



## Share Your Blessings! Harvest Worship Resources

***“Every communion table needs a photo of a CWS partner alongside the bread and wine to remind us who else is invited and entitled to this meal.”***

[Bishop John Bluck](#)

Extending the table to everyone is where this year’s Harvest resources begin. CWS invites you to make your Harvest celebration global. Look beyond the people who share your worship space to others who you will never meet and whose voices you will not hear. You may like to bring images of people in need of God’s love to your communion table. We ask you to remember those living with conflict or recovering from disasters like Typhoon Haiyan known locally in the Philippines as Yolanda. This super typhoon claimed the lives of many people, destroyed homes and livelihoods, and caused considerable trauma.

Piling a table high with food is a good way to make God’s abundance visible!

**The 2014 resources draw on material for Harvest Thanksgiving in the Anglican Lectionary. The 2013 resources use Methodist/Presbyterian readings.**

### Sentence

The earth has yielded its harvest; and you, our God, will bless us. Psalm 67:6

### Readings

#### ***Psalm 65: 1 (2-7) - 14***

The psalmist cannot remain silent in the face of all that God has done. He acknowledges God’s bounty on a global scale—from the ends of the earth to the edge of the seas (v6). God has power over all of nature and is responsible for filling streams with [clean] water and soaking the earth so grain will grow. Food and water is for everyone, not locked away for the few. It ends (v12-14) with a poetic description likening the earth to being dressed with the finest attire—crown included. God’s gifts are for all, poor, rich and middle-income!

#### ***Deuteronomy 24:19-22***

Practical concern for people in need is central to the Judaeo-Christian tradition. Having formed an identity as Jewish after 40 years in the wilderness, the people settle and develop new codes for living on the land. The right to glean is referenced to their time as slaves in Egypt (v22). Leaving grain, olives, grapes for the alien, orphan and widow was an important part of the local economy—allowing them to gather food with dignity. Three times this is repeated, giving emphasis to God’s constant compassion for those in need.

## 2 Corinthians 9:6-15 *Blessed in giving*

This is part of a fundraising letter. Paul is writing to the Achaians (9:2b) asking them to make good on their promises of help for Christians in Jerusalem. In the letter he reminds them that he has been boasting of their generosity to the Macedonians (v2) - a little peer pressure. He is straight down the line—abundance is to be shared. “God loves a cheerful giver” (v7c) and “you will be enriched in every way for your great generosity” (v11a). Sharing is the ministry of *diakonia* and is one of the ways we give thanks to God (v13).

## John 6:27-35 *The Bread of Life*

This discourse on bread comes after the stories of the feeding of the five thousand and Jesus walking on the water. Storms blow up quickly on the Sea of Galilee and this story points to Jesus as a cosmic force. The crowd goes looking for Jesus (v.24) who they recognise as a Rabbi or teacher (v25). Jesus responding to the challenge, publicly recognises some who had shared bread the day before (v.26) and had seen what he could do.

As usual Jesus does not answer their direct questions, for example, what they need to do to perform the works of God (v28). He teaches them not how to perform miracles like producing bread for a crowd, but about sustenance of a different sort. He affirms, “the bread of God is that which ... gives life to the world” (v33). The audience accepts his reply (v34) but when Jesus claims, “I am the bread of life...” and the broker of God’s life-giving bread. John writes “the Jews began to complain about him” (v 41). Jesus’ challenge is clear as is God’s commitment to give life to the world.

## Post Communion Sentence

The eyes of all look to you, O Lord, and you give them their food in due season. *Psalms 145:15*



## Prayer of Thanksgiving

Loving God

We give thanks for the colours of food: the bright red of tomatoes, the vibrant green of new beans and the bright orange of carrots.

We give thanks for the shapes of food: the roundness of an apple, the unevenness of kumara and the frills of the lettuce.

We give thanks for the smells of food: the sweetness of a pear, the earthiness of potatoes and the yumminess of biscuits from the oven.

They are your gifts to us. Gifts to be shared and enjoyed. Food for the world and life for all people. In gratitude for your gifts we give thanks! Amen.

## Prayer for Others

God of Compassion

We pray for our world, knowing that its bounty is not shared and too many people are hungry; a world where it is too easy to block out the voices of those whose rights are ignored or forget the images of suffering we have seen.

We pray for Filipinos in their daily struggles. Give them the strength and resources they need to rebuild their homes and communities.

We pray for ourselves that we might share more generously and speak out when life is not fair. In your name we pray. Amen.

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