



Friends

Happy Harvest Festival. What a special celebration to draw to a close the Season of Creation we have been honouring this past month through worship, wisdom and witness, as we seek to draw closer to God in and through creation.

There are different ways to understand 'harvest'. Yes, as the Harvest Samba reminds us its: '*when we bring our fruit and vegetables, cause we want to share the best of all the good things that we've been given*'... And of course we want to give God thanks for our abundant blessings.

Abundance is another way to open up fresh meaning in our traditional festival. I have been experiencing abundance during the Season of Creation in two significant ways which I'd be like to share.

Firstly, I've committed to walking up into the Downs early each morning with the dogs. It has been such a blessing and I return feeling as if I have been *bathed in green beauty* – not to mention the wildlife. Secondly, I have committed to saying Morning Prayer in our spiritual home of St Mary's Parish Church. I come off the Downs and into church and for a blissful 20 minutes or so, I *immerse myself in the patterns of prayer* which have been a gift of the church for centuries. Both walking the Downs and sitting in the Rector's stall, I am experiencing what it is to 'let go, and let God' – and I need it!

Who knew, but the Japanese government actually have an official policy for this – it's called '**forest bathing**'. Simply put, you go into to nature and let go to nature. So, each morning I am abundantly blessed to bathe in all the good gifts God so freely gives. Why not join me in prayer one morning – there's lots of room to bathe... or up the Downs!

Living faith, hope and love

Jonathan

07538 011579 frj.stmary@gmail.com The Rectory, RH20 4EF