

# LETTERS FROM THE CHURCHES

In our lifetime we will enter into many covenants. A covenant is basically an agreement between two or more people, usually where both parties bring something to exchange be it money for services, payment in kind, a marriage covenant, vote for me and I promise ....etc, etc. etc. Covenants are generally sealed by signature or handshake nowadays but in Biblical times it was common for a covenant to be sealed by the shedding of sacrificial blood. God made covenants with his people in the Bible, for example with Noah, David and Abraham. He is still prepared to make a covenant with us today! What we can bring to this agreement is not money or material goods. After all, God has no need of what he can supply anyway. No, what he wants is ourselves, our body and our soul, our heart, our whole being, our past, both good and bad, our sicknesses and weaknesses, our pride, our battles and our sins. What God brings to the agreement includes eternal life, healing, a future, forgiveness, hope, peace, redemption, righteousness, love, justice and so on. In effect God says to us "give me your life and I will give you mine, your battles are my battles, give me your past and I will give you a future". God's son, Jesus, was the sacrifice who sealed this covenant for us.

What remains is for us to live in the fullness of the covenant. God cannot and will not ever break his covenant but neither will he compel us to keep our part of the bargain. We can, and do, make daily choices to live in the blessings of his covenant such as choosing not to do things in our own strength but to rely on God. If we take back any part of our lives we prevent Him from fulfilling his part of the covenant and we are the ones who end up in a mess. Let's try to make the right choices.

**Rev John Girtchen 01469 530357**

## Harvest Festival Services

Thursday October 8<sup>th</sup>, 2.00pm at Greenfields Community Room.

Friday 9<sup>th</sup> October, 7.30pm: All Saints Church, Evensong followed by buffet supper

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> October, 9.30am: All Saints Church (Family Service)

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The season of earth's local harvest is in full flourish, and with some of the first year of produce from my husband David's allotment the freezer is already bursting and others have had a share.

Over the years David has also cultivated thousands of sweet peas, wonderful colours and glorious perfume, and mainly sold for church funds. When we lived in Lancashire we had a bucket of water holding bunches of sweet peas down at the roadside and an honesty pot next to it. Not quite so easy to sell them now we live at the end of a cul - de - sac!

Anyway, at the bottom of our Manse garden at that time we had a Bramley apple tree and up until the the year we moved that tree had but one apple per year. We would eventually pick it, stuff it with dried fruit and bake it, then share it between us. Same gardener, but very different result. One amazingly bountiful, blessing dozens of folk, the other rather embarrassingly frugal.

Jesus told us, in the parable of the sower, of the farmer scattering seed and the various conditions that stopped a good crop, contrasting it with the seed that fell on good soil, 'where it produced a crop - a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown' (Matthew Chapter 13); same farmer, but contrasting harvests.

We all have the same good God, who longs for us to put our roots of faith deep into His love and power and produce a good crop. What is a good crop in the Kingdom of God? Living in Jesus to God's purposes and blessing others through His abundance to each of us. 'All we can do is nothing worth unless God blesses the deed, vainly we hope for the harvest - tide till God gives life to the seed' states the well - known hymn. In God's eyes what kind of harvest is our life producing, beyond measure or barely visible?

**God bless, Rev Gillian Belford, Methodist Minister 01652 632148**

## Bereavement Service

Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 7.30pm, at Goxhill Chapel.

A time to remember loved ones departed whether recently or long time bereaved. The service allows time for quiet reflection as well as lighting a candle in memory of our loved ones.