



Earsdon Methodist



Our Lady & St. Edmund, Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea

CHURCH VIEWS

September 2021

£1.00



St. John's Backworth



Immaculate Heart of Mary, Parish of Our Lady Star of the Sea

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH September 2021

When I was a lad, I looked upon Friday night's bath with mixed feelings. On one hand it was good to get into that hot soapy water and stay until fingers and toes went pink and wrinkly, and the mud of the Wednesday football match eventually disappeared from my knees. On the other hand, there was the disadvantage of sitting in a bath that had been previously scoured with 'VIM'.

For those who do not know, in the good old days VIM was a commonly used scouring powder that not only removed stains from enamel, but it removed enamel; and could remove a layer of skin from your fingers too! And a further consequence of having a VIM-clean-bath was that no matter how much you rinsed it after use, there were always grains of the powder left in the bottom. On bath night, if you did not sit still, there was skin missing from more places than your hands!

So if you used VIM certainly you knew about it. And it is with VIM I want to stay now but use the letters to signify something else.

My V stands for VOCATION

It is often said about ministers, or nurses, that what they do is a vocation – but the same is never said about a bus driver or a postman. But why not? I think that there is a lot of misunderstanding about the word 'vocation'. I remember when I was first accepted as a candidate for the Methodist Ministry, one of my elderly relations (who had better remain anonymous) told all and sundry that it was going to be my lifelong vacation to be a minister. There's already plenty of misunderstanding about vocation without this adding to it!

Having a vocation is using your skills and talents to the best of your ability – you use what you are and what you can do, not just to earn a living but you do it because you feel it is how you can contribute. This is the task of every one of us. It is not the task of the perfect, otherwise there would be no vocations at all.

My I stands for INCARNATION

Now this sounds a bit grand– but it's not., for it is the very essence of what we are about.

By Incarnation, I mean the embodiment and possibility of a quality greater than what is at first seen.

When I was a lad, our family all gathered for Sunday tea at my Gran and Grandad's house – and as part of the tradition we always had tinned fruit and jelly and "incarnation cream" – at least that's what my Grandad called it. I never understood the joke at the time; but it was not a bad metaphor. The cream made fruit and jelly one big splodge – and though it seems irreverent to say that incarnation is the reality that God and us are linked in one big splodge – that's what it boils down to.

My M is for MISSION

Again, another misunderstood word.

Mission is about aim; about what we are moving towards; about what is the purpose for our existence.

There was a man who had a small business in the wilds of Northumberland, and he fell on hard times. He had many creditors after him for money, and he did not know what to do. He really was at his wits' end. So, in spite of his religious scruples, he decided there was nothing else for it, but to get down on his knees and pray, "O Lord, help me win the Lottery." As time went on his debts became larger and his worries greater, and so he prayed all the harder, "O Lord please help me win the lottery." Things got really desperate and so he sat up all night repeating again and again, "Lord, please help me win the lottery." Finally, a voice came from heaven, "Albert, meet me half way – buy a ticket." Mission is about buying the ticket; not that God will solve our problems if only we say we believe in him. But that we need constantly to buy into what God intends and wants us to do, as we see in the person of Jesus Christ. We are part of his loving intention for this place. God works but we must meet God halfway at least!

I understand that VIM can still be bought, but best still it can be practiced.

Wes Blakey

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Forthcoming events

The Parish of Earsdon and Backworth has new events for the month of September !

St. Alban's:

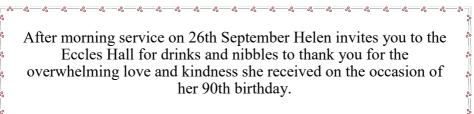
Saturday, 4th September 11.00am - 3.00 pm, Sunflower Family Fun Day! Sunflower judging at 2.30pm. Enjoy the stalls, raffles, stone painting, sweet tombola, ... check out the poster on our Facebook page.

Weekend 18th & 19th September: Heritage Open Church and Scarecrow Festival Weekend!

10am to 5pm on Saturday, then 12noon to 5pm on Sunday.

Come and see the weird and wonderful scarecrows round the village, and take part in the Earsdon Trail and other fun events centred on the Edward Eccles Hall.

An invitation from Helen Jackman of St Alban's :





This heart-warming message is from Rob Gowdy:

Watch out there are Angels about!

