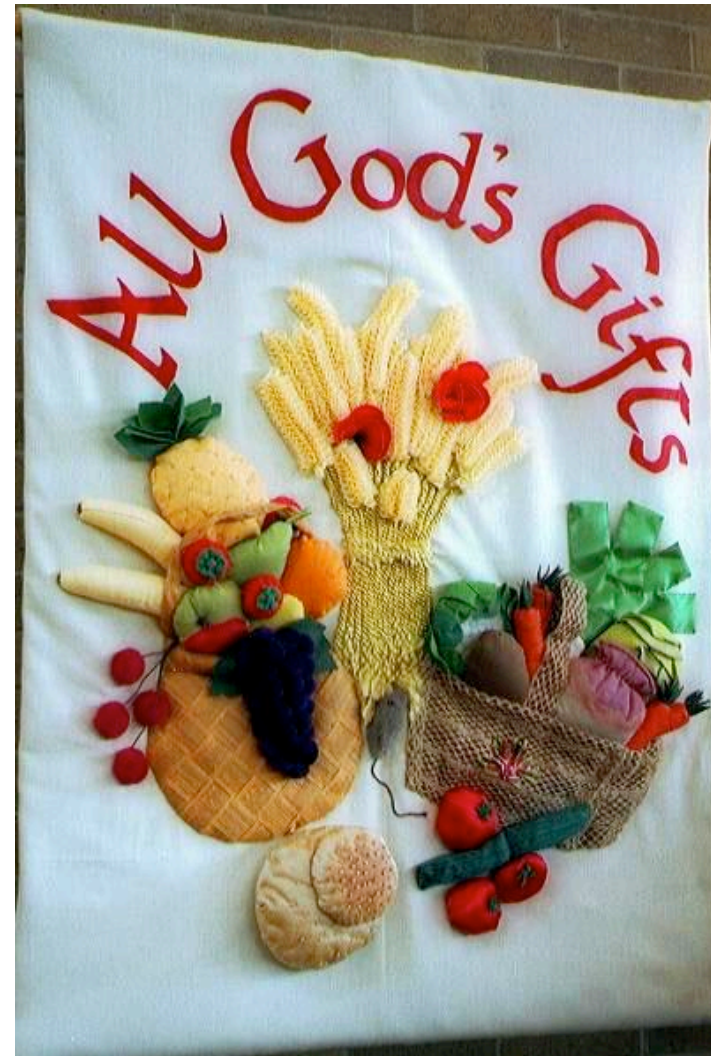


## Services and Events at St Helena's in the Autumn

|            |                                                                                |
|------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| October 5  | 9.30 Harvest Eucharist<br>4.30 Harvest Songs of Praise                         |
| October 8  | 11 Quiet Service                                                               |
| October 12 | 9.30 Eucharist<br>4.30 Evensong and Sermon                                     |
| October 14 | Afternoon tea at St Helena's, with Fashion show                                |
| October 15 | 12.30 for 1, Luncheon Club resumes                                             |
| October 19 | 9.30 Eucharist<br>4.30 Evening Service*                                        |
| October 26 | 9.30 Eucharist<br>4.30 Evensong and Sermon                                     |
| October 29 | 10 Book Sale                                                                   |
| November 1 | Sponsored Walk                                                                 |
| November 2 | 9.30 Eucharist<br>4.30 All Souls day Service of Commemoration of the Departed. |

\* The Evening Service on this day may be held at the CTO beach on Dhekelia Rd, if sufficient families sign up for it. Otherwise it will be held at the Church. All the Evensong services will follow a modern form.

**ALL ARE WELCOME AT ALL OUR SERVICES AND EVENTS**



St Helena's Church Larnaca Pastoral Letter

Harvest 2014

Dear Friends

This year we shall be holding two services to celebrate Harvest Festival. As always we shall be having a Harvest Eucharist at 9.30 on October 5<sup>th</sup>, and that is the service where we shall be hoping to receive offerings of food that will be distributed to our local old people's and children's homes. The new service will be at 4.30 on the same day and will take the form of a Songs of Praise: a service mostly of singing hymns that have been suggested or requested by members of the congregation. This will be the first of a series of late afternoon services during October and early November (see back page) which we hope might make churchgoing more possible for more people.

The two Harvest services represent two aspects of the season. The Songs of Praise service represents the element of joyful thanksgiving for the gifts we receive. At one level that can seem rather naïve; after all we usually reckon that we get what we get by our own efforts and ingenuity. But deeper reflection points us to our frailty and dependence, rather than our strength and desserts. We often reflect that we do not deserve the bad things that happen to us, but we rarely think like that about the good things. Harvest is a time for honest and realistic thanksgiving that puts self last and focuses our thanks on God, through praise and worship.

But in modern times Harvest has come to represent more than this. As we think about the whole business of food production and distribution we are inevitably brought face to face with the injustices of inequality, and that takes us on a journey that extends beyond food. In west Africa the Ebola outbreak has shown us enormous differences in expectation, across our world, when it comes to health care for example.

We might think also about the links between plenty and peace. The Old Testament characterises peace as a time when people are able to own and grow their crops. The pictures we see from Syria and Ukraine show how war disrupts the business of growing and feeding. Fields cannot be harvested because it is too dangerous. Refugees leave their smallholdings and become dependant on others. The pictures of first world war zones show how fields that could have been bearing crops are churned up wilderness, littered with the military detritus of burned out tanks and corpses.

And that is, in a sense, the aspect of Harvest represented by the Eucharist. That is a service that gives us opportunity for confession for our part in the world's wrongs, includes intercessory prayer for the hungry, war ravaged and disadvantaged, and above all tells a story of redemption – a story of how seemingly insurmountable evil and wrong can be transformed by God's grace. As Christians, that is the hope for the world that we want to remember weekly, believe in and be inspired by.

However we remember Harvest this year, may it not be superficially. The issues that the season asks us to focus on are deeply serious and urgent. And every one of us is invited to make a response.

*John Holdsworth*  
**Chaplain and Parish Priest**