

Editorial

Harvest Thanksgiving

Like the weather, drinking and eating is something we all have in common; it's a very basic need shared by all. This is brought home as you continue to read and look at the pictures; every parish event involves a 'cuppa', however simple or elaborate. Read how many feasts, fetes and festivals we enjoy. Watch the beautiful video of the Festival of Flowers and Fabric at www.witneyparish.org.uk

Reading Farmer David's evocative account, reminds me of when I was a boy in Bristol immediately after the war. Harvest was synonymous with the end of a long hot summer, and the imminent return to dreaded school; watching farmers; picking blackberries and hips from the hedgerows; scrumping apples; then helping with the storing, preserving, pickling, bottling, and jam making, against the next winter. The church was full of flowers and local produce, potatoes and swedes down the aisle, ripe tomatoes and fat marrows balanced precariously on the communion rail, hops and briers trailing from the pulpit, and Oh, the glorious heady fecund smell. The evening service was always dedicated to the Harvest of the Sea, "O hear us when we cry to Thee, for those in peril on the sea." Bishop Bill knows all about that.

Since 40% of our food comes from other countries, there is a harvest somewhere in the world every day. It also reminds us that 14% of this Country's population is involved in agrifood, that is the production, processing, distribution, retailing and preparing of food, or in other words, four million of us. But whilst most of us eat, drink and make merry (Luke 12:19), there are always those in need in our community, helped by the likes of Besom and the Food Bank.

So as we give thanks for *our* blessings, remember all those who have made them possible, including the vast army of unpaid volunteers, and resolve to share them with others less fortunate.

The next issue of Witney Way will focus on **Children and Young People**. So if you have something to share, don't just sit there, share it with me!

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