

# Order of Service



This Order of Service guide is designed to help you build your own Harvest service. Use this together with our Harvest Prayer Pack to choose prayers, songs and readings for your worship.

## Opening Responses

Sow for yourselves righteousness.

**For it is time to seek the Lord.**

Break up your fallow ground.

**For it is time to seek the Lord.**

Bring the first fruits of all your produce.

**For it is time to seek the Lord.**

Reap steadfast love.

**For it is time to seek the Lord.**

(Hosea 10.12 and Proverbs 3.9)

## Nyarai's Story

Incorporate a story of hope into your Harvest Service as you hear from Nyarai Zirugo from Zimbabwe who undertook agriculture training with Christian Aid.

You'll find Nyarai's Story at the end of this pack. You can also download slides that take you through this story on our website.

## Prayer of Penitence & Lament

Let us pray to the Lord, confessing our fears and failings.

The wild beasts wait with you in the desert.  
The trees clap their hands in praise of you.  
The creatures of the sea fulfil your word.  
*But we turn away from you.*

**Gracious Lord, have mercy on us.**

The earth is yours and all that is in it.  
You declared it good.  
In your hand is the life of every living thing.  
*But we treat the earth as our own possession.*

**Gracious Lord, have mercy on us.**

The land mourns.  
The stones cry out.  
Creation groans and suffers.  
*But we listen only to our own interests.*

**Gracious Lord, have mercy on us.**

*Silence may be kept as those present call to mind our need for forgiveness and our grief over the climate crisis.*

**Gracious Lord, Creator of all,  
Hear us and help us.  
Amen.**





## Responses (based on Psalm 146)

**I will sing praises to my God all my life long.**

Happy are those whose help is the God of Jacob,

whose hope is in the Lord their God,  
who made heaven and earth,  
the sea, and all that is in them;  
who keeps faith forever;

who executes justice for the oppressed;  
who gives food to the hungry.

**I will sing praises to my God all my life long.**

The Lord sets the prisoners free;  
the Lord opens the eyes of the blind.  
The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;  
the Lord loves the righteous.

**I will sing praises to my God all my life long.**

The Lord watches over the strangers;  
he upholds the orphan and the widow,  
but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin.

**I will sing praises to my God all my life long.**

Praise the Lord!

**I will sing praises to my God all my life long.**

## First Reading: Isaiah 35.1-2, 6b-7a

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;  
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;  
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly  
and rejoice with joy and shouting.

The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,  
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.


They shall see the glory of the Lord,  
the majesty of our God.

For waters shall break forth in the wilderness  
and streams in the desert;  
the burning sand shall become a pool  
and the thirsty ground springs of water

## Gospel Reading: Matthew 13.31-33

Jesus put before the crowd another parable:  
“The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that someone took and sowed in his field; it is the smallest of all the seeds, but when it has grown it is the greatest of shrubs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and make nests in its branches.”

He told them another parable: “The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.”





## Prayers for God's World



### Home

Pray for causes close to home, such as your local foodbank and people experiencing poverty in your community. Pray for yourself, your family and friends, that God may guide you as you take action for a more just world.



### Our Neighbours

Remembering our calling to love our neighbours as ourselves, pray for our global neighbours in places like Zimbabwe. Pray for those who are enduring the greatest impacts of the climate crisis.

## Prayer for Hope

God of hope,  
With you nothing is impossible.  
Your promises endure,  
Your Spirit sustains us.  
Establish in us hope for your world;  
Hope that moves us,  
Like fire in our bones,  
Like a shoot springing up from the soil,  
Like an ever-flowing stream.

### Power



Pray for those who hold political and economic power that they would act to tackle food insecurity and the causes of the climate crisis. Pray for those excluded from power, that they will no longer be marginalised.

### Environment



Pray for those working to repair and heal the harm we have done to the natural world. Pray for projects sharing environmentally sustainable farming techniques. Pray for environmental causes close to your heart.

