

Involving all the congregation in your Harvest Festival

Harvest Festival is the perfect time to come together as a church – to thank God for our plentiful harvests and to remember those farmers who need our prayers. This year, we're inviting your church to help us Give Poverty the Boot by supporting FARM-Africa at harvest time. And we'd like to give you a helping hand in planning your Harvest Festival, so here are some ideas that can involve the whole congregation.

Hunger lunch

After your harvest service, your congregation can come together for a hunger lunch. You can sit together and share a simple meal – perhaps of bread, cheese and water – and invite people to donate to FARM-Africa the money they would have spent on their traditional Sunday lunch. A hunger lunch can help the congregation appreciate how African families value each morsel of food, and you can say a special grace together for those who are hungry and in need.



Harvest fête

A harvest fête can bring people together to raise money for FARM-Africa. You can have something for everyone, like a cake sale (perhaps including welly-shaped cookies?) and a 'guess how many plums are in the welly' competition. You can organise a sponsored welly-wanging or a welly relay race. Best of all, a harvest fête need not only appeal to your congregation: it can be a great opportunity to involve the whole community.

Prayers for African farmers

As a congregation, this harvest you can dedicate prayers to the people FARM-Africa helps. To help raise funds, you could ask each member of the congregation to make a donation in exchange for a welly outline (you can download this from at www.farmafrica.org.uk/givepovertytheboot). Each member then writes a short prayer on their welly, which you can collect together for a thought-provoking display. Younger members of the congregation may like to use their prayers for the 'mini farmers' activity – see Harvest Festival Fundraising Ideas which can be downloaded from the resource centre at www.farmafrica.org.uk/givepovertytheboot.

Get close to nature

Why not arrange a group walk? You could choose to walk in the countryside, perhaps doing a sponsored hike in wellies. Or you could walk together simply to celebrate harvest and sing harvest hymns in the open air. You could even hold a short service in the great outdoors, perhaps in the church grounds. By spending time together outside, your congregation can really relate to what harvest time is all about – nature, soil, plants, sunshine and rain.



Quiz night



A quiz night (or afternoon!) is a fun way to come together to raise money for FARM-Africa. It's also great for informing your congregation about harvest time, and it can help you integrate FARM-Africa's work into your Harvest Festival. You can ask each participant to pay an entry fee, and then the congregation splits into teams. You can ask questions on all kinds of subjects, such as African farming, British farming, FARM-Africa and the Bible. You can target questions at the children and others at adults. And you can include a mix of serious and fun questions – for example, 'In which book of the Bible does the Parable of the Sower appear?' and 'Finish the line of this harvest song:

'We plough the fields and scatter . . .'