

# Salford Methodist Circuit



**The Bread Of Life – 22nd August 2021**  
**Jayne & Gordon Allen**

Good morning and welcome to our worship today.

So we're going to start our worship this morning with a call to worship

Welcoming God,  
we come to you with open hearts  
and with open hands.  
We come with our faith and hope,  
and with our doubts and fears.  
Send your Holy Spirit to work among us,  
filling us and changing us  
to become more like Jesus. **Amen.**

## **Hymn: Morning Has Broken**

*Morning has broken  
like the first morning;  
blackbird has spoken  
like the first bird.  
Praise for the singing!  
Praise for the morning!  
Praise for them, springing  
fresh from the Word!*

*Sweet the rain's new fall  
sunlit from heaven,  
like the first dewfall  
on the first grass.  
Praise for the sweetness  
of the wet garden,  
sprung in completeness  
where his feet pass.*

*Mine is the sunlight!  
Mine is the morning  
born of the one light  
Eden saw play!  
Praise with elation,  
praise every morning,  
God's re-creation  
of the new day!*

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## **Let us pray**

Loving God, giver of life;  
Lord Jesus, friend and Saviour;  
Holy Spirit, living water –  
we worship and adore you.  
We come today,  
not having or expecting all the answers  
but knowing that you are the way. **Amen.**

## **Dear Lord**

When we turn away from you, O God,  
and go our own way:  
**forgive us, and turn us back to you.**

When the way ahead is not clear,  
when everything feels too much  
and we turn our backs on you:  
**forgive us, and turn us back to you.**

When we make wrong decisions  
and our actions hurt others:  
**forgive us, and turn us back to you.**

When we want to give up because it's too hard:  
**forgive us, and turn us back to you.**

When we cannot see beyond ourselves and act selfishly:  
**forgive us, and turn us back to you.**

When we do not put you and others first:  
**forgive us, and turn us back to you.**

Turn us back to you, O God.  
**Amen.**

## **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.*

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*For thine is the kingdom,  
the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever.  
Amen.*

## **Hymn: My Jesus, My Saviour**

*My Jesus, my Saviour,  
Lord there is none like you  
I want to praise  
the wonders of your mighty love.  
My comfort, my shelter,  
tower of refuge and strength,  
let every breath, all that I am,  
never cease to worship you.*

*Shout to the Lord all the earth, let us sing,  
power and majesty, praise to the King.  
Mountains bow down  
and the seas will roar  
at the sound of your name.  
I sing for joy at the work of your hands.  
Forever I'll love you, forever I'll stand.  
Nothing compares to the  
promise I have in you.*

## **Reading: Ephesians 6 : 10 -20**

### ***The Whole Armour of God***

*Finally, build up your strength in union with the Lord and by means of his mighty power. Put on all the Armor that God gives you, so that you will be able to stand up against the Devil's evil tricks. For we are not fighting against human beings but against the wicked spiritual forces in the heavenly world, the rulers, authorities, and cosmic powers of this dark age. So put on God's Armor now! Then when the evil day comes, you will be able to resist the enemy's attacks; and after fighting to the end, you will still hold your ground.*

*So stand ready, with truth as a belt tight around your waist, with righteousness as your breastplate, and as your shoes the readiness to announce the Good News of peace. At all times carry faith as a shield; for with it you will be able to put out all the burning arrows shot by the Evil One. And accept salvation as a helmet, and the word of God as the sword which the Spirit gives you. Do all this in prayer, asking for God's help. Pray on every occasion, as the Spirit leads. For this reason, keep alert and never give up; pray always for all God's people. And pray also for me, that God will give me a message when I am ready to speak, so that I may speak boldly and make known the gospel's secret. For the sake of this*

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*gospel I am an ambassador, though now I am in prison. Pray that I may be bold in speaking about the gospel as I should.*

## **Reading: John 6 : 56 - 69.**

*Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood live in me, and I live in them. The living Father sent me, and because of him I live also. In the same way whoever eats me will live because of me. This, then, is the bread that came down from heaven; it is not like the bread that your ancestors ate. They later died, but those who eat this bread will live for ever."*

*Jesus said this as he taught in the synagogue in Capernaum.*

*Many of his followers heard this and said, "This teaching is too hard. Who can listen to it?"*

*Without being told, Jesus knew that they were grumbling about this, so he said to them, "Does this make you want to give up? Suppose, then, that you should see the Son of Man go back up to the place where he was before? What gives life is God's Spirit; human power is of no use at all. The words I have spoken to you bring God's life-giving Spirit. Yet some of you do not believe." (Jesus knew from the very beginning who were the ones that would not believe and which one would betray him.) And he added, "This is the very reason I told you that no one can come to me unless the Father makes it possible for him to do so."*

*Because of this, many of Jesus' followers turned back and would not go with him anymore.*

*So he asked the twelve disciples, "And you — would you also like to leave?"*

*Simon Peter answered him, "Lord, to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life. And now we believe and know that you are the Holy One who has come from God."*

The whole of John chapter 6 seems to have the theme of bread running through it.

Early on we have Jesus feeding the five thousand with five loaves there is also reference to the bread or manna that God sent to Moses to feed the Israelites in the desert.