Nurture in us a vision for change.  
Stir in us a desire for justice,  
That our hope may become action,  
That your will may be done.  
**Amen.**





## Prayer of Thanksgiving & Sending

God we thank you for the gifts that spring forth all around us,  
Flowing from our fellowship,  
Growing from our actions in your name.  
Inspire us with your Spirit,  
Encourage us to seek new ways to stand up to injustice,  
And speak up for those in need.  
Send us out replenished,  
That we may do the work of your kingdom.  
We ask this in your name, Lord.  
Amen.

## Harvest Blessing

May God our Creator bless you  
And make your days fruitful.  
May God our Saviour guide you,  
And make your ways just.  
May God our Comforter strengthen you,  
And make your heart hopeful.  
Amen.



## Suggested Hymns and Songs

- [Above the Moon Earth Rises](#) (Thomas H. Troeger).
- [Everything is Yours](#) (Jake Isaac). A worship song created in partnership with Christian Aid's Black Majority Church Climate Action Group. Music and Lyrics are freely available [online](#).
- [If the Fields are Parched](#) (Chris Juby).
- [Jesu, tawa pano \(Jesus, we are here\)](#) (Zimbabwean hymn writer, Patrick Matsikenyiri).
- [O God of Boundless Hope](#) (Brian Davis).
- [Oh the Life of the World is a Joy and a Treasure](#) (Kathy Galloway).
- [The Song of Kingdom Come](#) (Paul Field and Martin John Nicholls). Created in partnership with Christian Aid.

For your all-age or children's service:

- [In Our Lives Plant Seeds of Hope](#) (Carol Dixon).
- [Let Justice Roll Like a River](#) and [Global Neighbours](#) (Fischy Music). Created in partnership with Christian Aid.





## Nyarai's Story

**Determined to provide for her family Nyarai pushed back against poverty, with the support of Christian Aid, she gained new knowledge and skills to secure her family's harvest and their hope.**

Nyarai lives in the Mutoko district in Northeast Zimbabwe. The climate there is becoming increasingly variable with frequent droughts and dry spells punctuated by torrential storms. The unpredictable weather is leading to declining productivity and food insecurity.

Like most people in the region, Nyarai and her family are farmers. They always made their living by farming and selling chickens, until the climate crisis began to threaten their harvests and their hope. Low rainfall meant that yields were barely enough to feed the family, while hyperinflation undermined the value of the produce they could take to market.

When the family tried planting small grains because of the climate change issues, the birds would destroy most of the crop.


Nyarai's mother Janet recalls the struggle of providing for the family during this time saying ""During that drought, with no harvests, and little food, seeing my children and grandchildren without enough to eat was heart-breaking, I thought they were going to die, it was such a distressing moment, we had to get relief food."

Nyarai's determination to provide a secure future for her family led her to take agriculture training with Christian Aid's local partner Bio-Innovation Zimbabwe.

'One of the main things we got was improved knowledge', said Nyarai. 'We learnt how to put in place measures to prepare for unpredictable situations.'

Nyarai learnt how to sustainably harvest many of the wild plants that grow in the hills and forests surrounding her home. She's now using some of these to improve her family's nutrition, including making tea from zumbani and rosella. Other plants are prepared for market using a dryer constructed with support from our training partner.

With the profits, the family have been able to buy goats for their farm, as well as groceries, crockery and blankets. Nyarai also learnt about climate smart agriculture, helping her family to grow a wider range of grains and legumes.



## Nyarai's Story (continued)

Zimbabwe remains a challenging place to live, with high levels of poverty and increasingly unpredictable weather threatening food security. Due to poor rains this year much of the country is currently experiencing drought conditions.

Whilst the situation is difficult, the good news is that the communities, like Nyarai's, which have benefited from Christian Aid's work in the Mutoko and neighbouring Mudzi districts are remaining resilient. The farmers' new knowledge and application of climate smart agriculture techniques is helping them to push back and to thrive.

**'We've seen our livelihoods, diet and farming methods improve greatly. We are better able to sustain ourselves even when droughts hit. People have adapted to the unpredictable climate by using the climate-smart farming methods and have food and economic security.'**

