**Sunday August 2nd 2020** WORSHIP AT HOME: **Matthew 14.13-21**

Welcome to our act of Worship

Call to worship *Isaiah 55v1-2*

God says:  
‘Everyone who thirsts, come to the waters;  
you that have no money, come, buy and eat!  
Why do you spend money on that which is not bread,  
and labour for that which does not satisfy?  
Listen to me, eat what is good, and delight in me.’

A Prayer of Approach

Dear God,  
you look deep inside us,  
seeing not only our outer but our inner needs.  
Have compassion on us, we pray.  
Feed us today from your holy word,  
and we will be filled. **Amen.**

HYMN: There’s a wideness in God’s mercy...

HP230, MP683, RS353, STF416

(Some of the hymn books widely used in the Wiltshire United Area)

*Prayers of Praise*

God, who made the world, and everything in it, we marvel at the variety and richness and adore your holy name.

God, who continually recreates, forgiving and offering new opportunities, we marvel at your generosity and adore your holy name.

God, who shares our experiences, good and bad, we marvel at your faithfulness and adore your holy name. **Amen.**

*Prayer of Confession*

*Response:*  
Forgive us our sins,  
**as we forgive those who sin against us.**  
  
When your kingdom on earth  
is a pale reflection of your kingdom in heaven,  
because there is still hunger and need,  
and there is still greed and gluttony:

When your kingdom on earth  
is a pale reflection of your kingdom in heaven,  
because people are still homeless  
and refugees still seek sanctuary:

When your kingdom on earth  
is a pale reflection of your kingdom in heaven,  
because conflicts and wars rage between peoples and nations,  
and prejudice and hatred divide neighbours and families:

When your kingdom on earth  
is a pale reflection of your kingdom in heaven,  
because love and compassion are seldom seen,  
and hard-nosed reality collides with justice:  
Lead us not into temptation,  
**but deliver us from evil.**  
**Amen.**

HYMN Praise and thanksgiving, Father, we offer

HP350, MP-, RS48 , STF125

Ministry of the Word of God

Lectionary Bible readings:

Isaiah 55.1-5; Psalm 145.8-9,14-21; Romans 9.1-5; **GOSPEL Matthew 14.13-21 With special focus**

**Matthew 14v20 ‘And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full.’**

This is the Gospel of Christ.

**Praise to Christ our Lord.**

Reflection

“One scoop or two?” asked the ice-cream seller at Boscombe beach two weeks ago. We opted for two and it seemed as though we had half a tub on our cones. “Talk about generous,” I thought, until he told me how much!

Generosity in abundance is at the heart of today’s Gospel, recall our opening hymn, *“There’s a wideness in God’s mercy like the wideness of the sea,”* that can equally include the divine bountiful provision. God does not do small measures! Think of the miracle of water into wine at Cana*(John 2)*, think of the overflowing loving welcome that the Prodigal receives *(Luke 15)* Reflect on the Prayer of Humble Access at Holy Communion, *“We are not worthy … but it is your grace always to have mercy…”*

We know this passage backwards, it is the only miracle recorded in each Gospel *(Matthew 14:13-21, Mark 6:31-44, Luke 9:12-17, and John 6:1-13)*. What we sometimes overlook is the location. Jesus goes into the barren wilderness presumably to pray as he often did, and the people followed him. So, there he feeds them, it is reminiscent of the feeding of the people of Israel as they sojourned in the desert. Remember manna, that mysterious bread-like substance that covered the ground in the morning that was given by God to feed the Hebrew people. Those in the crowd of 5000 (plus women and children) would hardly fail to notice and connect the two events.

It is only in John’s version that we have the boy bringing forth his five rolls and two fish. Yet all Gospels record how Jesus takes this miniscule amount, prays over it and no-one goes hungry. Because God is the glue that holds everything together and the energy that courses through and gives life to everything, in the hands of the Son of God a few loaves and fishes was more than enough to feed them all, even to the extent of leftovers. God does not do small measures!

That challenges us in our response to those who are hungry in our world, and hunger can be more than physical and the barren wilderness in which this passage is set can be anywhere, especially at this time of Covid pandemic. I like the Dalai Lama’s prescription for the ending of world hunger. It is simply this, “Share.” This miracle has an ethical dimension. Christ shared his bounty and there was more than enough, let us do likewise always remembering that God does not do small measures!

Prayer of Response for all ages

*Hold out hands, palms upward, throughout the prayer.*  
  
Lord, there are so many hungry people in our world today.  
**Please make me grateful for the food I have,**  
**and may I always be ready to share my blessings.**  
**Amen.**

HYMN O bread to pilgrims given…

HP620, MP-, RS456, STF -

Our Prayers

Bidding: Lord in your mercy,

Response: Hear our prayer

Let us pray:

For a spirit of awe and wonder: that we may recognise God’s generosity who abundantly blesses us and fulfils all our needs.

For fuller gratitude: that we may appreciate all the gifts which God has given us and freely share them with all who are in need.

For all who are hungry, facing famine, are undernourished, or struggling with failed crops: that God will ease their suffering and touch the hearts of many to share with them.

For all who work the fields or bring food to our tables: that God will protect them, renew their strength, and make fruitful their labours.

For those who visit and bring nourishment to the unwell and housebound: that they may see Christ in all whom they serve and bring God’s love to those whom they visit.

