

<b>Theme &amp; Passages</b>	<b>Harvest</b> Exodus 23:14-16, 19; Gen. 1:29-30; 2:8-12	Notes prepared by Caroline Oliveira
<b>Welcome (10 mins)</b>	What are you thankful for this week?	
<b>Working with God (15 mins):</b>  Evangelism Discipleship Compassion Justice Creation Care	<p>On Sunday morning we heard from Anne-Marie Lewis about the Community Space coffee shop which has been set up in our building on Tuesdays and Fridays before the Community Fridge opens to the public. It started last autumn as a 'warm space' and has rapidly become a place of community and connection for those who visit. Since opening, numbers of attendees have steadily grown from about twenty people to seventy plus! Anne-Marie shared some stories of individuals who have been lonely or sick and have found friendship and support from the Community Space.</p> <p>Give thanks for the volunteers who facilitate Community Space and to God for the way He is working in the lives of those who attend. Pray that our volunteers will have opportunities to gently offer prayer and share their faith with those who attend.</p>	
<b>Worship (15 mins)</b>	<p><b>Read Psalm 65</b></p> <p>This psalm speaks of different ways the Lord has blessed and cared for His people. After reading the psalm, invite the group to use different phrases found in the psalm to pray out short prayers of thanksgiving eg. "thank you, Lord, for watering and enriching the land so that we can enjoy good food."</p> <p>If you would like to use music, choose a song(s) which speak of God's provision, Creation, or thankfulness.</p>	
<b>Word (20-25 mins)</b>	<p><b>Read Exodus 23:14-19; Gen. 1:29-30; 2:8-12</b>  <i>Share your immediate thoughts and reactions to this passage and anything that struck you from the talk on Sunday.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do the two Genesis passages tell us about God?</li> <li>• Why do you think Harvest festivals were so important to God? Nb. Ex. 23:14 specifically instructs that the festivals are designed to celebrate and honour the Lord, rather than a general celebration.</li> <li>• In verse 19, God instructed the Israelites to bring the best of the firstfruits to the house of the Lord as an offering. If we consider this principle in our contemporary world, what does bringing 'the best of the firstfruits' in worship to God look like practically? Discuss this in terms of material offerings, and also the other good things we possess eg. time, energy, belongings, skills.</li> </ul>	

As Christians we are to honour God with our work and with our offerings of worship. Consider what you do for 'work' ('work' includes volunteering, studying, taking care of your home and family, gardening, looking after elderly relatives, visiting your neighbours etc). Take time to pray for one another's work: that it may be fruitful and that our attitude would be of working 'unto the Lord'.

Romans 12:1-2 (The Message)

*So here's what I want you to do, God helping you: Take your everyday, ordinary life—your sleeping, eating, going-to-work, and walking-around life—and place it before God as an offering.*