

Methodist Church in Ireland
 Whitehead & Islandmagee Societies

Leviticus 19: 9-10 "When you reap the harvest of your land, do not reap to the very edges of your field or gather the gleanings of your harvest."

"Is your generosity based on facts or faith?" I would imagine that most of us would answer that question, "Faith!" Demographer and pollster George Barna did a survey and discovered that generosity is something that over 93% of all Christians polled believe in and ascribe to. However, when he went on in his survey to refine the question by adding "Do you know the limits of your giving and, therefore, mark yourself as one who is a prudent in that giving, always with an eye on who might be benefiting unscrupulously or frivolously of your giving?" The vast majority of Christians polled chose this latter statement as most indicative of how they view their generosity. If you are like most Christians, qualifying your giving is an important part of what it means to be generous. To most of us, this is what good stewardship is all about.

God instructed His children not only to be generous but to show that generosity in a way that was selfless and non-determining. He forbid His people from selecting targets for their generosity or limiting the scope of their generosity. Simply, generosity was something that should flow freely and without restrictions from a loving heart that was filled with gratitude to a gracious God whose supply of mercy and grace was never-ending. It sprang from a wellspring of love that could never be diminished or used up. Therefore, when they planted a field they planted that field not only with themselves in mind but also the weary traveller that might be journeying along that same field at the time of harvest. There were to be no distinctions as to whom that traveller might be. It may be their neighbour but it was more likely to be a stranger. It might even be an alien, someone not living in the land. This reminded God's people that they were mere caretakers of what He had generously given them in the first place. It wasn't a supply of grace that they owned. Rather, they were tapped into God's eternal grace that flows without end. This is also how God asks us to show our generosity. When we qualify it or attempt to "perfect it" through our own wisdom and understanding, we become more concerned that the good we possess might be depleted and we would suffer for it. *God grant that we may never measure our generosity by our own poor standards, standards of grace that can never hold a candle to the One who IS grace!*



Our Harvest Services 2015

Harvest Services in the other local churches will be notified through the weekly Announcement Sheet.

Sunday 27th September

10.30am WMC Harvest Worship
 7.00pm WMC Harvest Worship

Rev Gary Millar
 Rev Gary Millar

Sunday 11th October

12.00pm IMC Harvest Worship
 7.00pm IMC Harvest Worship

Rev Gary Millar
 Rev Eric Lawson

This year at Harvest we will be supporting the work of our own Container Ministry operating out of Lurgan, Co Armagh. A list of suitable non-perishable foods for decorating the church and inclusion in the harvest will be made available to you as soon as possible via the announcement sheets. Offerings of money to help fund the container will also be gratefully received.

