readings for today are:
2 Kings 5.1-3, 7-17; Psalm 111
2 Timothy 2.8-15; St Luke 17.11-19

For Your Prayers

Thanksgiving for the harvest; for all who earn their living on the land or the sea.
All pilgrims – especially for Fr Philip as he walks to Rome, and all who journey to Santiago de Compostela and all the holy places of the faith.
The people of Gaza, & Israel, & for lasting peace in the Middle East
For wisdom, restraint and a desire for peace among the nations of the world.
The government & people of Ukraine

and a just and peaceful end to Russia's war of aggression there.
All who are caught up in war or conflict
All those without adequate food or shelter
Those who suffer as a result of the climate emergency & for responsible stewardship of our planet
For compassion and responsibility in those elected to govern us.
For migrants & refugees, and all forced to flee from their homelands

For the Church:

For the bishops of the Church:
Cherry, Bishop of Monmouth, & Archbishop of Wales; Philip, Episcopal Visitor of the Society of the Holy Cross in Wales, & for all who hold and teach the Catholic faith that comes to us from the Apostles.
All bishops, priests and deacons and all baptised Christians
For the reunion of all Christians:
for Pope Leo, for Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomew, & for the leaders of the Reformed traditions
For the Severn Wye Ministry Area, for its priests, licensed lay ministers and all its people.

For the Sick & those in need:

Roy Staples, Ralph Hamilton, Sylvia Jackson; The Revd Helen Rodwell; Elisabeth; Anne-Louise; Mary; Peter; Margaret; Althea; Margi Osborne, Ken Smith

For the Departed:

The recently departed: Marilyn Humphries; our own departed relatives & friends, and those whose anniversaries of death fall at this time: Doris Collard; Mady Gerrard; Lewis Webster

A Prayer of Spiritual Communion

My Jesus, I believe that you are in the Blessed Sacrament.
I love you above all things, and I long for you in my soul.
Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart.
As though you have already come, I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.
(The Confraternity of the Blessed Sacrament)

The Jereboam Interview

We continue our series of extracts from the Jerusalem and Galilee Gazette, an imaginary first-century newspaper. Week by week, the correspondent Jereboam interviews people whose lives have been affected in some way by Jesus Christ and his teaching

This week's Jereboam is based on the Gospel for 17th Sunday after Trinity
St Luke 17.11-19

Enoch

Jereboam: This must be a momentous occasion for you, Enoch. It's not every day that you celebrate your eldest child's wedding, is it?

Enoch: I guess not.

Jereboam: You'll have been busy with all the preparations.

Enoch: There's certainly been plenty to do, but actually the hardest thing was the special challenge I set myself. I decided that I had to think of some special piece of advice to give my son, something I'd learnt during twenty-five years of married life. Eventually I did come up with something, although it was a bit of a struggle. You see, there wasn't much advice left to give, in a sense. All our children have heard us quoting pretty well every word we ever heard Jesus say.

Jereboam: But you did come up with some gem of your own in the end...

Enoch: I don't know whether it really counts as a gem – see what you think: I said that marriage has taught me not only how to give, which everybody tells you, but also how to receive...how to appreciate what's being given to you.

Jereboam: I don't remember Jesus ever mentioning marriage in that way

Enoch: I don't remember it either, but it does seem to fit in easily enough with his teaching. Think of that time he cured those ten lepers. There was one – the Samaritan – who came back to

give thanks for the healing, but Jesus was disappointed that the other nine had not done the same. He wanted them to recognise what they had received and to respond by offering thanks. So – going back to my own experience -- as I gradually learnt to appreciate what my wife gave me, I began to understand better all the blessings that we receive from God. Then I was able to thank Him more whole-heartedly for them.

Jereboam: But surely you don't have to be married to learn that sort of awareness.

Enoch: No, of course not, but I imagine that my experience will be shared by many married people.

Jereboam: Most probably, yes. Thank you, Enoch; you'd better get back to the wedding-feast.

TODAY

The lectionary readings for Sunday give us the story about Jesus healing ten lepers and only one of them coming back to give thanks, and that one was the foreigner. It reminds us of the importance of gratitude.

Wednesday is the feast day of Saint Teresa of Avila, Friday that of is the Memorial of Saint Ignatius of Antioch, and on Saturday the Feast of Saint Luke, Evangelist.

