

Heather Smith  
*reflects on* Psalm 82

The psalmist pleads for God to give justice to and rescue those who are weak, orphaned and needy – words which could be written today. Weak and needy people are scattered across the world, in our own country and all around the earth. Journalists bring us their stories and their photographs appear on our screens, showing us the misery that is inflicted on those who are powerless.

It's tempting to close our minds to all this suffering. What can we do? How can we choose which cause to support and how to work

for justice? But while it seems too big for our small minds, nothing is too big for God. "For all the nations belong to you!" says the psalmist. Surely God is concerned for the fate of each and every person on earth.

St Teresa of Avila understood the frustration and helplessness we feel when faced with such enormous need. "Let nothing disturb you. Let nothing frighten you," she said. "Christ has no body now on earth but yours; no hands but yours; no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which the compassion of Christ must look out on the world. Yours are the feet with which He is to go about doing good. Yours are the hands with which He is to bless His people."

We have a responsibility to do something. And whatever we do demonstrates God's love. The difference we make, no matter how small, is God's work. 🙏



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No feet  
but yours

God of Love, teach us to work unceasingly for justice and to show your compassion to all, especially to those who suffer at the hands of the powerful. Amen.

## Finding God on the smallholding

by Jeni Parsons

It's harvest time on this smallholding, though harvesting goes on in other ways throughout the year, as things become ready to gather for eating. Tomatoes and courgettes threaten to overwhelm us unless we give lots away, so we do exactly that. The blueberries, loganberries and blackberries are shared with blackbirds, initially a bit unwillingly, then when everything is about to inundate us I'm glad to share again.

This month begins with Lammas. As a Christian festival it's when the first grain to be harvested is traditionally made into a loaf for Eucharist. In deeper history it harks back to pre-Christian times which we can share with our neighbours who walk a different path of faith.

Thankfulness is part of all faiths and of the lives of all people of goodwill. So in this time of sharing I thank God and Mother Nature for what is given to be shared out. 🙏

## Make the most of the summer *Creating community*

by Heather Smith

Summer is a time not only for holidays, but also for carnivals, festivals and fetes. Given how much effort and hard work they take to organise, you might be wondering why this topic is included in a series about holidays, which should be all about rest and relaxation. The complete change of focus from everyday activities might confirm the notion that "a change is as good as a rest".

But more than that, these summer celebrations, with the need to work together, go a long way towards improving our sense of community. We are social beings. So often we find ourselves fulfilling different roles and building different kinds of relationships in the various groups with whom we interact. It helps us to find out more about ourselves and to fulfil our true potential. But we should not forget to include those who are lonely or generally excluded. It can be hard to see everyone enjoying the benefits of community if you aren't included. 🙏

“ I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you.”

Philippians 1:3-4