

Sunday 28th July 2024: Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

For use by the Central Norfolk Circuit at 10.30 am or some other suitable time.



StF 117 H&P 511 'Sing praise to God' by Johann Schutz (1640 – 1690) & later editors

Opening Prayer

Think of the past week and say both 'thank you' and 'sorry' to our loving God.

Epistle Reading set for today: Ephesians 3 v 14 – 21

To think about

The Epistle reading is a lovely passage that is one of the treasures of the Bible. If you have the time and the inclination today, you could have a go at re-writing it in your own words (paraphrasing Paul's words) and taking the message with you into the week.

StF 159 H&P 477 'Not far beyond the sea nor high' by George Caird (1917 – 1984)

Gospel Reading set for today: John 6 v 1 – 21

Message from a Circuit Friend

When I was a Boy Scout we were urged to "Be Prepared". This motto was cast into the belt buckle that was part of the uniform we wore. Perhaps Jesus' disciples would have been well advised to adopt the same motto, because they were being constantly surprised by what Jesus thought, said and did. The danger for us, is that we are so familiar with some Bible passages, that we don't examine them in detail. Imagine you were Philip and Jesus asked you where you could buy enough food to feed five thousand people. We are familiar with the concept of a trick question. Was this an example of Jesus asking one? Did he really expect Philip to provide a satisfactory answer? Was he prepared for the answer he received? It is also interesting to note that Philip's answer is one to a different, and unasked, question dealing with the cost of such provision. The question about how we are going to feed the hungry and starving in the world today, remains a major challenge. Do we care about it? Jesus obviously did and demonstrated this to his disciples as well as the huge crowd. I wonder how the boy with the loaves and fish reacted to the need for him to surrender them? How would you react in such circumstances? It is only when we take that step of faith that a miracle can occur. Just reflect on how Food Banks have become essential throughout the nation in more recent times. Our small donations do make a difference. A further important point is made in both the feeding of the crowd and the passage following it. The disciples have set off in their boat again heading for Capernaum. Jesus is not with them in the boat, having previously disappeared. The wind is making rowing the boat extremely hard work. To add to their concern, Jesus suddenly appears close by and seems to be walking on the water. However, as he steps on board, their struggle against the wind and their worry vanishes. Perhaps there is an important lesson we can learn from this. If we rely on God to help us when we are struggling with the challenges we face in daily life, we will find them easier to manage.

Quentin Stephen (Local Preacher and member of Watton Methodist Church)

StF 250 H&P 141 'Jesus calls us o'er the tumult' by Cecil Frances Alexander (1818 – 1895)

Prayers of Intercession

We pray for our world... for the church... for our communities... for our families & friends...

Pray for children, families, and teachers at the beginning of the Summer holidays...

Also for ministers on the move – leaving, arriving, preparing to take up new appointment.

Offer to God your offertory for the week, and say the Lord's Prayer...

StF 238 H&P 68 'Lead us, heavenly Father, lead us' by James Edmeston (1791 – 1867)

May the blessing of God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us, and all those we love, this day and always, Amen.