In the weekday eucharistic readings we begin St Paul's Letter to the Romans this week. After a powerful introduction, Paul writes to this community in Rome about God's righteousness (mercy or kindness) and justification (making us holy or one with God) which comes to us, not through the law but through faith in Jesus.

Each day we move through St Luke's gospel as people gather around Jesus. He declines to give a sign other than the sign of Jonah. At a Pharisee's house Jesus calls for authenticity: "give alms and everything will be clean for you." He challenges the religious practices of the Pharisees which miss the heart of fidelity to God and mercy toward others. Jesus tries to get them to see that, while they honor the prophets, they are no better

than their ancestors who ignored and killed the prophets. Instead of hearing him, the religious leaders plot to trap Jesus. Warning his disciples about imitating religious hypocrisy, Jesus tells them not to be afraid, even of death, but to only fear losing their souls. Acknowledging Jesus is enough to save us. When we make our defense of our faith and way of life, the Holy Spirit will teach us what to say.

Next Sunday, through the parable of the persistent widow wearing down the unjust judge, Jesus urges us to have faith. "Will not God then secure the rights of his chosen ones who call out to him day and night? Will he be slow to answer them?"

A Homily for Harvest Thanksgiving

+ Everyone likes a "traditional" harvest festival; we can come along and give thanks for the safe gathering-in of the harvest in a way that our ancestors have from time immemorial. Except, of course we're not. What we regard as the traditional harvest thanksgiving is largely a development of the mid to late Victorian era, celebrated first of all by a rather eccentric priest called R.S. Hawker on the isolated Atlantic coast of Cornwall. Like lots of Victorian things in our culture it lays claim to an antiquity it doesn't really possess, a little but like the furniture our parents and grandparents wouldn't give houseroom to and which now fills a considerable part of antique and bric a bric shops throughout western Europe, some of it good, some of it downright awful, most of it somewhere in between - all of it overpriced. The Victorians were experts in inventing history or to put it more charitably, breathing new life into it. But so it is with lots of things we now regard as being "traditional" - not always that old, certainly in the context of two thousand years. It's odd that harvest was never really celebrated liturgically in the Christian Church before that, there are much older forms of prayer asking for fine weather and for the blessing of the growing crops. Religious festivals were highly significant for the agricultural year, not least in terms of tenancies and the payment of rent & tithes - Lady Day and Michaelmas spring to mind immediately. But the harvest itself was somehow taken for granted or left for more riotous secular

celebrations! It's very odd, particularly given the Old Testament's various celebrations of harvest time, that the Church never followed through on that. Perhaps this in some way reflected the predominantly urban nature of the Church in the first few centuries of its life; the Christian Faith didn't make substantial inroads into the countryside until quite a bit later. It's no co-incidence that the word "pagan" used of a non-believer has its origins in the Latin word "paganus" meaning simply and non-judgementally a countryman, just someone who lives in the countryside.

So the "traditional" harvest festival in historical terms is really rather a new phenomenon, its huge popularity over the last hundred and fifty years or so, even in the towns & cities probably has a lot to do with a nostalgic yearning for something important which people felt had been lost, or which in danger of being lost. Yet it certainly struck a chord and rapidly became a part of British folk religion, one of the most popular celebrations of the year. And to a certain extent it still is. But whether the harvest thanksgiving is ancient in its origins or really something relatively new doesn't really matter, I suppose, if it's able to give us a very different angle on a eternal truth. Harvest is a bit like that in that it re-iterates the Christian theology of creation and redemption and it also emphasises in the form of a popular celebration the human race's stewardship of the natural world in a way which had not been done before. So in many ways harvest thanksgiving has some strikingly "modern" themes. It's fundamentally a communal celebration, it doesn't make sense to speak of harvest in an individualistic sense; it celebrates the united effort and co-operation of an entire community. In so doing it emphasises the common needs of everyone from the richest to the poorest.

It also strikes a chord with our present day concern for the natural environment which our technological achievements have thrown off-balance. Harvest speaks to us about responsible stewardship of the divinely-created world in which we live, about our own responsibility to care for the patch of earth where we have been put for a purpose and a reason. The universe springs from the hands of the living God, one modern Greek author has written and our concern for the world around us and

its future is tied up with our belief in the mystery of God taking the natural substance of human flesh upon himself and becoming a human being and is tied up with the *sacramental* principle which runs through Christian thought of God taking the ordinary physical stuff of the world and using it as a channel of his grace.

