

# Vicar's Pastoral Letter

**Date :** October 2008  
**Author :** Rev. Peter Holzapfel, St. Mary's Church, Kempsey, Worcester.  
**Subject :** Harvest.

Dear Friends,

We've certainly got an exciting month ahead with new ventures starting and great opportunities to enjoy ourselves as well as finding out more about what God has done for us through Jesus. There is the start of another Alpha Course on Tuesday evenings (for more information and to sign up for the course please give Chris & Carole Cooke a ring on 820838) and the Confirmation Course (ring Peter on 820202) as well as the start of an after school club at Kempsey Primary School with exciting and enjoyable activities on offer and the opportunity for the children to share with us and their families what they have been doing on the first family services in the month at St. Mary's Church.

Then, of course, it's Harvest Time with Harvest Festival Services and not one, but two, chances to join in with a Harvest Supper: the first is The Traditional Harvest Supper at Severn Stoke Village Hall on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October at 7:30pm (Tickets available from Church Wardens or from John Henderson (371218) or give Peter a ring on 80202) and the second is on Friday 31<sup>st</sup> October at 7:00pm at Kempsey School when there will be a Barn Dance and Harvest Supper for all the family with something for everyone (Tickets available from Kempsey Primary School and Church Wardens, John Henderson or by giving Peter a ring and leaving a message).

There are a couple of things I want to emphasise about these and all our activities at St. Mary's and St. Denys'. The first is that they're intended to be fun and enjoyable whether it's studying the Bible, dancing a jig or partaking in a delicious supper. The Christian faith is about JOY with a capital J and sometimes we can forget this. How many of you have been put off Christianity and attending church worship because you were made to go in the past and it was all so blooming miserable? Well, we're doing all we can to put that right.

The second is that all our activities are for EVERYONE throughout our parishes and communities and that certainly includes you. They say that talking to yourself is the first sign of madness and if those who are trying to walk in The Way of Jesus talk only to each other then it's certainly the first sign of decline. OUR CHURCHES ARE YOUR CHURCHES and not the private domain of just a few people. The Church is not a private club and so I would invite all of you to come and make it your own.

And the third thing is, Yes, I do have an ulterior motive in that I hope and pray that through participation in any of our events and activities you will come to know who Jesus was and is and the difference He can make to your life if you let Him become part of your life: in short, I would like you to become a follower of Jesus. If you aren't already or if you reject the claims of Christianity then I certainly won't think any less of you or be any less there for you because it's the person that matters to me and not what they believe or don't believe. But knowing Jesus as my Saviour and Friend has made all the difference to my life and I would like it to make a difference to yours. After all, I'd be a pretty funny minister if I didn't look for these things!

And so we look forward to Harvest with all of its celebrations and thanksgivings and, as we do so, let's all remember that we ourselves are part of God's Harvest Field because to know God as your loving Heavenly Father is part of your birthright and to know Jesus as your Lord and Friend is what God wants for everyone. God loves everyone equally whoever they are and no matter what they believe or don't believe and so if we reject His offer of love then it is us who are turning away from Him and not the other way around. Even then God never stops loving you and longs that one day you will turn round and recognise Him and embrace Him as your Heavenly Father. You and I are part of that beautiful golden Harvest Field and God wants to wrap us round with His warm and tender love.

Jesus said that the Harvest is ripe but the labourers are few and invited us to ask Him to send more workers into His Harvest Field. So why not join? Is your life so blissfully happy and content that you can afford not to and turn your back on such a generous and wonderful offer? Your life will be more complete and happy if you do for let's remember that God made us to know Him and enjoy Him and to gather to ourselves a rich Harvest of Love.

God Bless you.....ALL AND EACH OF YOU.

*Peter*

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