

Order of service 2nd August 2020 – Trinity 8

Welcome and Gathering

We welcome you to this service from the churches of the Benefice of Rural East York. Today we will be reflecting on the gospel account of the Feeding of the 5000, and we hope that you too will be fed through this offering of worship.

My name is Nick Bird, and together with our curate Mark Poole and the many others involved in bringing this service together, we gather on screens, via the telephone, or simply in spirit in our own homes whilst reading a transcript, to offer to God praise and thanksgiving.

So I invite you to still your hearts, and to open them to the Spirit, hiding nothing that needs to be brought forward for healing, and welcoming the blessing of grace that God has to offer.

Our deepest desire is to love Jesus, to live in the Spirit, and to praise the Divine Creator. So let us pray....

Come God
Come walk with your people
for you alone are our strength and glory
and we put our trust in you.

Come God,
Come walk behind us, beside us, before us
for you alone are our shelter and direction
and we put our trust in you.

Come God
Come seek and find and put us right
for you alone are the light in our darkness
and we put our trust in you.

Come God
We know you are near
the sound of your footsteps sets us dancing
help us to praise and worship you.

Confession

God of the spirit of kindness,
in the gory of earth and sea and stars,
in the kaleidoscope of colour and shade and shapeliness,
in the patterns of humour and tenderness and touch,
we celebrate your generosity.

Forgive us when we forget the gift in our every breath,
the care that sustains our every moment,
that grace that can transform our every day.

Set us free from the prison of grudging hearts,

mean desires,
resentful spirits,
give us the courage to act with justice and generosity,
and draw us into love that does not calculate or keep score.

Absolution

Merciful God, grant to your faithful people pardon and peace, that we may be cleansed from all our sins and serve you with a quiet mind; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father
There is no shadow of turning with Thee
Thou changes not, Thy compassion's, they fail not
As Thou hast been, Thou forever will be
Great is Thy faithfulness
Great is Thy faithfulness
Morning by morning new mercies I see
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me

Summer and winter, springtime and harvest
Sun, moon and stars in their courses above
Join with all nature in manifold witness
To Thy great faithfulness, mercy and love
Great is Thy faithfulness
Great is Thy faithfulness
Morning by morning new mercies I see
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me!

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth
Thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide
Strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow
Blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!
Great is Thy faithfulness
Great is Thy faithfulness
Morning by morning new mercies I see
All I have needed Thy hand hath provided
Great is Thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me
Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father

Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand - Matthew 14:13-21

When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick. As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food." Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat."

“We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish,” they answered.

“Bring them here to me,” he said. And he directed the people to sit down on the grass.

Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Homily

Jesus' feeding of the five thousand is a well-known miracle story that is recorded in all four of the Gospels. And this is perhaps of no surprise. For it is an account of Jesus' time on earth, his living with us and amongst us, that is shimmering with breath-taking meaning and truths.

I want to focus on three of those possible meanings that shine out from Matthew's account powerfully illuminating the nature and purposes of God.

Jesus has just heard of the death of his dear friend John the Baptist, and despite trying to seek out a little time alone to process the news and deal with his grief, the crowds, so enthralled by Jesus' teaching, sought him out. Jesus saw them, and overwhelmed with compassion, he surrendered himself to serving the deepest needs and hurts and wounds of humanity he saw before him, and he brought healing and life in all abundance. This is summed up in just one of the two sentences that Jesus utters in the entire story. Verse 18, he said to the disciples 'Bring them here to me.' Bring these people who are hungry and thirsty and in need, to me. Jesus demonstrates God's reaching out to you and me to be drawn into His presence. He invites us into communion with Him, into relationship with Him so that he can feed, satisfy and heal the deepest desires and longings of our hearts to an abundance and overflowing of joy and peace.

Secondly, God calls us into community. To be in community with one another. We are created by God for being in community and relationship not only with Him, but with one another too. In Jesus's time, eating together as the crowds on the hillside did, was a symbol of unity. Once again, Jesus powerfully demonstrated this by feeding a community of five thousand. What a party! What a picnic! What a meal like no other that must have felt! You can almost hear the joyful buzz of talking and laughter as they shared together! God's children being and doing as they were lovingly created to be and do. Being fully human, in fellowship, having fun and sharing friendship with one another. But more than this, Jesus was calling and welcoming those gathered into a *new* community. A new community in His Kingdom where no one is excluded. One that is united in His saving and redeeming grace. All of us, whoever we are, are truly welcomed into this new community in Christ today.

And finally, we maybe discover something more about the purposes of God in the only other sentence Jesus utters. In verse 16, Jesus says to the disciples, '...you give them something to eat.' Once called into communion and into the new community with Him, a Kingdom that is brimming and overflowing with an abundance of His compassionate love, mercy and grace for each one of us, imagined here as twelve spare basketfuls, He commissions us to share that love. 'You give them something to eat.' We are invited to share this love. We may feel that our humble offering to be shared for a service so great is just too meagre for the task. But Jesus Christ showed us that just five loaves and two fishes was sufficient to feed five thousand and with more to spare. God is the source of the feeding, but the resources are human, they are us, and the little we may feel we have to offer. The work of the disciples, the bread of human effort is honoured and magnified by Jesus. God welcomes, invites and commissions us to offer all that we have and all that we are, and He willingly receives it, blesses it and multiplies it for the glorious purposes of His

Kingdom.

