

“GOD’S HARVEST: OUR THANKSGIVING”

(Adapted from Ruth’s Harvest: Worship resources for Harvest, by Tim Aldred, Wild Goose Publications/ www.ionabooks.com)

It is harvest time. As sense of completion enwraps the earth and invites us to gather in and give thanks. In this season of Covid and autumn changes, we see empty spaces where something beautiful once lived. One by one the leaves let go, and we see the emptiness of trees. One by one people are hospitalized and leave empty places in our lives. These are part of life’s lessons – when certain things fall away, there are other things that can be seen more clearly. We need each other to gather the harvest and to welcome the next season.

When seasons change, we are reminded of the changes that take place in our lives. Autumn will not stay forever. It will soon fall into winter. As one season comes another leaves. It is the movement of life into death and into life again. It is the season of God’s harvest and the time of our thanksgiving.

OPENING PRAYER

Holy Spirit of God, we welcome you among us.

As we celebrate your harvest and pray for your justice, we ask you to bring your peace.

Come into the quiet place inside us, that in the stillness we may be at one with you. Amen.

(silent pause)

As we pause for a quiet moment, our lives are filled with loss and sadness, responsibilities and demands.

Lord, release us from the stress in our lives.

Free us to live and grow in your light.

A BIBLE READING Ruth 1:8-18

It is harvest time, and the story of Ruth is a Harvest story.

It is harvest time, and what does that mean for you?

What is God’s harvest and how do you show your thanks?

(pause for your reflection)

A PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

(lift your prayers of thanksgiving...)

Lord of the harvest, just as Ruth found home with Naomi and Boaz, we pray for all who – grow the world’s food, stitch the world’s clothes, mine the world’s metals, and yet remain homeless...

We ask you for justice –

in food and farming, in trade and finance,

in human rights, in government and law,

for the children, the women and men, for the world and its harvest...

We pray for all creation.
We ask for fairness in all places,
that all may know your harvest of justice and peace...
We pray for the world's struggles to combat a deadly virus, for health workers and their families, for those in our lives and our churches, for our world, we lift our prayers to you...
These are our prayers. This is your harvest. Show us how to lead your people. Show us how to be your people. Amen.

SONG *"Come, Ye Thankful People Come"* **UMH 694**
<https://youtu.be/e1VNP6HtCXY>

BLESSING
May our love for God become ever deeper and wider.
May the busyness of our lives and the cares of our hearts
give way to the light of God.
May God's harvest be our thanksgiving.