

October 2025 Autumn

I often approach autumn with mixed feelings. Of all our seasons, it is the season that most prompts me to look both backwards and forwards, and for me it is a season that prompts both thankfulness and an awareness that for many autumn is a time of increasing anxiety.

Some of my earliest memories of autumn include picking mushrooms from the fields in the early morning before the overnight mist lifted, before going home to eat them for breakfast. And memories of scuffling through fallen leaves, or picking fruits and berries from woods and hedgerows, together with smells of jam and chutney making. For me, autumn still includes looking back with thankfulness over the summer's garden harvest (including both what we will eat, and provision of food and shelter for wildlife for the months ahead) and looking forward, sometimes with trepidation, to the list of tasks to try to complete before winter sets in. And as I feel myself beginning to long for the time when daylight hours begin to lengthen rather than shorten, I am aware that for many the approaching darker and colder days bring anxieties about finances or health.

In the church calendar too, autumn is time for looking both backwards and forwards. Harvest encourages us to look back with thankfulness for God's generous provision, and forwards to how we can honour and cherish the world that sustains us. All Souls' encourages us to look back in gratitude for all those who are no longer with us but have lit our lives with love, and forwards to the eternal home with him that God offers to all. Remembrance encourages us to look back in sorrow for lives lost in conflict and in the service of others, and forwards in hope to God's vision of a world where conflict and injustice are no more.

But Christianity teaches us to do more than simply look. Christianity also teaches us to work to become part of the future we long to see. As Christianity teaches us to look forward with hope to a time when God's ways are known on earth, when all conflicts cease and all creation flourishes, so Christianity invites us to look backwards to discern the impact that we, individually and collectively, have on the world around us. And Christianity invites us to commit ourselves to do all that we can to end all that harms, and to promote all that brings about flourishing.

So my prayer for all of us this month is that we would each know, or know afresh, God's love and goodness towards us, and would each long to share that love and goodness with all.

Yours in Christ,
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