

What is the deeper meaning behind Harvest festival?



This Religious Education unit follows on from previous studies of Christianity in Years 1,2 and 3. The unit will help the children to understand how the Christian festival of Harvest teaches us about gratitude and about giving thanks. They will learn about the importance of Harvest and why it is celebrated by Christians and other religions. The children will also learn first hand how charities such as 'The Upper Room', support the homeless in our local community. The children will have an opportunity to be involved in promoting and supporting this charity through our 'Harvest Collection' across the school.

Key Knowledge

- Harvest festivals have been celebrated since ancient times and many churches celebrate Harvest some time in the Autumn.
- Rev. Robert Hawker held the first Harvest Thanksgiving service in Cornwall. This has remained a tradition ever since.
- For Christians it is important to say thank you to God for the Harvest and to be grateful for the food we have in our lives, as they believe God gives us all things for example - seeds, soil, water, sunlight.
- To understand and appreciate that the food we eat is harvested and transported from all around the world.
- Christian charities such as Christian Aid, Cafod and The Tear Fund help people both in this country and also people in poor countries around the world.
- The Upper Room charity helps and supports homeless people in our local area.
- Understand how as part of our Harvest celebrations, we can help a local charity through our actions and kindness.



Links with other religions

The Jewish festival of Harvest is called Sukkot.

The Sikh festival of Harvest is called Vaisakhi.

Muslims believe in the importance of Zakkah—giving to those who need help.

Buddhists believe that wealth is a blessing from God and they should share it with the needy.



Key Vocabulary

Harvest - The season when ripened crops are gathered.

Harvest Festival - A service in Christian churches and schools to celebrate the annual harvest, to which gifts of food are brought for charities who support those in need.

Charity—an organisation set up to provide help and raise money for those in need

Homelessness—an individual or family who have no home to live in

Personal Reflection

In what ways do you think gratitude increases our sense of well-being?

How might a religious person show gratitude?

What or who are you grateful for?

Why do people celebrate Harvest?

Are some charities more worthwhile than others?

Why do people choose one charity over another?

Is it possible to support a charity without giving money?

Who or what is your safety net?