Our son and his wife recently took a short break in the Lake District to celebrate a birthday. Unfortunately he took ill with a sore throat which developed into a very painful infection. At the Keswick NHS walk-in centre he was prescribed antibiotics. He was so ill he returned to the hotel and his wife went to the chemist to pick up the prescription, total cost £22. In the hurry to sort out the medication she inadvertently only had my son's debit card but expected to be able to tap the card reader. Unfortunately the tap didn't work and she was asked to enter in the number code which she didn't know. She was about to leave to get the information when the lady behind her said she would pay. There was a bit of discussion but the lady insisted, her only condition was that she should do the same favour for some other person in the future.

What an angel 😳

This little gem is a photograph taken from a book of children's prayers. There may be Dear bod, one or two more in future magazines. Should we call you sir? That's what we call our principal Do you have a beard? He does not. Love, Sarah

Mabel Henderson has sent in this lovely article, which I really enjoy.

During the long months of Covid, with our churches devoid of normal activities, I recalled one of my favourite poems.

DIARY OF A CHURCH MOUSE, by John Betjeman 1906 -84

Here among long-discarded cassocks, Damp stools, and half-split open hassocks, Here where the vicar never looks I nibble through old service books. Lean and alone I spend my days Behind this Church of England baize. I share my dark forgotten room With two oil-lamps and half a broom. The cleaner never bothers me, So here I eat my frugal tea. My bread is sawdust mixed with straw; My jam is polish for the floor. Christmas and Easter may be feasts For congregations and for priests, And so may Whitsun. All the same, They do not fill my meagre frame. For me the only feast at all Is Autumn's Harvest Festival, When I can satisfy my want With ears of corn around the font. I climb the eagle's brazen head To burrow through a loaf of bread. I scramble up the pulpit stair And gnaw the marrows hanging there. It is enjoyable to taste These items ere they go to waste, But how annoying when one finds That other mice with pagan minds Come into church my food to share Who have no proper business there. Two field mice who have no desire To be baptized, invade the choir. A large and most unfriendly rat Comes in to see what we are at.

He says he thinks there is no God And yet he comes ... it's rather odd. This year he stole a sheaf of wheat (It screened our special preacher's seat), And prosperous mice from fields away Come in to hear our organ play, And under cover of its notes Ate through the altar's sheaf of oats. A Low Church mouse, who thinks that I Am too papistical, and High, Yet somehow doesn't think it wrong To munch through Harvest Evensong, While I, who starve the whole year through, Must share my food with rodents who Except at this time of the year Not once inside the church appear. Within the human world I know Such goings-on could not be so, For human beings only do What their religion tells them to. They read the Bible every day And always, night and morning, pray, And just like me, the good church mouse, Worship each week in God's own house, But all the same it's strange to me How very full the church can be With people I don't see at all Except at Harvest Festival.

The celebration of Harvest Festival, which is in the not-too-distant future, brought to mind an incident regarding church mice at Earsdon many years ago.

Choir practice has always been on a Thursday night 7-9pm and it was noted at one of these sessions that where the altos sit the POLO MINTS (ready for dry throats) had been trifled with! Between various psalm & hymn books torn wrappings and half munched Polos were scattered!! Ah yes, there must be "A MOOSE LOOSE ABOOT THIS HOOSE" or rather "church"? On further investigation, (by the brave) our furry friends had also rummaged through cassock pockets in the choir vestry.

We bravely carried on rehearsing, keeping one eye open for the

culprits, and the other on the musical notes our choir master Nick hoped to hear (patience of a saint).

However, Gilbert Hugman, chorister and church warden at that time, set humane traps in choir stalls and vestry and YES eventually the little blighters were caught and set free in the church grounds, to live on a free, more frugal diet. One can only imagine the commotion they may have caused if they appeared during a joyful hymn? Or even worse during Prayers ? (WOW.) Even better during a choir anthem, with the full attention of the congregation!!! Those high notes from the top sopranos, sublime! !!!!.

Covid made me think of the CHURCH MOUSE poem, free to roam in an empty church, sparse pickings and their now meagre frame, but Harvest Festival, full of goodness just around the corer .YEAH !!!! With Covid in retreat, who knows?

