

Land's End Churches Facebook Plough Sat 23rd Jan 21

Plough Sunday, traditionally the first Sunday after Epiphany, is the time to celebrate the long hours of tilling and preparing before the seed can be sown. It is the time to celebrate the mystery of land and soil itself and all that keeps it in good heart. Associated with the festival are the tools of our work: the plough, the spade, the trowel. In medieval times the communal plough was often kept in church. The festival reflects the virtues of faith and fortitude.

Genesis 8 v.22 "As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease."

Welcome and Opening prayers

Creator God, the whole earth sings of your glory. From the grandeur of the coast and the moors to the quieter beauty of field and hedgerow, **Your hand is seen and praise resounds.**

From the sure footed sheep and cattle to the crops in the field From our care of creation, to our care of one another; **Your hand is seen and praise resounds. Creator God all the world belongs to you, receive our praise. Amen**

Confession and Absolution

Compassionate God; when we have not joined with you in caring for creation
Lord have mercy

When we have not loved our neighbours and missed the chance to care
Christ have mercy

When we are careless about our work, and forget we are God's co-workers:
Lord have mercy

Our Loving God, forgives you and renews you; now sends you out to work with Him in God's world. **Amen**

Thanksgiving

The earth is the Lord's: **And everything that is within it;**

The Lord looked upon the earth: **And filled it with his blessings.**

When farmers plough for planting, do they plough continually?

Do they keep on breaking up and harrowing the soil?

The seed is sown and left to grow and flourish

As long as the earth endures, seed time and harvest:

Summer and winter will never cease.

A Blessing of the Soil

O Lord, all the earth is yours. We give you thanks for this soil, and ask you to bless it and to make our fields and gardens fertile. Life descends to the soil;

From the soil life rises.

Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth, bless this soil; may it produce for those who respect it abundant crops for birds, animals and people; in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Let the heaven rejoice and let the earth be glad;

Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it.

Collect

Eternal God, you crown the year with your goodness and you give us fruits of the earth in their season: grant that we may use them to your glory, for the relief of those in need and for our own well-being; through Jesus Christ your Son, our Lord. **Amen**

Reading Ecclesiasticus (Sirach) 38: 25-27

The wisdom of the scribe depends on the opportunity of leisure;

only the one who has little business can become wise.

²⁵ How can one become wise who handles the plough, and who glories in the shaft of a goad, who drives oxen and is occupied with their work, and whose talk is about bulls? ²⁶ He sets his heart on ploughing furrows, and he is careful about fodder for the heifers. ²⁷ So it is with every artisan and master artisan who labours by night as well as by day;

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Blessing of The Plough

God our strength, we bring before you the ploughs of our land, and ask your blessing on all we do to cultivate the soil. God of every occupation, we bring tools used in many kinds of work, and ask you to bless them to our use and us to your service.

The plough is the foundation of our work and a symbol of our labour. For the soil to be broken up and seed sown, we must first plough the fields. For the green corn to grow and the ripe grain to be reaped, we must plough the fields. For the bread to be baked and the people fed, we must first plough the fields. For prosperity to come to our farms and families, we must first plough the fields. So we bring our ploughshares and tools for you to give your blessing upon them and upon all the work done on our farms and gardens. Let us each offer to God in our hearts our own work.

God our Father bless the ploughs of our land, and all of you who work the soil on farms and in gardens. Bless all the tools we use in our daily work and help us to labour for the good of all, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. God speed the plough.

Let us pray for God's blessing on the work of the farmers of our county, of which the plough is a sign and token. Holy Spirit, give to all who till the ground wisdom to understand your laws, and to co-operate with your ways and grant that the fruits of the earth may not be hoarded by the selfish or squandered by the foolish, but that all may share abundantly in the harvest of the soil; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

God speed the plough and the ploughman, the farm and the farmer.
God speed the plough, on hillside and in valley; on land which is rich, and on land which is poor; in countries overseas, and at home.
God speed the plough, in fair weather and in foul, in success and disappointment, in rain and wind, in frost and sunshine;
God speed the plough.

Let us pray: O God, who gives each of us work to do for your sake, we ask for your blessing on this plough and upon all the machines and tools that enable us to do our work upon the land. We ask you to prosper throughout the year the work done on our local farms. May the farmers' hopes be fulfilled in a plentiful harvest; may your people be fed with wholesome food; may town and country, united in gratitude to you, be drawn nearer to the understanding and true service of each other: through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Intercessions

Lord in your mercy

All: Hear our prayer

And at the end Merciful Father, **accept these prayers for the sake of your Son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be your name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory for ever and ever. Amen.

A prayer for farmers: Loving God, we give you thanks for all those involved in bringing us our food. We pray particularly for farmers as they work hard to care for the land and for livestock; keep them safe and help them to know your presence with them. We remember all those who work to keep society going, often unseen and unacknowledged. **Thank you for their hard work and all it means to us. In Jesus' name, Amen.**

A prayer for Plough Sunday: Creator God, you give us the amazing gift of soil in which to grow crops to feed both humans and animals. Grant us wisdom as we seek to work with you and in harmony with the micro-organisms and worms in maintaining soil fertility and proper drainage. As we plant successive crops, we trust you for the miracle of growth enabled by the balance of light, warmth, nutrients and moisture to produce an abundant crop. **Keep us alert to maintain and use our tools and machinery carefully and give us pride and satisfaction in our work. This we pray in the name of Christ, who set his hand to the plough and did not look back. Amen.**

A prayer of thanksgiving: Every good and perfect gift comes from you, O Lord. For fertile soil, for the smell of newly-turned earth, We give you thanks, O Lord. For keen, cold, frosty winter days and nights, We give you thanks, O Lord. For the tractor's hum and the gleam of a cutting edge, We give you thanks, O Lord. For the beauty of a clean-cut furrow and the sweep of a well-ploughed field, We give you thanks, O Lord. **Blessed be you, Lord for all your gifts to us.**

Blessing: May God bless you in winter and summer, in your ploughing, your sowing and your reaping. May God give you sunshine and rain in due season; May God, who gladdens the face of the earth, give you joyfulness of heart. May God, who has called you to work on the land set your affections upon himself. And may the blessing of the Trinity, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be yours today and always. **Amen.**

Tend the earth, care for God's good creation, and bring forth the fruits of righteousness. Go in the peace of Christ. **Thanks be to God.**