***Song of the Harvest***

**Come, ye thankful people, come,**

**raise the song of harvest home;**

**all is safely gathered in,**

**ere the winter storms begin.**

**God our Maker doth provide**

**for our wants to be supplied;**

**come to God's own temple, come,**

**raise the song of harvest home.**

**All the world is God's own field,**

**fruit as praise to God we yield;**

**wheat and tares together sown**

**are to joy or sorrow grown;**

**first the blade and then the ear,**

**then the full corn shall appear;**

**Lord of harvest, grant that we**

**wholesome grain and pure may be.**

**For the Lord our God shall come,**

**and shall take the harvest home;**

**from the field shall in that day**

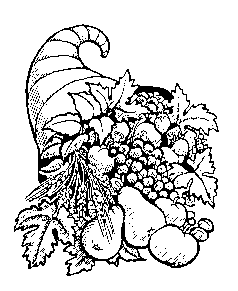
**all offenses purge away,**

**giving angels charge at last**

**in the fire the tares to cast;**

**but the fruitful ears to store**

**in the garner evermore.**

 **Even so, Lord, quickly come,**

**bring thy final harvest home;**

**gather thou thy people in,**

**free from sorrow, free from sin,**

**there, forever purified,**

**in thy presence to abide;**

**come, with all thine angels, come,**

**raise the glorious harvest home.**

***Poets and Bards – reflections and fragments***

*from William Blake, Martha Lavina Hoffman, Elizabeth Barratt Browning,*

*DH Lawrence, Percy Bysshe Shelley.*

*……. .at the end of which we take up again the first verse of our song of the harvest.*

***The Transfiguration Mark 9:2-8***

***Reflection*** *- autumn leaves & changing lives (around fire bowl)*

Song of the Bard – “Who knows where the time goes?”

*(adapted from original words and music by Sandy Denny)*

***The Dark Night of the Soul***

*meditation and chant*

*Refrain*

**As you lose your life, lose your life,**

**as you lose your life, you find it.**

**As a grain of wheat is buried deep,**

**as you lose your life, you find it**

Song of the Bard - based on a poem by John of the Cross

*(adapted from an arrangement by Loreena McKenitt ) During which seeds are buried in pots of earth)*

***St Michael and protection in the dark half of the year***

Michaelmas was also associated with the Equinox and was traditionally one of the quarter days when debts were settled and workers hired. It marked the end of the harvest for many, hence the date people where paid hired and fired. Also the start of school term following the harvest.

Often a Goose, fed on the stubble of the field was given as payment to the landlord and traditionally Goose was eaten, hence the goose fairs of this time of year.

As the dark part of the year is entered thoughts turn to the need for protection from the forces of darkness and also the need for food and prosperity in winter, hence the following protection prayer

‘prosperity of family, Mystery of Michael, Protection of the Trinity’

***Traveling in the protection of Michael***

*As the callers read each prayer, please turn to face in their direction*

God of the South and passing summer

**Be with us as the days shorten and darken**

God of the East and the promise of Spring

**Be with us as we travel onwards in hope**

God of the North and coming winter

**Be with us, protect us and guide us**

God of the West and Autumn harvest

**Be with us and feed us in body mind and spirit**

And May the blessing of the God of life and death

In whom the seasons grow and fade

In whom all of us are held in love

Our Father and Mother who made us

Our Brother Jesus who mends us

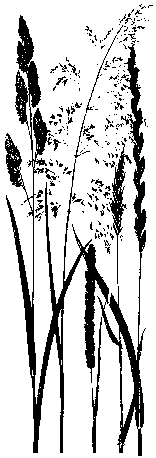
Our Sustainer the Spirit who moulds us

Be upon as at this time

And in all times to come

**Amen**

**A celebration for the Autumn Equinox and Michaelmas**

***Introduction &*** *****Opening prayer***

Be still, be attentive to the divine presence *(Silent pause)*

God of beginnings and endings

as light and dark balance in the midst of Autumn   
**We come to you**

as the fruits of the harvest are gathered  
**We welcome your life giving Spirit**

as mortals made in your image   
**We welcome each other**

**Christ Jesus   
be the life within us  
be the love between us  
be the light that guides us  
this day   
and for eternity**

***Welcoming the God of the Circle of the Seasons***

*We create a sacred space for prayer and ritual according to Celtic custom.*

*As the callers read each prayer, please turn to face in their direction*

God of the South and the warm breeze

**we call to you to be with us on our life’s journey**

God of the East and sun rising

**we call to you to bring us life renewed**

God of the North and the cold winds

**we call to you to be the warmth in our hearts**

God of the west and sun setting   
**we call to you as the time of harvest approaches**

