

Harvest Festival/Assembly on Environment/COP 26



Welcome

Welcome to our Harvest assembly. Harvest has been celebrated ever since human beings first planted seeds, cut heads of grain and stored them to use through the times of scarcity. It is a time to say **thank you** to God for our food.

Reading 1 (7 children)

1. Let us praise God for potatoes and pasta, crumbly cheese and juicy tomatoes
2. Let us praise God for the smell of freshly baked bread, for butter and honey, jam and cream
3. Let us praise God for colourful carrots and bendy bananas, peppers and peanuts and pears
4. Let us praise God for sizzling sausages and bacon butties, for crunchy apples and seedless grapes
5. Let us praise God for milk and for juice, for fish and for chips

6. Let us praise God for chocolate and for biscuits, for cornflakes and toast
7. Let us praise God for food, glorious food and those who provide it

Harvest is a time to say thank you for the wonderful world that God has given us. But it is also **a time to look carefully at our world and how we are taking care of it.**

Adapted from Prayers of Praise from *'Harvest Resources: for use with Children or Young People'* produced by **The Arthur Rank Centre**: <https://arthurrankcentre.org.uk/resources/harvest-resources-children-young-people/>.

Reading 2 (2 children)

In the beginning God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. And God saw that it was good.

Now the world's resources are wasted, as lights are left on when no one is in a room and energy is wasted. People are beginning to realise that is not good.

In the beginning God said, "Let there be a sky and let it divide the waters that are below from the waters that are above the sky." And God saw that it was good.

Now air is polluted and dirty as fumes from cars and factories are released into the air.

Our seas are polluted with plastic and chemicals. People are beginning to realise that is not good

In the beginning God said, "Let dry land appear" And God saw that it was good.

Now land has been over farmed, pesticides have killed bees and the land is dry from drought which causes soil erosion. People are beginning to realise that is not good.

In the beginning God said, "Let plants and trees grow from the earth. And God saw that it was good.

Now too many trees have been chopped down and this has affected the health of our world. Forests absorb huge amounts of **carbon dioxide** – another greenhouse gas – from the air, and release oxygen back into it People are beginning to realise that deforestation is not good.

In the beginning God said, "Let there be two great lights, the sun and the moon. God made the stars also and placed them in the heavens to throw light upon the earth. And God saw that it was good.

Now earth is warming. This is not the sun's fault; the behaviour of human beings has caused this to happen. In fact, many of the warmest years on record have happened in the past 20 years. People are beginning to realise that is not good.

In the beginning God said, "Let birds fly above the earth and in the sky. Let there be fish all kinds of living creatures in the water. And God saw that it was good.

Now people have overfished and caught more fish faster than the fish can breed. This means there are fewer and fewer fish in our oceans. People are beginning to realise that this is not good.

In the beginning God said, "Bring forth all kinds of living creatures, cattle and creeping things and wild beasts."

Now many creatures have become extinct and have disappeared. People are beginning to realise that is not good.

In the beginning God said, "Let us make a man and woman.' Let him rule over the fish in the sea, the birds of the sky, the cattle, the wild beasts and all the living things that crawl upon the ground. And God saw that it was good.

Now people have ruled over creation for thousands of years. Climate change won't just affect animals, it's already having an impact on people, too. Most affected are some of the people who grow the food we eat every day. Farming communities, especially in developing countries, are facing higher temperatures, increased rain, floods and droughts. People are beginning to realise that this is not good.

In the beginning when God had finished the work, he rested from all his work.

Now people cannot rest, as time is running out to change our behaviour and save our wonderful world. We have changed our world for the worse, now we need to change our world for the better.

Video Clip

1m 58 second message from David Attenborough (made Jan 2021):
<https://youtu.be/oQnDVqGlv4s>



Reading 3 – COP26 (Older pupil & younger pupil)

In November 2021 in Glasgow there will be an important meeting known as COP26.

What does COP stand for?

COP stands for 'conference of parties.'

Why is it called COP26?

It is the 26th time they have met.

Why are they meeting?

This huge, important meeting all about taking action against climate change.

Who will be there?

More than 200 world leaders.

Will anyone else be there?

There will be observer organisations, such as United Nations agencies, environmental organisations, climate experts, international companies, youth groups, trade unions, indigenous peoples, farmers, faith groups and many more; all these different people will be working towards the same goal.

It will be the biggest meeting of world leaders that the UK has ever hosted!

What is the aim of the meeting?

Everyone will aim to set targets for reducing greenhouse gases and protecting the planet. These decisions will affect people all over the globe; they help us all work together to become greener and more sustainable.

It sounds important.

It is very important.

Reading 4 (2 pupils)

The leaders will make big decisions about how we treat our world, but is there anything we can do? How can we look after our world and save our planet?

We can walk instead of using the car

We can turn off electrical items when we're not using them

We can recycle paper and other items.

We can feed birds, create ponds and defend the habitat of creatures.

We can eat less meat and we can reduce our food waste.

Buying Fairtrade products can help invest in their farms to keep their crop healthy, without needing to resort to cheap methods of farming which can further damage the environment.

We can plant more trees.

All these things can make a difference to our world.

Prayer (1 pupil)

Thank you for our world. It is good.

You have given us this earth for ourselves, but also for the generations to come.

Help and inspire us to look after it for now and for the future.

Amen.

Harvest is a time to say thank you for the wonderful world that God has given us. It is also a time to look carefully at our world and how we are taking care of it. It is also **a time to share** what we have with those in need. Our gifts will go to e.g. **the foodbank** this year.