PS I knowingly brought my cassock home during Covid. Shame 'cos all throat remedies etc. are kept in plastic containers. Ahhh poor mice, Beatrix Potter would have loved them .





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St Alban's Book Club review

'Butterflies in November' by Auður Ava Ólafsdóttir

August's meeting was notable for two reasons: first, that we very much hope it will be our last on Zoom (!) and second, that no one was very keen on the book.....

We were all attracted by the colour and the 'blurb' which implies it would be heart-warming and possibly light-hearted, but I'm afraid none of us could quite see it after we'd all struggled to the end. Sandy thought it 'lost in translation'.

It's a story about a young woman who embarks on an unexpected journey to her home town, in Iceland, in winter, accompanied by a friend's small child, and it did have many lovely moments, particularly involving the child Tumi, who's deaf and mute but very smart and engaging, and the relationship between him and the unnamed protagonist was indeed heart-warming. But it was rather disjointed in structure and most of us complained that it didn't have an ending – although there was a rather appealing appendix of recipes for dishes mentioned in the book. There was a lot



of description of meals, if you like that sort of thing (I did).

So, overall, our marks out of 10 ranged from 4 (Pat) to 6 (Jo), with most of us plumping for 5. We still had our usual lively discussion though, as reactions did vary.

I shall be giving the Icelandic pancakes a go.....

Many thanks Jo, for this review.

CHURCH VIEWS FOR SEPTEMBER 2021 FROM THE PARISH OF OUR LADY, STAR OF THE SEA

The Lindisfarne Gospels at the Laing Art Gallery



The Lindisfarne Gospels will be on display at the Laing Art Gallery from 17 September until 3 December on loan from the British Library. The Gospels were produced in the scriptorium of the Priory on Lindisfarne in about 715 AD on the instructions of Eadfrith, Bishop of Lindisfarne to honour St Cuthbert who had died in 687 AD. To suitably reverence Cuthbert, the production was magnificent – and costly.

The pages are vellum, specially treated calf skin, and it is estimated that at least 150 calf skins were used. The coloured inks used in the print and

illustrations are from animal, vegetable and mineral sources, mostly local, but some brought from the Mediterranean. It took ten years to complete, and was moved to the Chester-le-Street Priory to protect it from the Viking raids of the 8th and 9th centuries. The present cover (illustrated) is an 1852 copy of the original metal cover, set with jewels, which disappeared during those raids.





Now that travel is again

possible, it's worth considering a visit to the St Cuthbert's Centre on Holy Island, and the Church of St Mary the Virgin with its simple and beautiful interior and impressive stained glass.

St Aidan's Catholic Chapel is a more recent addition, originally served from the Seahouses parish of St Aidan. However, St Aidan's, Seahouses, is now served from St Aidan's, Berwick. The Chapel's stained glass windows are delightful; one, dedicated to St Aidan, was saved from the old Willington Quay church of none other than......St Aidan.



Sustainability

As we indicated last month, changes are being made to move the parish to a more sustainable future in keeping with the thoughts of Pope Francis in Laudato Si, to "work with generosity and tenderness in protecting this world which God has entrusted to us".

The UK Government's directive phasing out halogen and fluorescent bulbs has encouraged this and the lighting at St Edward's has now been changed and LED lighting installed. These lights are not only more environmentally-friendly, they are cheaper to run, so that is a win-win situation. The lighting at Immaculate Heart of Mary, in the body of the church, office and meeting rooms will be upgraded in the near future.

Changes at St Dominic's

A new religious community is to be established this autumn in St Dominic's Priory in New Bridge Street in Newcastle. Three priests of the Society of Jesus, the Jesuits, will live as a community there. Jesuit Frs Gero McLoughlin, Dermot Preston and Peter Randall will be welcomed in the coming months. The parish will remain under the pastoral care of St Mary's Cathedral. St Dominic's has a remarkable history in Newcastle. The Dominican Order, the



"black friars", established themselves here in 1239 beginning an 800 year association with the City which ended when they withdrew in 2020. The connection was interrupted in 1536, when the friaries were dissolved and the Dominican buildings sold to the Newcastle Corporation and used as workshops and Guild meeting rooms. The Dominicans returned to a mission in Hexham in 1721 and after the death of Fr James Worswick who built St Andrew's Church, the first Roman Catholic church in the City since the Reformation, the Order was invited to establish itself there. In 1873 they moved when the current Priory was opened. To serve the community in that desperately deprived area, they also built the public Bath House and Wash House - both were still in use post-war.

