

TRACTORS AND SPRING

A service that was put together based around Bill Bennett's "Listen to the Shepherd Whakarongo Ki Te Kupu", 1997 Printed by Swift Print, 23 Taonui St, Palmerston North, New Zealand.

THE GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE

Welcome Theme Tractors and spring

Prayer

Song Come on and celebrate Down the mountain

On OHP

Minister: The God of creation is here.

People: The Lord of the earth blesses us.

Minister let the earth bring forth her increase.

People :Praise to our God who brings us together.

Sentence: As long as the earth endures, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease. (Gen. 8: 22)

Bidding Prayer (Confession)

We remember both the promise and the curse placed on the shoulders of humanity regarding the nurture of the earth; of God's promise at Eden, of how humankind defied the divine order, and God declared that the filling of the earth would be hard and wearisome. We see the power of tractor and plough transforming the landscape, that the land may produce its plenty. We also know that greed and misuse can create wildernesses and infertility. We pray that all modern farm machinery now in use in our district, will help sustain the earth's riches and provide for future generations. Amen

As we have acknowledged our need for Gods forgiveness and guidance we hear a sound coming from the mountains.

Song I hear a sound coming from the mountain

THE MINISTRY OF THE WORD Psalm 8 A New Testament Reading Luke 8: 4-8

ADDRESS

Jesus told that story that we have just read and Luke wrote it down so that it would not be forgotten. Jesus said "a farmer went out to sow his seed" I wonder what sort of seed he sowed? I've got some seeds here. I wonder if you can tell me what sort they are? (*Show an assortment of seeds*) These seeds don't look very alive do they? In fact they look rather dead. But if we put them in the dark soil and let the sun warm the soil and the rain water the soil, one day we would see tiny green shoots coming through the soil. And do you know what we would see if we dug the little seed out of the ground with a trowel? We would see that in the darkness, the warmth and the dampness the seed had developed roots, before it developed shoots. So the seeds that looked dead came to life. When Jesus died and was buried in the tomb the people were sad because they thought he was dead forever. But God brought him back to life again and everyone was happy. Jesus was not dead he was alive. Were happy too because Jesus is alive for us too. We can't see him but his spirit is at work bringing new life into sad peoples hearts and lives. Spring time is a good time to think about Jesus coming alive and bringing new life as we see signs of new life all around us. Farmers all around the district are using their tractors at present to get the ground ready for planting of their seeds this spring which will remind them of new life. Here we have some little "Barley Boys" for you to take home. Inside their heads are barley seeds. If you sit them in the top of a jar their tail dangling in the water and if you dampen the head and put it on the window sill in the sun your little barley boy

will grow hair as the seeds come to life and send down roots into the water and shoots up to the light. It will help you to remember that Jesus brings new life. He is not dead but he is alive. Song From the rising of the sun to the going down Question What do we use on the farm to prepare for spring? The Tractor Ask the children to display their tractors, Big ones little ones..... Each Tractor is made and engineered for different tasks, some have front end loaders, some have trays on the back etc. The tractor has meant a lot of time saving and back breaking toil to the farmers. Isn't it good that God has given us brains that have helped us develop and make tractors. Lets give God thanks with a prayer about a tractor.

Lets pray.

God of all technology we give you thanks for the farm tractor, that modern symbol of our dominion over the earth. How versatile it is, how much we take it for granted. We plough the land, disc and harrow, dig, bulldoze, excavate. pull, saw timber, and harvest with it. We can build up and destroy with it, for it is an extension of all our possibilities to create and to subjugate. Help us use it wisely and safely. Thank you for this work-saver. Amen

Isn't God great the way he has given us clever people with minds and hands that could make tractors to help plant and sow the crops. And it's all because...

Song He's got the whole world in his hands

God has indeed got the world in his hands, this is shown by the way that he has given us creation to enjoy, He has given us our brains and our hands so we can create things like the tractor and subdue and use creation for good. We see this happening in our district as the soil begins to warm with the suns rays and the farmers are beginning to till the land for the seeds to be planted for Crops. We can begin to know Gods love and care as we work with Gods creation. It is a love that God wants everyone to know about.

Song Father God I wonder .I the Lord of sea and sky

One way we can show Gods love for people is to pray for them asking that God will bless them as they live and work. Lets us pray together using the OHP.

BLESSING OF TRACTOR AND PLOUGH

Farmer(s): We ask that, with the season of soil preparation and planting underway, you declare God's blessing upon this work, of which this tractor and plough are symbols.

Minister or Priest : God of the earth and sky, who guides the seasons through their cycle, give stamina to those whose days will be spent sitting on the tractor, in cool wind or dusty heat. Let the furrowed, fumed earth become a fertile seedbed for planting, and produce a rich and full harvest. Blessing of Tractor and Plough God speed the tractor and plough! May the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, be upon you, and all who plough these paddocks. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it. The world, and those who dwell there. The breaking of the soil and the furrowed trails of the ploughed earth, the roar of the tractor's engine and the sharpness of the spring wind: Declare your presence, O God. We skill of the plougher, with steady eye and hand, and the curiosity of the birds that follow after: Awaken our sense of wonder and responsibility. The days of discing, rolling and harrowing, with a constant eye on the weather, till the earth is ready for sowing; Reveal creation's patience and readiness to provide. The Creator who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. Thanks be to God.

Lord's Prayer

Song We plough the fields and scatter.

Blessing May the High God shield us all the day long. May we dwell under his protection today and forever. Amen.