

# 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.

## Maryama's Story

Hear from Maryama - a farmer, community leader and widowed mother of her four children. Maryama lives in Njualahun village, Sierra Leone.

You can find her story at the end of this pack. You can also download slides that will take you through this story for use in your service.

## 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)

## 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 65 and Amos 5:24)

O God of our salvation; you are the hope of all  
the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas.

**Your righteousness and justice are an ever-  
flowing stream.**

You visit the earth and water it;  
you greatly enrich it.

The river of God is full of water.

**Your righteousness and justice are an ever-  
flowing stream.**

You crown the year with your bounty.

The pastures of the wilderness overflow.

The hills gird themselves with joy.

The valleys shout and sing together.

**Your righteousness and justice are an ever-  
flowing stream.**

Praise to you O God,

O you who answer prayer!

You forgive our transgressions.

You make the gateways of the morning and the  
evening shout for joy.

**Your righteousness and justice are an ever-  
flowing stream.**

O God of our salvation; you are the hope of all  
the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas.

**Your righteousness and justice are an ever-  
flowing stream.**

**Amen.**

## Readings: Deuteronomy 26.1-11

## Philippians 4:4-9

## John 6:25-35

### Talk/Sermon

Use our Harvest Sermon Notes Pack to  
prepare your talk on the readings above or  
on other suggested texts.

You can also download our ready-to-use All  
Age Harvest talks.

## 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.

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.**



## Your Harvest Offering

If you are taking a collection for Christian Aid's Harvest Appeal during your service - **thank you!** If your church usually gathers food to donate to local charities, we offer a resource that allows you to show your commitment to your global neighbours too. You can download and print a tin can label to be used on any ordinary tin as part of your Harvest offering. Our special label represents your support for Christian Aid's work to tackle food insecurity around the world. Find out more at [caid.org.uk/harvest](http://caid.org.uk/harvest)

## Praying for our neighbours: local and global



### Our local neighbours and ourselves

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 global neighbours

Remembering our calling to love our neighbours as ourselves, pray for our global neighbours in places like Sierra Leone. Pray for those who are enduring the greatest impacts of the climate crisis. Pray for an end to hunger and food insecurity across the world.



### The earth, our home

Pray for the earth, the home of humanity and of all living creatures. Pray for those working to repair and heal the harm we have done to the natural world. Pray for those who work to develop environmentally sustainable farming techniques. Pray for action to protect natural habitats and cherish land, water, plants and animals.



### Local and global leaders

Pray for those who hold political and economic power. Pray that they would act to tackle food insecurity and the causes of the climate crisis. Pray for wise and just leadership in our communities, governments and institutions in the UK and around the world.

Pray for those excluded from power, that they will no longer be marginalised.



## 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).
- 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.
- You Made a Universe So Full of Wonder (Ally Barrett).

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.

## Maryama's Story

**Maryama has been able to provide for her children by taking part in a Village Savings and Loan Association, supported by Christian Aid's partner**

Maryama is a farmer living in Njulahun village in Sierra Leone. Tragically Maryama's husband died leaving her to support their four children. In recent years, the climate crisis has affected Maryama's crop yield. In addition to working the land, Maryama would harvest groundnuts and extract the oil to sell but even this wasn't enough to make ends meet. She needed to invest in her farming to ensure a secure future for her family but had few options. Maryama found herself taking out loans that were unsustainable for her. As she told Christian Aid, **'... there was a lot of challenges ... Repaying loans has been a serious problem.'**

Christian Aid's partner WoNES worked with Maryama and her neighbours to help them establish a Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) in their community. VSLAs empower women like Maryama to take back control of their finances, their farms and their future. They offer a space for training women in leadership skills and economic management. VSLAs enable their members to offer and manage low-interest loans as a collective. Members also save together. Each VSLA is led by a committee from within the community.



*Maryama, farmer, VSLA committee member and mother of four, in Njulahun village, Sierra Leone.*



Maryama told Christian Aid:

**‘[The VSLA] has been a support to me because I have been able to pay my kids’ [school] fees. It’s a blessing for us ... This will help us support our kids to be educated. .... When I go to the farm, do my farming, the leadership derived from the VSLA has been a support to me. ... VSLA is an empowerment for us as women. It has helped to bring us together as community members, especially the women, and it's a strength for unity. It's an empowerment for us - every time you don't have to consult somebody to loan you or to give you something. Women should have power and they should be able to take decisions.’**

Maryama and her community still face challenges as the impact of the climate crisis grows. Access to water and sanitation remains difficult. But by working with WoNES and developing the VSLA, Maryama and her neighbours now have more options for the future.

Maryama’s hope is that **‘the Lord [will] provide more’** through the work of WoNES and VSLAs will **‘extend to other communities so they can benefit like us.’**

You can help make Maryama’s hope a reality this harvest by fundraising, taking action and praying with Christian Aid.



*Maryama holding the groundnuts that she harvests.*

What will you do?

- Hold a collection for Christian Aid’s Harvest appeal at your service
- Use our special tin can label to represent your support for Christian Aid when you collect food for local causes
- Host a bring and share meal with a quiz or harvest craft to raise funds
- Use our printable placemats at your harvest supper to get people talking about the challenges in Sierra Leone