For the members of Parliament: that God will open a new understanding of the issues that they face and help them to work together to serve those who are most in need.

For those unwell, particularly those with Covid-19: that God will relieve their pain, restore them to wholeness, and guide all who are caring for them.

**Amen.**

The Lord’s Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy 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.**

HYMN Alleluia! Sing to Jesus

HP592, MP207, RS, STF568

Blessing

Waste nothing, give all,  
and be blessed every moment and every day  
as you go in Jesus’ name  
to be his disciples and his friends. **Amen.**

Rev David Coppard Superintendent @ Wiltshire United Area

Bank Chaplain @ Musgrove Park Hospital, Taunton

***Our churches may not be open, but the Church is alive.***

*This is service is offered to any and all, with love and prayers.*

A Prayer for the coming week

Lord, a new week lies ahead of me  
and I don’t really know what it will bring.  
Help me to be aware of people around me  
who are struggling in any way.  
May I be sensitive to their needs  
and seek your wisdom as I come alongside them.  
I want to be there for them, Lord, bearing your blessing. **Amen.**

**Matthew 14.13-21**

**Feeding the Five Thousand**

**13 Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. 14When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. 15When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, ‘This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves.’ 16Jesus said to them, ‘They need not go away; you give them something to eat.’ 17They replied, ‘We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish.’ 18And he said, ‘Bring them here to me.’ 19Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.****20And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. 21And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.**

**Mini Bible story based on today’s Gospel**

*Enough for everyone*

**Many people came to meet Jesus.  
*Hold out hands.*  
They waited all day, and started to get hungry.  
*Rub tummy.*  
The disciples said, ‘Send them all home!’  
*Sweep hand away.*  
Jesus said, ‘No!  
*Shake head.*  
You feed them!’  
*Point.*  
The disciples said, ‘There isn’t enough –  
*Shrug shoulders.*  
only five loaves and two fish.’  
*Hold up five fingers and two fingers.*  
Jesus blessed the food  
*Praying hands.*  
and shared it out.  
*Mime handing out.*  
There was enough for everyone!  
*Pat tummy.***

**There's a wideness in God's mercy,** **T Corvedale**

like the wideness of the sea;  
there's a kindness in his justice  
which is more than liberty.  
  
There is plentiful redemption  
through the blood that Christ has shed;  
there is joy for all the members  
in the sorrows of the head.  
  
For the love of God is broader  
than the measure of our mind;  
and the heart of the eternal  
is most wonderfully kind.

But we make his love too narrow

By false limits of our own;

And we magnify his strictness

With a zeal he will not own.  
  
If our love were but more simple,  
we should take him at his word;  
and our lives would be illumined,  
by the glory of the Lord.

**Praise and thanksgiving,** **T Bunessan**  
Father, we offer,  
For all things living  
You have made good;  
Harvest of sown fields,  
Fruits of the orchard,  
Hay from the mown fields,  
blossom and wood.  
  
Lord, bless the labour  
We bring to serve you,  
That with our neighbour  
we may be fed.  
Sowing or tilling,  
We would work with you;  
Harvesting, milling,  
For daily bread.  
  
Father, providing  
Food for your children,  
Your wisdom guiding  
Teaches us share  
One with another,  
So that, rejoicing  
With us, our brother  
May know your care.  
  
Then will your blessing  
Reach every people;  
Each one confessing  
Your gracious hand.  
When you are reigning  
No one will hunger:  
Your love sustaining  
Fruitful the land.

**O Bread to pilgrims given, T Passion Chorale**  
O Food that angels eat,  
O Manna sent from heaven,  
For heav'n-bom natures meet:  
Give us, for thee long pining,  
To eat till richly filled;  
Till, earth's delights resigning,  
Our every wish is stilled.

O Fountain, purely flowing  
Forth from that sacred heart,  
Our Saviour's grace bestowing,  
True wine of life thou art.  
O let us, freely tasting,  
Our spirits' thirst assuage;  
Thy goodness, never wasting,  
Avails from age to age.

Jesus, this feast receiving,  
We thee unseen adore;  
Thy faithful word believing,  
We take, and doubt no more:  
Give us, thou true and loving,  
On earth to live in thee;  
Then, death the veil removing,  
Thy glorious face to see.

**Alleluia, sing to Jesus!** **T Hyfrodol**   
his the sceptre, his the throne:  
Alleluia! his the triumph,  
his the victory alone.  
Hear the songs of holy Zion  
thunder like a mighty flood:  
'Jesus out of every nation  
has redeemed us by his blood!'

Alleluia! not as orphans  
are we left in sorrow now:  
Alleluia! he is near us;  
faith believes, but knows not how.  
Though the cloud from sight received him  
whom the angels now adore,  
shall our hearts forget his promise,  
'I am with you evermore'?

Alleluia! bread of heaven,  
here on earth our food, our stay:  
Alleluia! here the sinful  
come to you from day to day.  
Intercessor, friend of sinners,  
earth's redeemer, plead for me,  
where the songs of all the sinless  
sweep across the crystal sea.

Alleluia! King eternal,  
you, the Lord of lords we own;  
Alleluia! born of Mary,  
earth your footstool, heaven your throne:  
you, within the veil have entered,  
robed in flesh, our great high priest;  
thou on earth both priest and victim

In our eucharistic feast.

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