

Grace Christian Fellowship

September 2024 - Newsletter



Hello, it's Harvest Festival this month! A harvest festival is an annual celebration that occurs around the time of the main harvest of a given region.

Various laws and stories in the Bible refer to ancient Israelite crops and harvests. The main harvest was the spring harvest called Pentecost, when the grain crops were gathered in. The summer harvest, a less important harvest, was fruit: grapes, dates, figs, pomegranates and numerous fruits, seeds and vegetables. There was also an autumn olive harvest. All of Israel were commanded to celebrate these feasts and harvests. It was a matter of obedience to God. Overall, the harvests and feasts in the Bible had both practical and spiritual purposes. They helped the Israelites maintain their religious identity, strengthen their relationship with God, and deepen their understanding of His character and plan for humanity.

The feasts also laid the groundwork for the fulfilment and revelation of these spiritual truths in the life, ministry, and teachings of Jesus Christ in the New Testament. The last feast, the Feast of Tabernacles, was timed to mark the end of the harvest in Sept / Oct, when all the corn had been harvested, and when the grapes and the olives had been picked. It is also a prophetic feast that looks to the future age. It points towards a time when God will again *tabernacle* on earth, when Jesus comes and restores all things.

As Christians, we don't have to keep the Jewish feasts, but Harvest Festival is a good time to reflect and thank God for his provision and presence in our lives, and to remember that he is the source of our security and hope.

It is also a time to look forward to his return, when God restores all things. His return from heaven will be personal, visible and glorious, a blessed hope for which we should constantly watch and pray. Amen!

HCT India Update

Samuel has sent this message asking for our prayers.... 'I hope you all are doing well, and we are also doing very well. Thank you so much for your prayers. there is an important issues that I need to tell everybody. 10 days ago in a Christian children's home in a different area, 4 kids died due to food poison and 37 kids were hospitalised. This became a state breaking news and the whole government has ordered all the departments to check each and every children's home in the state. The children's home where the kids died, has 97 kids and they have only a small shed and there is no facilities and when the government inspected the children's home, it was terrible. It became a red flag and the government started inspecting each and every children's home, along with the police department. First police people came to ours to do a preliminary inspection and secondly child welfare committee and ITDC department came and inspected each and every room. They were checking the facilities we are giving to the kids, including bathrooms, doors, lights, taps, kitchen, clean water, food and staff. They said everything is good, but we need to provide few things as the kids doesn't have any beds and are sleeping on the floor and it is not a good thing. So the government has told us that we need to provide beds for all the kids as soon as possible, and the second thing they told us to do is to fix new doors to the bathrooms. The third one is very important and that is to provide mineral water for all the kids. So these three things we need to do as soon as possible. They said they will come back again, but they didn't tell us when they will come back again, so we are really a little bit tense. If they come back and we haven't done what they said, then maybe we will be in trouble, and they may be serious and angry with us, so we are praying that God will make a wave so that we will provide beds and mineral water and provide new bathroom doors for all the kids toilet. Please pray for us and please pray for the work. We are doing ok apart from that. Everything is good. The school is going good and all the new kids come from the different villages are very good and the other school kids merged in our school. All the kids are well settled and they're doing very well and Nicky is working very hard. Printing new text books for all the kids ID cards, etc, it's really an answer to our prayers. We never expected that suddenly this many kids would come into our children's home and school, so praise God for that right now. The government is not unhappy with our facilities in our children's home, but they asking us to do few changes and few things to provide to the kids so please pray for us and thank you so much, and please continue to pray for us. Thank you.

Notices

Prayers

Let's remember to pray for the work in India, as Samuel has requested. Please can we also pray for Pearl's son Eugene, that he is saved and set free miraculously, by the power of the Lord Jesus Christ! Please pray for Georgie who is going to Addenbrookes for a pre-op meeting on wed 28th August. Her operation to remove some cancer cells from her bowel is coming up soon in September, or October.

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Church Day Out

I hope everyone enjoyed the church day out on Saturday 3rd August, at Highways Garden Centre. It's always lovely to meet and have fellowship, so if anyone has any ideas for next year then start thinking now!

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Harvest Festival at GCF



Sunday 29th September is our church Harvest Festival service. If you would like to take part with a reading, testimony, song or anything else, then let us know. Thank you. We will be collecting food donations for the Food Bank on that day, so if you can give any items we would be grateful. Enclosed is a list of items the Foodbank currently needs.



**Indian Independence Day
Celebrations on the Campus**



Meetings/Programme

Church Service - every Sunday 11am at Saints Event Venue

Communion Service - first Sunday in the month

Prayer Meeting - 10am before service at SEV / first Sunday of the month

Charity Offering - third Sunday in the month

Live from India - Nicky preaches usually on the last Sunday of the month

Forthcoming Events / Church Programme 2024

Sunday 29th Sep - Harvest Festival Service/Food donations to Foodbank

Sunday 20th Oct - Church Birthday/Macmillan Coffee Morning

Sunday 3rd Nov - Service with Fireworks!

Sunday 10th Nov - Remembrance Sunday

Sunday 15th Dec - Service with Christmas meal

Sunday 22nd Dec - Carol Service

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If you would like to donate to the church, you can give during the service, donate by bacs, or go to the 'donate' button on the 'Contact' page of the website and make a payment there. If you would like to donate by cheque, please make the cheque out to Hope Community Trust.

GCF supports Hope Community Trust India, which is a Christian ministry, run by Pastor Samuel Zion and his wife Nicky. The ministry has a campus in Andhra Pradesh, with a children's home, school and Bible School.

Please see the GCF website for further details.

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