New Term Begins

As the new academic year begins it is pleasing to note that many of our Universities still retain their connection to the Christian tradition. At Durham University this term is Michaelmas, after Christmas is Epiphany and the third term is Easter. Oxford has Michaelmas, Hilary (the feast of St Hilary of Poitiers is in January) and Trinity, while Cambridge keeps Michaelmas, Lent and Easter. Long may it continue. Welcome to "**The Secret Life of St Alban's and St John's Folk**". This month we have been talking with <u>Sophie and Jamie</u>, from St. Alban's church.

1) Where were you born?

 \underline{S} : I was born at what is now James Cook University Hospital in Middlesbrough. 30 years ago (before it was a university hospital) it was South Tees. I moved up to Shiremoor between lockdowns to be with Jamie.

<u>J</u>: I was born in Somerset but don't let that persuade you that I'm not a true northerner as my mam is from Longframlington (where we moved back to in childhood) and my dad is from Berwick-upon-Tweed.

2) Surprise us with your hobbies

<u>S & J</u>: We are both obsessed with sea glass hunting at Seaham Beach. There used to be a glassworks there from the 1850s through to 1921 and loads of apprentice pieces and surplus end-of-day pieces were thrown from the factory into the sea. We've been beach combing for about a year now and have found every colour from the most common clear and seafoam pieces to the rarest of reds, oranges and multicoloured treasures! We've definitely gone from a 'moderate collection' to 'problematic hoarding'...it's in jars all over the house!

3) Favourite book/film/TV series

<u>S</u>: I absolutely love the ITV Hornblower series based on the books by CS Forester. I've been obsessed with it ever since I was about eight years old when I came downstairs one evening to find my dad watching an episode. I fell in love with the history, the ships, the uniforms and the drama. I've been a bit of a naval history nerd ever since. I have letters and signed photos from two cast members that I've treasured since I was 12. Even though I've loved the series for 22 years I've only just got round to listening to the audio book version of the novels on YouTube!

<u>J</u>: Jurassic Park no question! There's no other novel where you turn a page and find a graph! I'm a nerd, I can't help it! The film is wonderful but the book is way more engrossing and genuinely terrifying!

4) Somewhere interesting you've lived/visited.

<u>J</u>: I lived for a while in Suzhou (pronounced Sue-Jo) in China. It's known as the Venice of the East because of its beautiful canals. One of the canals is home to a fabulous tea house dating back around 1000 years! There's also a bridge that's the same age as the original parts of the Great Wall and it's still in use! The only thing I disliked about the place was the pollution - the air tasted like glue!

 \underline{S} : One of the most fabulous places I've ever visited has got to be Australia but specifically Kata Tjuta (known as The Olgas) and the Red Centre. It was incredibly magical to be able to walk through such sacred ground and learn all about the culture, history and spiritualism that has enveloped the land for tens of thousands of years. The Northern Territories is also home to some of the most beautiful bush flora I've ever seen and bush tomato relish will always trump tomato ketchup for me!

5) Tell us something that's on your bucket list

<u>J</u>: Antarctica! I'm really, really keen to do a cruise to Antarctica to see it in all its amazing glory. It's one of the only places in the world with no permanent population; it's only researchers and tourists who inhabit it seasonally. There are only ever on average between 70 and 350 inhabitants per million square kilometres!

 \underline{S} : My bucket list wish is to see the Northern Lights! I was lucky enough to see a double rainbow at Uluru and a lunar eclipse on the same night so I feel I've had more than my fair share of bucket list ticks in the Southern Hemisphere...the wonders of the North have yet to be experienced!

6) How has everyday life changed due to Covid

<u>J</u>: My office is based in Edinburgh and before Covid (specifically lockdown) I was renting a room in Musselburgh then driving back to Shiremoor or Middlesbrough every weekend to see Soph. Needless to say, it cost a small fortune! I've been working from home since March last year and unlike most people, I love it! I get to watch the birds in the garden whilst I work and eat noodles and chocolate to my heart's content!