But the bread and blood Jesus is now talking about is not what we can physically eat or drink. Jesus is referring to the spiritual feeding of our souls by wholly accepting him as our saviour and that this is a gift from God. This gift which took on flesh and walked this earth sharing the word of God. It wasn't an easy task, not just for Jesus but for those who chose to follow him. In the passage from John, we hear how some of Jesus followers choose this wasn't for them, this new kid on the block going round preaching God's word, not just in the synagogues but anywhere in the streets, fields, and even by the lakesides. He was taking

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this message where everyone was not just the Jewish people; he also met and talked with Gentiles.

So, by Jesus saying that his body is the bread and wine, which we can only receive by believing in him and giving ourselves completely to God we will then receive the eternal life he is offering us.

It's also very clear in the reading that Jesus fully knows the path his life is going to take during his discipleship on earth. He knows that his life is going to be short, he knows it's not going to be an easy path to walk, that at some point he will be betrayed and will die. In a way when Jesus is speaking to the whole crowd and telling them it's not just a case of following me around, listening to what I say and claiming to believe in me, you also have to believe it is the word of God that I am sharing with you and accept him as your own. By doing this you will then be able to feast on the eternal bread and blood that God has prepared for us. The reading tells us that most of the people left Jesus that day, they found this request too hard.

So, Jesus is left with his 12 disciples who he asked "would you also like to leave?"

It's Simon Peter who replies with the words "Lord to whom would we go? You have the words that give eternal life, and now we believe and know that you are the holy one who has come from God. "Jesus alone can give us this gift of eternal life, either in an instance or more usually over time, God has revealed the fullness of a life of faith to us, and we can come to know the holiness and glory of God.

In the Ephesians reading we hearing the words of encouragement Paul is sending to those who have chosen to answer this question with a yes and have decided to follow Christ.

How they need to stand tall in their faith, to put on the armour of God that he has given them, the belt of truth and the breastplate of righteousness, to be ready to announce the good news of peace.

A peace that passes all understanding and is available for each and every one of you.

So, I'm now going to ask you the question that Jesus asked.

"Would you stay or would you also walk away?"

We're now going to sing our next hymn which is hymn number 495 and one of Gordon's firm favourites, as I'm sure it is with quite a few of you: Dear Lord and Father of mankind, forgive our foolish ways.



## Hymn: Dear Lord And Father Of Mankind

*Dear Lord and Father of mankind  
forgive our foolish ways;  
re clothe us in our rightful mind;  
in purer lives thy service find,  
in deeper reverence, praise.*

*In simple trust like theirs who heard  
beside the Syrian sea  
the gracious calling of the Lord,  
let us, like them, without a word  
rise up and follow thee.*

*O sabbath rest by Galilee!  
O calm of hills above,  
where Jesus knelt to share with thee  
the silence of eternity,  
interpreted by love!*

*With that deep hush subduing all  
our words and works that drown  
the tender whisper of thy call,  
as noiseless let thy blessing fall  
as fell thy manna down.*

*Drop thy still dews of quietness,  
till all our strivings cease;  
take from our souls the strain and stress,  
and let our ordered lives confess  
the beauty of thy peace.*

*Breathe through the heats of our desire  
thy coolness and thy balm;  
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;  
speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,  
O still small voice of calm!*

Now we come to our prayers for concern about the world and its people. Let us pray.

O God, who answers prayer,  
we heard the words of Paul the apostle.  
He exhorts us to pray on all occasions  
and with all kinds of prayers and requests.  
We pray for communities that have seen tragedy.  
For vulnerable people who struggle to face what life



throws at them.  
May they be built up in your love and strength.

**Lord, we pray in your Spirit.**

We pray for people who suffer for their faith, Lord.  
For ministers and evangelists who seek to spread your word.  
For us all as we share the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.  
May they, and may we, be built up in your love and strength.

**Lord, we pray in your Spirit.**

We pray for people who feel bound  
by chains of unemployment and poverty,  
chains of disability or illness,  
chains of sorrow.

**Lord, we pray in your Spirit.**

We pray for ourselves when we feel vulnerable.  
May they, and may we, be built up in your love and strength, Lord.

**Lord, we pray in your Spirit.**

**Amen.**

Hymn: We Are Marching In The Light Of God.

*We are marching in the light of God,  
we are marching in the light of God.  
We are marching in the light of God,  
we are marching in the light of God.  
We are marching, oh,  
we are marching in the light of God,  
we are marching, oh,  
we are marching in the light of God.*

*We are living in the love of God...*

*We are moving in the power of God...*

So to finish our service we are going to share the Grace together:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
The love of God  
And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit  
Be with us all evermore.  
Amen.

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Amen

Morning Has Broken - Eleanor Farjeon

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My Jesus, My Saviour - Darlene Zschech

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Dear Lord And Father Of Mankind - John Greenleaf Whittier

Music: Charles Hubert Hastings Parry (1848-1918) from the oratorio Judith

We Are Marching In The Light Of God - South African Traditional v.1 Anders Nyberg vv. 2, 3 Andrew Maries

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