

Harvest of joy

Third Sunday of Advent



Sowing seeds is an act of anticipation which should culminate in a joyful harvest. But years of drought left Joyce, a farmer in Zimbabwe, reaping nothing but pain and suffering. Now, thanks to your support, Joyce has learnt new drought-resistant farming techniques and can once again feel joy at harvest-time.

Psalm 126 echoes content of the preceding Psalms – people have experienced God’s deliverance in the past but are again confronted with another crisis. They express their trust in God and call out for help as an act of anticipation and hope.

These feelings, which make up a big part of our journey in Advent, are highlighted in the imagery around the “streams of Negev.”

The Negev is the wilderness, or desert region, to the south of Israel. During the dry season, it is totally barren and it is almost impossible to imagine that anything could grow there. But, when the autumn rains come, the streams of Negev become rushing torrents and the entire region suddenly bursts out with life. This simile conveys not only the people’s need but also their faith, hope, and expectation of the life giving deliverance of God.

Sowing seeds is a very real act of anticipation which culminates with the joy of a good harvest. For many, the good harvest may not always come. Famine, drought, and changing weather patterns have meant many people around the world struggle to produce enough food to feed their families – people just like Joyce.

Joyce is a pioneering farmer from Zimbabwe. Along with many others in her community, she has felt the terrible effects of drought, rising food prices, and political instability. Joyce was one of the first people in her district to learn an innovative new way of farming called Conservation Farming.

“When we were farming the usual way, we’d plant our seeds and they wouldn’t do well. We had to repeat the process over and over, and still they wouldn’t germinate” Joyce recalls.

Thanks to supporters like you, Act for Peace’s local partner Christian Care, has taught Joyce a new way of growing crops, much better suited to the cycle of drought and low rainfall that Zimbabwe is now experiencing.

“Before, I never managed to buy anything. But now with Conservation Farming I have managed to buy a security fence for my plot. I feel like a well-established farmer!”
says Joyce, beaming.

The joy of the harvest that the Psalmist proclaims is still every bit as real today as it was then and through your support more than 1,200 families in Zimbabwe alone are feeling that joy first hand as they learn to farm their land in a new way.



Joyce, a conservation farmer in Zimbabwe has seen her yield – and her life transformed – thanks to your gifts to the Christmas Bowl.

When did I see you hungry?

Zimbabwe was once known as the ‘breadbasket’ of Africa. Since 2000, it has struggled to feed its own people due to a series of droughts and the effects of an unsuccessful land reform program, which led to sharp falls in production and food availability across the nation.



\$20

Helping farmers learn new skills to survive

\$20 can provide a Zimbabwean farmer with a maize starter pack.