

Heacham Parish Church on-line

Sunday 2nd August 2020

Opening music: -

Adrian Flower plays 'Rondo from Abdelazer' by Purcell.

This was used by Britten in his 'Young person's guide to the orchestra'

Welcome to our Service of worship on this Sunday 2nd August.

Today, Heacham Parish Church gathers and worships in at least 3 ways, some of us are reading this service on paper in our homes, some of us are watching this service on our phones or computer through you tube , and some of us are in church for our 2nd service in the church building since March.

All of us worshipping together yet apart, with much of the service the same wherever we are.

We come from scattered lives to meet with God.
Let us recognize his presence with us.

Silence is kept.

As God's people we have gathered:

let us worship him together.

Loving God, we have come to worship you.

Help us to pray to you in faith,

to sing your praise with gratitude,

and to listen to your word with eagerness;

through Christ our Lord. Amen.

We may not be able to sing in the Church building at present but we can sing in our homes. I do encourage you to join with our musicians, Hilary and Lesley and singers Terry and Karen in singing our hymn

Be thou my vision

Be Thou my vision, oh Lord of my heart
Nought be all else to me, save that Thou art
Thou my best thought in the day and the night
Waking or sleeping, Thy presence my light

Be Thou my wisdom, be Thou my true word
I ever with Thee and Thou with me Lord
Thou my great Father and I Thy true son
Thou in me dwelling and I with Thee one

Be Thou my breastplate, my sword for the fight
Be Thou my armour and be Thou my might
Thou my soul's shelter, and Thou my high tower
Raise Thou me heavenwards, oh power of my power

Riches I need not, nor man's empty praise
Thou mine inheritance through all of my days
Thou and Thou only though first in my heart
High king of heaven my treasure Thou art

Oh high king of heaven, when battle is done
Grant heaven's joy to me, bright heaven's sun
Christ of my own heart, whatever befall
Still be my vision, O ruler of all

Bible reading:

Matthew 14 v 13 – 21. Read by Andrew Beaumont.

A reflection from Veronica Wilson

So we continue our journey through Matthew's gospel, with the story of the feeding of the 5000, this well-known story features in all 4 of the gospels.

We are going to think about food today, Food, glorious food, as the song from Oliver goes!

At it's most basic, we need food to sustain us and keep us going. But it is also much more than that: a source of delight, joy and comfort for many, whether through the enjoyment of cooking or baking it, growing it, sharing it with others..

In this week's reading from Matthew 14.13-21, we hear how Jesus meets this basic human need in a miraculous and creative way, bringing people together through the small act of simply sharing five loaves and two fish.

During the lockdown period food has been one of the most talked-about aspects. First there were the shortages – possibly the first time that those of us normally blessed with a comfortable lifestyle will ever have experienced worry about what we will eat:

- empty shelves where the eggs or fresh vegetables or pasta or flour would normally be in the supermarket;
- no online delivery slots even for loyal customers;

- Many of us eating our way through our store cupboard and freezers, being creative with what we had rather than buying more
- Food parcels being sent out to vulnerable people

Once the panic-buying subsided, the sourdough bread-making began, with many Instagrammer showing off their new lockdown-learnt baking skills. Now we're hearing how big online retailers are cashing in on our online food shopping habit and adding that to their repertoire. And then how much less many of us – myself included – should eat if we are to stay well and save the NHS, overweight people are being asked to lose five pounds to save the NHS money and help lower the risk of dying from coronavirus as part of the Government's new obesity crackdown.

But that's only one side of our current experience. On the other, many in our society have to struggle to feed themselves and their families. In the current crisis, with schools closed and work and income drying up for many, it has become harder to ignore just how many people live in or close to the edge of food poverty. Food banks have seen a huge increase in those needing their services. Perhaps this time their cries will be heard and their needs met?

The crowds who gathered to listen to Jesus will have been just as mixed as our society. Some rich, some poor. But their experience on that day was levelled out by the shared distance from anywhere to get food quickly, just as, perhaps, lockdown has levelled out our own experiences a little, giving us some shared struggles and hopefully a clearer glimpse of others' needs.

The crowds were all hungry and needed to be fed; the disciples saw and brought that need to Jesus. But they were understandably daunted by his demand that they meet that need.

Feed all these thousands of people with just what we have here? It's only five loaves and two fish, barely enough for us! The disciples must have felt helpless as they faced the crowd, with Jesus's instruction to feed them and their woefully inadequate resources! Jesus tells them to

do what they can with their limited resources and these turn out to be more than enough

I know that when I am confronted with others' needs, that is sometimes my reaction too: But Lord, I do not have enough time, energy, courage, hope, wisdom, skill, strength, love, money, even to sustain myself! See what little I have, how can it be of any use to the situations I see in front of me?

Jesus shows how.