Today, Jesus Christ welcomes us into communion with Him. Invites us to feast in a new community with one another, and He commissions us to go out and share this love, with all that we have to offer, with the seal of His blessing, so that the hungry of this world may be fed. May we accept His invitation. **Amen**

Go, tell it on the mountain

*Go, tell it on the mountain,
Over the hills and everywhere,
Go, tell it on the mountain that
Jesus Christ is born.*

While shepherds kept their watching
O'er wandering flocks by night,
Behold, from out of heaven,
There shone a holy light. *Refrain*

And lo, when they had seen it,
They all bowed down and prayed;
They travelled on together
To where the babe was laid. *Refrain*

When I was a seeker,
I sought both night and day,
I asked the Lord to help me
And he showed me the way. *Refrain*

He made me a watchman
Upon a city wall,
And, if I am a Christian,
I am the least of all. *Refrain*

Agape Liturgy – Call to the Feast

This is a table of welcome. All are free to come and eat. As we gather at this table, we remember these words of our brother Jesus: "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst."

We come to this table hungry and thirsty. Satisfy us, O God.

As we gather at this table, we remember these words of our brother Jesus: "Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.

We come to this table weary and burdened. Give us rest, O God.

Prayer

Living God, you are present in our midst.

And we praise you.

Because, in Jesus, you have shown us a way of hospitality, simplicity, prayer and harmony.

We praise you.

Weak as we are, you fill us with hope. Lover of our souls, you give us joy.

And we praise you. Amen.

Preparation

Jesus is with us!

Let us open our hearts to God and to one another. **Amen.**

We take joy in this meal which we share together, and remember that Jesus too is here, with us. In our midst are bread and wine to remind us of his promises to us:

Bread, for he is the bread of life. He nourishes us as we put our trust in him.

A cup, as a reminder of his sufferings. He took up the cup with his friends before he was crucified, and his blood flowed. He suffers still with those who weep, or sigh today and with those in pain or distress. As we eat and drink, we remember Jesus who lived and died and rose again for us and was present with his followers when bread was broken.

Come, Holy Spirit, come!

Bless this bread and bless this fruit of the vine. **Amen.**

Bless all of us in our eating and drinking now.

May our eyes be opened, that we may recognise the risen Christ in our midst, in each other, and in all for whom Jesus died.

Sharing the Agape

We pass the bread and wine to one another.

With this bread, remember Jesus With this cup, remember Jesus.

After the agape

Lord Jesus Christ you have put your life into our hands; now we put our lives into yours.

Take us, renew us and remake us. What we have been is past, what we shall be through you still awaits us. Lead us on, Lord. Take us with you. **Amen.**

Prayers of thanksgiving and intercession

Lord Jesus we thank you for the many examples there are in the bible of you sharing a meal with your disciples, friends and strangers. Thank you for occasions in the past when we ourselves have been able to do that and also in the present time as we come out of lockdown and meet family and friends again. Thank you for fellowship one with another and for the food we eat. We pray that we may not take your gifts of food for granted. Help us to be discerning in what we buy especially when there are others who have no money to buy food and rely on food banks. We pray for those in other countries, who have neither money or food and especially children whose long term health will suffer as a result of the current Covid situation.

May the blessing of light be on us,

Light without and light within.

May the blessed sun shine on us

And warm each heart

Till it glows like a great fire,

So that strangers and friends

may come in and warm themselves.

And may the light shine out

From our eyes,

Like a candle set in the windows of a house,

And may the Lord bless us and all those who we encounter. Amen

We pray for those who live alone or are self isolating due to Covid and who are not able to meet family and friends or share a meal together. May you Lord be their hope and strength for each day. Stay close to them, and may they know the assurance of your Love

and presence as you walk alongside. Touch their hearts Lord with your Holy Spirit and bring them Joy and Peace.

Deep peace of the running wave to them
Deep peace of the flowing air to them
Deep peace of the quiet earth to them
Deep peace of the shining stars to them
Deep peace of the Son of Peace to them
Amen

Lord thank you for our Church Communities, and the village communities in which we live. Thank you for the many acts of caring and kindness which have taken place especially over the past few months. We pray that you would come by your Holy Spirit and fill each one of us, help us to recognise the gifts you have given us. Inspire us all to give our time and talents, so that your Kingdom will be multiplied across this Benefice.

Just as Jesus has compassion for the crowds, Lord show each of us Compassion for one another. In situations we meet give us an awareness, challenge our hearts to have a right attitude and give us a willingness to act out of compassion for one another.

Lord, make our hearts places of Peace
And our minds harbours of tranquillity
Sow in our souls, true love for you
And for one another
And root deeply within us
Friendship and unity
So may we give peace to each other sincerely,
And receive it beautifully

So Lord, lead us out
To live as changed people
Ask much of us
Expect much from us
Enable much by us
Encourage many through us

We ask these prayers for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ. **Amen**

10,000 Reasons (Bless the Lord)

Bless the Lord oh my soul, Oh my soul
Worship His Holy name
Sing like never before, Oh my soul
I'll worship Your Holy name

The sun comes up, it's a new day dawning
It's time to sing Your song again
Whatever may pass and whatever lies before me
Let me be singing when the evening comes

Refrain

You're rich in love and You're slow to anger
Your name is great and Your heart is kind
For all Your goodness I will keep on singing
Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find

Refrain

And on that day when my strength is failing
The end draws near and my time has come
Still my soul will sing Your praise unending
Ten thousand years and then forevermore.

Refrain

Yes I'll worship Your Holy name
I'll worship Your Holy name
Sing like never before, oh my soul
I'll worship Your Holy name
Jesus I will worship Your Holy name
Worship Your Holy name

The Sending

As we leave now, let us do so in faith.

Trusting God to guide us and keep us.

As we leave now, let us do so in hope.

Knowing God holds the future in his hands.

As we leave now, let us do so in love.

Serving others in thought, word and deed in the name of Christ.

As we leave now, let us do so in faith, in hope, and in love.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

The Blessing

The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious to you.

The Lord look kindly upon you and grant you peace.

Amen.