

## HARVEST THANKSGIVING SERVICE

### **Great and Small**

Look at the Harvest Table: what can you see on the table? Can you see your favourite food?

Let's give thanks for the food we have; God has provided all of this food for us; I know that we buy it in supermarkets, but everything that is here, at some time grows in the ground. Today we remember that it is God that makes all things grow and gives us our food to eat.

What is the biggest animal in the world? *The Blue whale was the best answer.*  
What's smallest animal you can think of? *The flea or the midge!*

Here's a photo of the Horsehead nebula, one of the biggest living parts of the universe, a place where stars are born. The words we read at the start of the service tell us about some big things: the sun, the moon, the stars, the sky: all of these big parts of our world praise God because He made them; they are part of His world and He has made them. We can also include animals – the blue whale, the elephant, the giraffe – and these are some of the biggest animals on the planet that God has made.

Here's a photo of a ladybird, one of the smallest things that also are part of God's world; atoms, bugs, all of these God has made as well; they are also part of His world. These great and small things in the world, the biggest we can think of, the smallest we've come across, all are part of world God has made; and all of these great and small things help us praise God for the world we live in.

Here's Google Earth with two images: the first shows the whole world and the second shows our church building, great and small pictures of the world!

Then, there's us!

How many of us have blonde hair? Brown hair? Grey hair? No hair?

How many have blue eyes? Brown eyes? Green eyes?

Here's a finger and on end of your finger, see the fingerprint, a set of lines and circles and every one of us has a different fingerprint; we are unique.

The words of Psalm 8 tell us that God loves and cares for us; we are special! The man who wrote Psalm 8 looked up into the bigness of the night sky, and he sees the moon and the stars and he knows how big these are and thinks that he is very small compared to the moon and the stars and he's right; we are small. He says to God: "what are we, human beings, small in comparison, that you care for us?" But he knows that God does care for us and that God has given us the world to look after for Him; He cares for us and loves us. We are people who are made in God's image, to love and be loved.

We have three things to thank God for:

1. the food we eat and we say thank you for our food in this harvest thanksgiving service
2. the big and the small things in the universe and the world; God has made them all.
3. Us – God has made us, we are all unique and He cares for us.

There is a fourth thing to thank God for: Himself - we say thank you that He is such a great God to have made all of this and to have loved us every day.

### **The Secret Millionaire**

*The Secret Millionaire* is a TV programme on Channel 4. A very rich person visits a poor part of the UK in disguise and in the end helps people by giving some of his money to help them in their poverty. *Fresh Start* in Edinburgh helps people who have been homeless or with other problems here in the city to get back on their feet. Volunteers collect all kinds of things to help: we take part once a month; look out for the notices and it might be curtains, towels, or cutlery. A few years ago, a millionaire came to visit *Fresh Start*, and he lived in Pilton for a time; he was followed by TV crew and they had made up some story about this person wanting to volunteer for a time so that he could see what *Fresh Start* does. Will he give them some money? He got to know what life could be like in a poor part of Edinburgh and how it was to be homeless and have to start all over again! At the end of the programme he has to reveal to people who he is and that he *The Secret Millionaire* and that he's going to give them some of his money! *Fresh Start* were delighted by the gifts he gave to help them in their work.

Jesus, Son of God, servant. Think about how great the Bible says Jesus is: He is the Son of God, who shared the greatness and glory of God from the start; He is the centre of the universe. We can't imagine what that means, but we know that it means He is greater than we are and greater than we might ever understand. But, Jesus gave all of that up to come to live in our world. Where was He born? In a stable. What did He do? He served people and helped people. There are some clues and hints to His greatness: the miracles that He did let people see that He wasn't just an ordinary man, but not everyone realised. To most people He was just an ordinary man and He went about His ministry quietly. He wasn't followed by a TV crew either. Then, He died on the cross, the servant who suffered and gave His life for us. He came into the world to live the life we live; so He knows what it's like to be afraid or excited, hungry or thirsty, happy or sad; He knows what its like to be us.

Jesus gives us everything we need. He gives us His blessing at its fullest. He is not a millionaire giving out money, but the Saviour giving out all kinds of other things: He gives us everything we need; He gives us food to eat; He provides us with family and friends; He gives us faith and hope; He helps us be strong and be able to live life in the right kind of way; He forgives us our faults and failings; He helps us when we're afraid; He promises to be with us everywhere we go. Jesus is the Saviour of the world giving His blessing to people everywhere. The riches He has He shares with us and we are blessed, and we will even share His glory one day.

He says: "*Consider the ravens... consider how the lilies grow...*" Trust God to give you everything you need! Jesus has come to bless the world and give us everything; we learn to trust Him. But we get anxious about all kinds of things: what will we wear? What will we eat? Will we have enough? We don't sleep at night worrying about this, that and the other. Trust God to give you everything you need and do not worry; why? Because that's the kind of God He is! Jesus knows how we feel; He knows why we get worried and anxious and He is able to help us. Our proper response to Jesus giving out blessing and the good things and everything we need is to trust Him, because we know and are convinced that He loves us. He gives the birds and the flowers everything they need for food and colour; how much more will He give us everything that we need. It is why Jesus came to the world!