The human race isn't meant to be just the tamer and the exploiter of the natural world but to strive towards a true stewardship, living in harmony with creation, not set against it. created order, given to us as a sacred trust by the God who creates and sustains everything. It's important when we celebrate harvest that this celebration is really a thanksgiving not just for the natural processes of crops coming to fruition and food being brought to our tables, but a celebration of the goodness of God, the God who sends his Son into the world to free us from sin and alienation, to bring us back into union with him. The true harvest is what we could call in traditional language the harvest of souls.

And that's what harvest witnesses to, not just to the glories of nature. Nature is wonderful, glorious, beautiful, it gives us more than a hint of the design behind the universe in which we live. But we shouldn't be sentimental and romanticise it; it's deeply ambiguous and it's not always on our side. I wouldn't place my trust in it. Nature is a beautiful spring morning, a memorable sunset, but it's also what happens to the hedgehog we see in the middle of the road, what happens to the hen when the fox gets into the chicken run, when we look at the news and see what enormities human nature is capable of.

Of course, if we are able to look at it from the right perspective, nature speaks to us of what is beyond it, the design (and therefore the designer) behind the creation of the universe, the eternal reality of the love of God.

Harvest speaks to us of continuity and change. The seasons roll around – we more or less know what to expect, even at a time of increasingly obvious climate crisis, but it's also a time when nature tends to point beyond itself by the fragility of its passing beauty. This harvest season doesn't last long, the season changes quickly – it's already starting to. Winter is coming, as they say.

Nature itself shows us that the sleep of winter only hides a living power beneath the soil or the covering of snow, which will show itself to those who have the patience to wait. The impermanence of our lives here only points to a glorious future in the presence of God. But only if we have faith, if we have hope, if we have love.

But here we are just passing through, we are in the world but we are not of the world, and the world is not ours to do with precisely as we want. And that's both an extremely ancient and a very modern way of looking at things. Harvest thanksgiving is like that. It was a good thing the Victorians reinvented it. +

SERVICES IN OUR CHURCHES

TODAY

Trinity 17 12th October 2025

10 a.m. Harvest Thanksgiving
Sung Eucharist
at St Arvan's

11.30 a.m. Liturgy of the Word
at St Deiniol's, Itton.

NEXT SUNDAY

Trinity 18 19th October 2025

10 a.m. Sung Eucharist
at St Arvan's

11.30 a.m. Harvest Thanksgiving
at Holy Cross, Kilgerrig
(non-eucharistic)

Readings:
Genesis 32.22-31
Psalm 121
2 Timothy 3.14 - 4.5
St Luke 18.1-8

Fr Michael's day off is Monday.

For all services in the wider Ministry Area
please see www.severnwyema.co.uk

**'Jazz in the Arv' with
The Fraser Smith Quartet
Friday 21st November 7 p.m.
St Arvans Church**

**Tickets £20
Bar and raffle**

Harvest Thanksgiving Appeal St Arvans Church.

On Sunday 12th October we hold our Harvest Festival in St Arvans.

As usual we like to have a contemporary appeal at the same time, to mark that we have plenty and to share with others.

The days of apples, pears and wheat sheafs are gone, but in the past we have donated to the local hospitals and food banks.

This year I thought we could collect CHOCOLATE

The homeless refugees and food banks like to give out chocolate bars at Christmas time so please can we all bring a bar of chocolate to church throughout October.

These will be collected in early November and taken to the appropriate refugees etc for distribution. CUT OFF DATE FOR COLLECTION FROM CHURCH : SUNDAY 16TH NOVEMBER (This will give Verena time to get them to their destination). Thank you all in anticipation BOX IN BACK OF THE CHURCH AS USUAL.

The Ministry Area Prayer Group

meets every Thursday 7.45pm – 9pm
4th September St. Andoenu, Mounon
For further details
email david@bedlambeds.com

16th October Ann Cooke's house,
Kilgerrig (please ask David for directions)
23rd October and onwards The Cedars

St Arvans Tea and Chat

November 8th and usually every second Saturday of the month
Childrens activity table

For assistance or a lift
please ring Diane on 628084