 \underline{S} : I worked in a primary school in Hartlepool throughout Covid so to be honest my day to day life didn't change dramatically as I was still working. My work patterns and focus changed quite a bit though as we all went onto a rota timetable where we worked 50% of our usual hours and only had the children of key workers in school but had to adapt very quickly to teaching and assessing via Google classrooms for the children who were learning from home. One of the hardest aspects of lockdown was going months without seeing Jamie in person. We were lucky enough that we could Skype regularly but I'll never forget the day when we were able to see each other in person and actually hold each other for the first time in months; it was extremely special! One huge way in which my life has changed during the pandemic rather than because of it is that I've had the time to apply for a new job in Newcastle in a completely different field to education. I was told in May that I was successful but am still waiting for a start date...watch this space!

7) Sum up what being a Christian means to you

<u>J</u>: Asking myself the important question in every tough situation - that is "What would Jesus do?" When I'm questioning my actions and how I live my life I genuinely take myself right back and ask myself this question to ground myself and influence my responses, actions and decisions in every aspect of my life.

<u>S</u>: I think fundamentally for me it's taking the messages behind the teachings and applying them to modern life and the way in which I live my life as a kind, accepting and loving person. I'm at the very start of my faith journey and I'm overwhelmed by the feeling of acceptance and belonging whilst also knowing that I have the support of the church family to question, explore and tread my personal path.

8) Favourite hymn and why

 \underline{S} : I absolutely love Amazing Grace as it's such a powerful song about reformation; forgiveness; faith and hope spiritually, socially and economically. I studied the British abolition of slavery for my A Level history thesis and although I had heard Amazing Grace as a child I never appreciated the raw passion until I watched the film of the same name and learnt of John Newton's transformation from slave ship captain to a man of the cloth. My hairs still stand on end every time I hear it.

<u>J</u>: All Things Bright and Beautiful is my favourite as I absolutely adore all animals and forms of life. St Francis is my favourite saint as he patronised the animals. I've been vegan for six years now so it's a very fitting hymn that reflects my lifestyle and love for all creatures great and small.

9) Inspirational historical person:

<u>S</u>: For me, one of the most influential people in history is one of the most overlooked. I mentioned in another answer the abolition of the slave trade. Whilst William Wilberforce is revered (rightly so) for his influence in Parliament alongside William Pitt, they wouldn't have had a leg to stand on without the work of Thomas Clarkson. He was a member of the Clapham Sect (a group of social reformers) who travelled the country gathering and publishing evidence of the abominations of the trade and first hand accounts of slaves and ex traders which he then compiled for Wilberforce and Pitt to present in Parliament. He was also responsible for coming up with the basis of a bill that changed the laws around ships communication flag usage which effectively caused a huge trading blockage on the seas without directly being an abolition bill which had previously been laughed out of Parliament by the Whigs.

<u>J</u>: Marcus Aurelius who was Roman emperor from AD 161-180. He was not only the Roman emperor, he was one of the key stoic philosophers of his time and of today. His philosophies can be summed up as humility, mindfulness and gratitude, and they are just as relevant today as when he wrote his meditations nearly two thousand years ago! People think that mindfulness is quite a new concept as it has become a huge global trend in the last few years, and rightly so, but Marcus Aurelius shows us that we have been practicing it in one way or another for literally millennia!

10) Least favourite food/drink.

<u>S</u>: I can't stand bananas! The smell, taste, texture - everything! They're one of those awful foods that makes everything else taste of it too! I'm not keen on olives but I'd just pick those off/out as I'm not that bothered but if something has banana in it I can't eat it. I don't understand the fascination with banoffee - why ruin the flavour of toffee?! There's a running joke now at school where the kids will purposely ask me to peel their bananas at snack time as they know fine well that I hate them and they find it hilarious!

<u>J</u>: Regardless of being a vegan I can't stand milk and haven't been able to even before veganism; it just smells and tastes of farmyard! When you think about it we are the only animal that drinks the milk of another animal...farm-smelling milk at that!

Earsdon Methodist Church

September 2021

At our recent Zoom Church Council, it was agreed that we would reopen our Church for Sunday worship from the beginning of September. We appreciate that other Churches have already been opening up, but when we considered re-opening earlier in the year we felt that we were not just ready.

