



**Friday 8th
October
Messy Harvest**

Introduction

Harvest is a time when we say thanks to God for all that we have. This is not done begrudgingly, but happily. We also have a tradition of giving some of the best things that we might have to God, either as an offering of money, or as gifts to those who have less than we do. Our story today is about two brothers, Cain and Abel who offered gifts to God at harvest time:

The bible passage is from Genesis 4:2-7

Abel became a sheep farmer, but Cain farmed the land. ³ One day, Cain gave part of his harvest to the LORD, ⁴ and Abel also gave an offering to the LORD. He killed the first-born lamb from one of his sheep and gave the LORD the best parts of it. The LORD was pleased with Abel and his offering, ⁵ but not with Cain and his offering. This made Cain so angry that he could not hide his feelings.

⁶ *The LORD said to Cain:*

What's wrong with you? Why do you have such an angry look on your face? ⁷ If you had done the right thing, you would be smiling. But you did the wrong thing, and now sin is waiting to attack you like a lion. Sin wants to destroy you, but don't let it!

Cain and Abel lived at a time when donations to Foodbanks were not made at harvest time, but items were offered to God through being burned as a sacrifice. Cain didn't offer the best of what he had but kept that for himself. This displeased God and Cain's jealousy of Abel made it worse. Today we are exploring how much we have to give thanks for and how giving to others can make us happier.

Activities:

1. Pictures from fruit and veg

You will need: paper, paints, paint brush, potatoes or other fruit and veg, knife, [bubble wrap and scissors for alternative]

This is the time of year when fruit and vegetables are harvested. Use different fruits and veg to experiment with making pictures by cutting them in half and then cutting out different shapes on each surface. Dip the shapes into paint, or brush



paint onto the surface and then print onto some paper to create a picture.

Alternatively, you can create a textured picture using bubble wrap. Cut out a shape from the bubble wrap, paint it and then print the shape on your paper. Earlier this year we used this method to create a picture of a bunch of grapes.

Talk about: What a variety of fruit and vegetables there is. How many can you think of? Give thanks to God for all this variety.

2. Harvest wreath

You need: a circle of plain card, short ribbon, dry leaves (or leaves made from different coloured paper), glue, scissors

Attach the paper or real leaves all around the outside of a circle to create a decorative wreath. Attach a loop of ribbon so that it can hang from a door knocker or hook. You could add a message of thanks in the middle:

“Thank you to God for all that we have.”

Talk about: Cain and Abel were closely involved in food production. A traditional harvest wreath is made from bread or corn, but as we live further away from the production of our food, we have started to connect different things with this time of year.



3. Growing a bean



You will need: a glass jar, bean seeds, tissue paper. Fill the jar with tissue paper that is damp. Place a seed between the tissue paper and the side of the jar, so that you can watch what happens as it grows. Add more water whenever the paper begins to dry out.

Talk about: what a seed needs to grow. Cain worked very hard in preparing the soil for his plants to be grown.

4. Sheep picture

You will need: Card – white and black, googly eyes, cotton wool, glue

Cut out a circle of white card and stick blobs of cotton wool onto it. Cut out a sheep face and two feet from the black card. Glue two eyes onto the face and stick it onto the cotton wool. Add two feet at the bottom of the circle.

Talk about how dangerous it could be for Abel out in the fields with his sheep which need protection from other animals and from people who might steal them.



5. Autumn sensory tray



You will need: a large box or tray, lots of autumn leaves, conkers, acorns and berries collected from a park, roadsides or the countryside

Collect autumn leaves, conkers, acorns, berries, pine cones and other items found outside at this time of year and put it in a large box or tray to enable an experience of different sounds, colours, and touch (being careful of the spiky items).

Talk about how seeds, berries and other autumn items become plants themselves in years to come and the importance of enabling the circle of life to continue.

Song: Thank you, Lord for this fine day

Thanking God for all that we have is something that can make us feel happy. This is a very simple song:

1. Thank you, Lord, for this fine day,
Thank you, Lord, for this fine day,
Thank you, Lord, for this fine day,
Right where we are.

Chorus:

*Alleluia, praise the Lord, x3
right where we are.*

2. Thank you, Lord, for food to eat ...

Chorus

3. Thank you, Lord, for clothes to wear ...

Chorus

4. Thank you, Lord, for all your gifts

Chorus

Here's a link to a version that you can sing along to:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=njsdfxK9FcQ>

Prayer

Last month we had a different type of prayer where everyone shouted for what they wanted. We'll use the same style this month, but shout for what we are thankful for. Being thankful for what we have, rather than always wanting more, is a great way of being happier.

You might want to say thank you for:

Family

Food on the table

Sweets at snack time

Walk in the park

Friends

On the count of three, everyone should pray their prayer out loud at the same time.

Messy Grace:

This is a prayer that we say at Messy Church to ask God to always be with us, as we try to keep connected to Jesus.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ (hold out hands as if expecting a present)

And the love of God (put your hands on your heart)

And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit (hold hands)

Be with us all (raise arms)

Amen (drop hands)

Next date: Friday 12th November 2021

We hope to continue meeting in-person, starting from 3.45pm at St Mary's Church, The Avenue, West Wickham. BR4 0DX. There will be a livestream once the celebration starts on our YouTube channel, probably around 4.45pm, with a link from the Facebook page.

www.facebook.com/MessyChurchWestWickham/