



COLLECT, READINGS AND REFLECTION
SUNDAY 5 OCTOBER 2025 – Trinity 16

HARVEST 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.

Psalm 100

- 1 O be joyful in the Lord, all the earth; ♦
serve the Lord with gladness
and come before his presence singing.
- 2 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.
- 3 Enter his gates with thanksgiving
and his courts with praise; ♦
give thanks to him and bless his name.
- 4 For the Lord is gracious; his steadfast love is everlasting, ♦
and his faithfulness endures from generation to generation.

A reading from Paul's letter to the Philippians, chapter 4, verses 4-9.

4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. 5 Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. 6 Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. 7 And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. 8 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. 9 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.

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

At Morning Prayer, the Gospel is simply the second reading, people sit to hear it and is introduced in the same way as the first:

The second reading is from John, chapter 6, verses 25-35.

and then at the end:

For the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God.

For Eucharists/ Communion people stand to hear the Gospel. Everywhere except Fitz introduces it with an Acclamation (the blue bit), and then we all use the introduction and ending (the green bit):

Alleluia. **Alleluia.**

We do not live by bread alone, but every word that comes from the mouth of God.

Alleluia.

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to John, chapter 6, verses 25-35.

Glory to you, O Lord

And then at the end:

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

When they found him on the other side of the lake, they 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 him, '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.'

A Harvest Reflection from Dave

The request at the end of our Gospel reading sounds so simple - "Give us this bread always!" Jesus has offered "food that endures for eternal life", and the crowd say "Great! Feed us! Not just now, but always!"

Harvest is rightly the time when we celebrate this kind of abundant provision by God. But it is also the time to recognise the hard work and tough realities that go into supplying people's demands for food. It has never been easy, and that's certainly been true over this past year.

The demand remains: "Give us this food always" - but supplying what people want, when people want it, becomes difficult when pressurised budgets mean people also want it cheaper than before.

The demand remains: "Give us this food always" - but supplying even "enough" has been difficult in a year where it was too cold to sow and too dry to grow, and where heavy rains came too late to impact after long summer droughts.

The demand remains: "Give us this food always" - but even as we supply tins, boxes and cartons at our harvest services, we recognise the huge need in our communities and around the world for those lacking "enough".

It would be no surprise then, if some of us hear Jesus' claim of supplying an eternal food and think that it seems overly optimistic, naive, or just plain false. But we miss what Jesus is really offering if we think it is just about filling the demand of our stomachs.

Jesus recognises the reality that as hard as we work, in the end, our food perishes. It has a "use by date", it will run out, we will need more. For Jesus, our physical need for perishable food points to a fundamental need for a kind of life that won't perish, whose "use by date" is eternity, and that no changes in weather, economic forces, or consumer practices can get in the way of. It is the kind of life only God possesses: no amount of work will grow it in a field; no amount of money can buy it in a shop. But anyone can have it with a simple request.

Because just like our demand for food, our need for Jesus is a daily need too. When anyone comes to him and says, "give us this food, this eternal life, always," his response is the same now as it was then: "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty." We can't demand this supply from him, but we don't need to. We just need to ask each day, "Jesus, give us this food always."