For some people generally, trying to get 'back to normal' is a little scary and uncomfortable, and we respect the decision of those who still are uncomfortable about this and feel that the time is not right for them. I think that most of us view the fluctuating infection figures with apprehension, yet we feel that the time is right to attempt this, with the appropriate restrictions and safeguards. We intend to keep the situation under regular review and will keep our congregation up-to-date of any future changes.

It will be good to be back, even in a limited way.

Wes Blakey

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St. Alban's and St. John's Diary Page for September 2021

Sunday	5th		Fourteenth after Trinity							
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's						
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's						
Wednesday	8th	9.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's						
Sunday	12th		<u>Fifteenth after Trinity</u>							
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's						
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's						
Thursday	16th	9.30am	Holy Communion	St John's						
Sunday	19th		Sixteenth after Trinity							
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's						
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's						
Wednesday	22nd	9.30am	Holy Communion	St Alban's						
Sunday	26th		<u>Seventeenth after Trinity</u>							
		8.30am	Holy Communion	St John's						
		10.00am	Holy Communion	St Alban's						
Thursday	30th	9.30am	Holy Communion	St John's						
Sunday	3rd Oct		<u>Eighteenth after Trinity</u>							
		8.30am	Harvest Festival	St John's						

10.00am Harvest Festival

St John's St Alban's



St. Alban's and St. John's

Gospel Readings for September 2021:

 5th
 12th
 19th

 Mark 7. 24-end
 Mark 8. 27- end
 Mark 9. 30- 37

26th3rd OctoberMark 9.38- endMark 4. 1-8



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1	6		4		3	9		
			1				8	
7	8							
9	2		8		4		6	1
							7	2
	1				2			
		8	9		1		3	6
2				3		1		

Please note - all material for next month's magazine (October 2021) will need to be in before Wednesday 29th September 2021. Thank you, *Jean*.

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Marti's Musings 90

I've had such a lovely summer. The weather has been great and I have finally seen all my friends I haven't seen for months! My favourite get together was Faith's birthday party as I got to wear my tiara and be Princess Marti at last.

The really sad thing is that the walks will be coming to an end. I enjoy our weekly rambles and creature spotting. This week was quite scary as we had to jump across this massive ravine! Luckily I'm very nimble on my feet and obviously have 4 paw drive.

I expect to see you all at St Albans Sunflower family fun day, although I hope everybody's sunflowers did better than mum's as hers didn't even

appear! I will be on the hot dog stand of course with my gloves on ready to serve. Happy munching Marti xxx





WORDSEARCH

The Parable of the Weeds (Matthew 13.24-30)

Ever wonder why there is both good and evil allowed in this world? Jesus told a parable that touched on this subject – it is called the Parable of the Weeds. It runs like this: Consider the world as if it were a field where a Farmer has sown good seed. But then an enemy came and sowed weeds among the wheat. So when the wheat came up, so did the weeds. What to do? Instead of destroying the weeds, and thereby risking the wheat, the Farmer tells his reapers to wait and let both wheat and weeds grow together until the harvest. At the harvest he will instruct the reapers to gather up the wheat, but to discard the weeds. So do not despair when evil seems to thrive in this world – there is a reckoning still to come, and justice will be done.

Kingdom Heaven Good Seed		E M		N W		_			_		_	W E
Field	Η	Α	0	Α	Α	Ν		R	Н	Ε	Ε	E
Sleeping Grain	Т	S	W	Т	L	Ν	Е	V	А	Е	Н	D
Weeds Enemy	Ν	Т	Н	Ε	G	Ε	0	Ρ	G	R	Т	S
Servants Master	S	Ε	L	D	Ν	U	В	U	R	Ν	Е	D
Sow Gather	R	R	0	Е	Ι	Е	Ν	Ι	А	R	G	L
Reap	D	Μ	Μ	Ε	Ρ	Т	R	S	V	D	Ο	E
Root Let	Ε	Y	Т	S	Е	V	R	Α	Н	S	Т	
Grow Together	Ε	Ι	S	Ε	Е	Ν	Ν	G	0	0	D	F
Harvest Bundles	W	V	Ν	D	L	Т	Ε	0	0	Ν	0	G
Barn Burned	Η	L	0	Η	S	В	Α	R	Ν	Ε	Μ	Α

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