

HARVEST THANKSGIVING 2018
GENESIS 1:1-13; LUKE 10:30-37

The World comes to Juniper Green

We looked at some of the food items on the table as part of the display – find out where they come from?

Bananas – come from Costa Rica or Colombia.

Avocados – come from Brazil

Peaches – come China, Spain, or Italy

Pasta – comes from Italy

Coffee – comes from Kenya, Brazil or Colombia

Tea – comes from India or China

Beans – are used all over the world, probably originating in the USA

Tuna – comes from the Pacific Ocean

Haggis – comes from Scotland

Apples – come from a tree in Baberton Crescent!

We can add some things we eat: some of our food dishes come from other places:

Curry – comes from India

Pizza – comes from Italy

Rosemary Jerk Lamb chops – is a recipe from Jamaica

The World comes to Juniper Green when we celebrate harvest; food from all over the world is on our table this morning; people all over the world have grown crops that we eat and enjoy. There are food items from Scotland: strawberries, raspberries; potatoes; apples; meat, fish – all of these are part of our harvest in Scotland and we enjoy all of these things too. Our food is so varied; it comes to us in so many different ways and there are so many different tastes and flavours.

We say ‘thank you’ to God for the harvest: we buy all of these things in shops & supermarkets, but these are all gifts that God has given us. The rain and the sun to make things grow, these are God’s gifts and He gives us these gifts and so we say ‘thank you’ to God that He has provided all these good things for us.

We say ‘thank you’ too to farmers who have grown all of these things; there are farmers in Scotland, but there are also farmers in Brazil, China, the USA, Kenya, Spain – all over the world farmers have worked hard to grow the food that we eat and enjoy. It is not always easy: we have loved the long, hot summer, but it has been hard for farmers, when there has been not enough water to feed their crops and animals; they have had to work hard to make all of this possible for us. We say ‘thank you’ to them for all their hard work.

The World comes to Juniper Green this morning and we rejoice that God is at work all over world to make the harvest possible for us.

Noughts & crosses

We played noughts & crosses; there were two people, one with paper plates marked with X, and the other has plates with O; let’s play the game – does someone win? Let’s play it again but take away one person’s plates. How does that work? Can you play? How does it feel? You can’t win; you can’t even play without plates!

Life is like that for lots of people in our world. They go through life with no ‘plates’; other people have all the wealth and the power; many people have nothing and no power to change the world to make it a better place. People in our world still find life is unfair at times, rich people get richer, poor people struggle along with nothing. But watch this film...

Birungi is taught to sew and that changes things for her. Because she can sew, she can earn some money to buy a pig, then sell the pig to buy a cow, then sell the cows to buy a house or some land. This is 'Restoration' for her: life is restored, she has a new sense of worth and dignity. Jesus restores people's lives by bringing us back to God and we are to care for people in need in our world in Jesus' name so that this restoration might happen for even more people.

"The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
Because He has anointed me to preach good news to the poor
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
And recovery of sight to the blind
To release the oppressed
To proclaim the year of the Lord's favour."

Thank you, Jesus for loving me

*"Isn't this just a wonderful world
A wonderful world that we live in
And whoever made this wonderful world
Is someone that I can believe in"*

This is Fischy Music's take on the world that God has made! People of faith have always looked at world, then the universe, and marvelled at what God has done in creating this fantastic place for us to live in. Helen read for us earlier a part of Genesis chapter 1, which is the very first time a man of faith is marvelling at the universe. The Bible doesn't tell us how God made the world; it doesn't tell us when God made the world but it looks at the world and says "Wow! God made this!" He shares his faith with everyone who has read Genesis 1 and says "thank you" to God for making the universe and for making us!

We say "thank you" to God in lots of ways. We say "thank you" to God when we sing our songs of praise on a Sunday morning; we celebrate God's power and goodness and His love for us today in the songs we sing, saying thank you for the harvest; every Sunday we thank God for His goodness in other ways when we sing; we use words written by other people, but make them our words to say thank you to God.

We say "thank you" to God when we give: every Sunday our offering for the life of the church is a way of saying "thank you" to God for His goodness and love; we respond to God. Today we give gifts of food to the Gorgie Foodbank to help people in need and that too is a way of showing our appreciation for God's goodness and faithfulness to us; our giving is a way of showing our thanks.

We say "thank you" to God when we love and care for other people. God has loved us and so we love other people, those in need wherever we find them. We show the world how good God is by our love. This is a huge challenge, because there are lots of people in need across the world, some at home, some in other places. Gorgie Foodbank is there because there are people in Edinburgh who don't have enough money each month to go to buy food for themselves and their families, and to put on the heating; this is just one of lots across the city that help people and so our giving today will help. There are lots of people like Birungi across the world and we can give to Tearfund and help people like her, but we can also speak up for her and people like her because the world is unfair and needs to change; to change the world is a way of saying "thank you" to God for way He has loved us.

Jesus told a story: "Who is my neighbour? Who am I supposed to care for?" He told the story of a man who was beaten up and two important, religious people walked past as if not to care. The third man stopped and in the story he was the man who should have hated and who should have ignored the injured man, but he was full of compassion, he stopped, he cared, he

helped the man. The challenge of the story is for us to do the same for anyone we see who is in need.

All of this we do because Jesus has loved us. He has loved us not only by giving us food to eat, but He has also loved us by giving His life for us, dying on a cross, taking away our sin; He has also loved us by promising to be with us every day, helping us, making us strong, listening to our prayers. Because He has loved us like this, we say “thank you” by our singing, by our giving, by our caring.