



Harvest Outreach Ideas

Thinking On Harvest

What comes to mind when you think of harvest? Maybe it's school harvest assemblies with donations of fruit and vegetables in foil covered boxes. Perhaps it's tins and packets for the local food bank? Food banks often rely on a good harvest to see them through the winter months. Food might still be the key thing we link to harvest. If you think about it, have we not only moved from the association of fresh fruit and vegetables to food bank produce, but away from an appreciation of harvest itself?

In times gone by, harvest was a time of thanksgiving and relief because enough food had been gathered in to last during the winter months. Fruit and vegetables were grown in season. Most of us may remember relying on seasonal food production, perhaps some even lived close to or had a role in it. Today, the seasons have less impact on the availability of food, linking scarcity less to the weather or season and more to our finances or accessibility to shops.

Yet, harvest remains something of a calendar event in our culture, marked by schools, supermarkets, and various online craft suppliers! Cultural moments like this, the ones that spark conversations in the supermarket seasonal aisle, are missional opportunities for the church. Such moments can be a useful 'hook' into faith and engagement. So how can the church make the most of this harvest? There is no one size fits all approach. Contexts differ, so here are a few ideas to take and adapt to suit yours.



Food Focussed

Food is still what we think of when we think about harvest. Consider collecting for your local foodbank and even encouraging volunteering. Harvest can also be a good time to launch a community fridge. Check out [About - Community Fridges \(communityfridgemap.org.uk\)](#) for more information.

Harvest Suppers

Harvest suppers are welcoming events to invite family and friends along to. You might want to buy in a hog roast, do a sausage sizzle or opt for a ploughman's supper! But what do we do besides eat? Many of the ideas in our summer outreach opportunities also apply here. Use the resources you have; play board games, host a quiz night or barn dance.

Harvest celebrations tend to span September and October so, depending on the weather, many churches still choose to hold BBQ's and picnics as part of their celebrations.

Amazing Creation

Harvest can be a great time to celebrate creation and the environment. You might want to think about working towards an Eco Church award, [Eco Church - An A Rocha UK Project](#) hosting a 'refillery' or just have a recycling drive. Not sure what a refillery is? [Collections -The Refillery](#) provides an explanatory diagram and a FAQ section to answer your questions and jump-start your planning.

You could bless and serve your community by doing a litter pick and garden tidy. Tulips and Hope Countryside have a great resource that will help you to prayer walk as you litter pick and you can find it here [Picking-up Prayer - Steve Weatherill \(tulips.org.uk\)](#)

Did you know that the old strapline for LEGO was 'Amazing Creations'. You could hold a community LEGO café celebrating amazing creations with a competition to make the most amazing LEGO creation! Sammy at Hope has done just this. LEGO is popular across ages and generations and works whatever the weather. If you have the facilities and licenses, you could combine a LEGO café with showing the LEGO Movie!

Sharing Gratitude

At the heart of harvest is a reminder to pause and be thankful. Having an 'attitude of gratitude' has been shown to enhance wellbeing. What would it look like to have a season of thankfulness? Could you create some community bunting where people write things they are thankful for on each pennant? A bunting alternative might be large stones/pebbles which could create a shared piece of art in a community space.

Maybe this season presents a chance to visit shops on your local high street or local services like doctors and schools to deliver thank you cards and offer to pray for them. You could even play around with the words 'thank you' in different languages and hide the words in windows around your community creating a trail.



Harvest Fun

Check out our summer fun day ideas [Hope Together : Summer](#) and pivot them for harvest. Board games, bake-offs and craft are easily adapted to different themes and seasons. A harvest scavenger hunt can work well to reinforce the harvest theme of 'gathering in'. Check out this popular [harvest samba](#) for a fun ear worm!

People and Prayer

As church, harvest can have an extra layer of meaning and many churches find harvest a good time to do outreach and think about a Kingdom harvest of people. Could you use harvest to prayer walk your community? Instead of centralising things around a church building could, decentralise and invite people to prayer walk their communities and host their own local harvest suppers? For prayer walking resources check out [Hope for Every Home : Resources](#). You are welcome to pin your prayers on the OIKOS app and help us pray for every street by 2028. If you have any others, we'd love to hear them! Email us at office@hopetogether.org.uk.

Next Invitation

What's the next invitational event you could invite people to? During harvest, thoughts might already be turning to Christmas, but you might also be hosting a community event for Halloween or even have a weekly toddler group! Think carefully about who is at your event and the one thing you'd want to invite them to.

Whatever you decide to do in your context make sure there is something for people to take away if they want to find out more about faith - from Hope in Hard times booklets, Mark's gospels, Happyland books for the children or our new all-season newspaper! www.hopetogether.org.uk/shop