He takes the little that is brought before him and blesses it, looking to heaven, to God. With God's blessing the small gift shared grows in the sharing until it is enough to meet the needs of everyone present, and to overflow beyond. What we bring, what we do, as small as it is God will bless and use.

Jesus tells us too, like those 1st disciples, to do what we can with our limited resources, because with God blessing these will turn out to be more than enough.

So this week what can we do, what can we bring and what small act of generosity can we share from our limited resources so that God may bless it and use us?

Time to sing again as David and Kath bring us the song

Abba Father

Abba Father, let me be
yours and yours alone.
May my will for ever be
evermore your own.
Never let my heart grow cold,
Never let me go.

Abba Father, let me be
yours and yours alone.

Prayers of intercession

Led by Lynda Swain.

As we come to bring our prayers of intercession, Romans chapter 5 verse 1 reminds us "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have gained access by faith into his grace in which we now stand"

Father God,

Standing in your outrageous grace we come before you in prayer today to bring you our concerns and worries, the things you have placed in our minds that need your divine intervention. Situations where we have no earthly resources to use or working in our own strength, we cannot make the difference that is needed. Thank you that with you the door is always open and you are ready to receive us and hear our prayers.

Merciful Lord, we look at our world and we cry out for help, Help to bring peace and security where there is war, and disruption.

Help to bring hope where there is darkness and despair.

Help to bring healing where there is disease, famine or pain.

Thank you, Lord, for those who work to end injustice, abuse, poverty and discrimination in our world. For all who seek to serve you in mission, prayer or service – draw close to strengthen them and help them to walk faithfully with you.

*Lord in your mercy – **Hear our prayer***

Father God, we look to our own country and communities and we ask for your grace and mercy;

We ask for wisdom and strength for all who are in leadership making decisions and choices that impact on so many and may be a matter of life and death for some.

Be present in our Government and with our Queen, and all those in leadership within the Church, may they be ready listeners to your Holy Spirit's guidance, and be ready to do your will.

*Lord in your mercy – **hear our prayer***

Lord Jesus, in this holiday season we pray for safety and health for all those who come to visit our local area this Summer, we ask that the tradesmen and women of our local community will continue to be able to offer valuable and much needed services in our village and the surrounding area. We pray for those who rely on tourism, that they will operate responsibly and may have a good season despite all the changes.

Lord we lift before you all those who are finding the school holidays an extra burden both financially and in coping with the changes the Covid-19 virus has brought.

Thank you for all those services who have worked over the past months to keep us going despite the challenges of the pandemic; our Post Office, our GP surgery, the shops and pharmacy, our Vicar and the volunteers and helpers in the village and the many working behind the scenes to keep life going.

Lord enable us to be your hands and feet, that we will be good neighbours and bring the light of your love into the places where you have put us.

*Lord in your mercy – **Hear our prayer***

Gracious Lord we lift up all those who are finding life difficult at this time.

Let us take a moment to bring before God those we know who are suffering at this time and are in need of your touch

For those who are anxious and worried, send an outpouring of your peace that goes beyond our understanding.

Hold fast in your loving arms those who are depressed and whose spirits are laid low.

We pray for those who are grieving the loss of loved ones, draw close and be a comfort to them at this time.

For those in physical, mental, or spiritual pain and anguish, we pray that your Holy Spirit will be like a soothing balm to bring healing.

Lord give us the words to bring hope, but to be willing and obedient to also serve a hurting world.

God of mercy,

you know us and love us

and hear our prayer:

keep us in the eternal fellowship of

Jesus Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Led by Alex Knight, we pray together

The Lord's Prayer

Closing prayers

Eternal God, our beginning and our end
accompany us in this day's journey.

Dawn on our darkness,

open our eyes to praise you for your creation

and to see the work you set before us today.

Take us and use us

to bring to others the new life you give in Jesus Christ our Lord.

You are called and loved by God the Father and kept safe by Jesus Christ. Mercy, peace and love be yours in abundance, from God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Closing music

Adrian plays the end of the prelude from Prelude and Fugue in C minor BWV 546 by J S Bach

HEACHAM PARISH CHURCH online service will be on YouTube from 8am on Sunday morning

www.youtube.com/channel/UCefWbBrE77u7MPpdjWtwzow

NEXT WEEK: Morning Prayer: Monday, Tues, Wed and Thursday

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/9960936343?pwd=TIerVHp3UHBzZHNTSm16QzdCNUY0Zz09>

Meeting ID: 996 093 6343 Password: 150936

Morning Prayer Friday Use Penny Taylor log in details

Church Open for private prayer

Saturday afternoons 2-4pm and Wed 10-12noon.

For those without access to the internet:

The telephone worship service: **Daily Hope**, offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line.

The line – which is available 24 hours a day on **0800 804 8044**. This is a freephone service.

Also The Diocesan weekly podcast **Sunday Hope** can be listened to via your phone by calling **01603 537577**- calls for this are charged at a local rate.