



Food for the Soul, Food for the Table - 2nd August 2020 Rev Kim Ratcliffe

Welcome to this time of worship.

We will have a short time of silence to help us to focus on this moment in time as we come to worship God.

[Silence]

This is the day that our Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it.

Let us pray
Eternal God and Father,
You are the source of all life,
The fount of all wisdom,
The well-spring of all grace.
Your days are without end,
Your loving mercies without number.
We depend on you:
And we remember your goodness to us
And to those who have gone before us.
We tell your story in every generation:
God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob,
God of Sarah, Rebekah and Rachel,
God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
God of a pilgrim people, your Church.
You are our God,
Ahead of us, leading us,
Guiding us and calling us;
You are the Lord God,
The all wise, the all-compassionate.

To you we lift up our hearts
And we worship you,
One God for ever and ever. Amen.

Our Prayer of Confession

I confess to God and to you
That I have sinned in thought, word and deed;
May God have mercy on me.

[Silence]

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May God grant you pardon,
Forgiveness of all your sins,
Time to amend your life,
And the grace and comfort
Of his Holy Spirit. Amen.

[Silence]

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That we have sinned in thought, word and deed;
May God have mercy on us.

May God grant you pardon,
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We sing our first hymn this morning which is hymn number 363 in Singing the Faith: My Jesus, My Saviour.

Hymn: My Jesus, My Saviour

*My Jesus, my Saviour,
Lord there is 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.*

The Collect for today

Lord and giver of life,
You alone nourish and sustain your people,
Through Christ, the bread of life.
Feed our hunger and quench our thirst.
That we may no longer work for what fails to satisfy,

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But do what you require, in obedience and faith;
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Reading: Genesis 32 : 22 - 31

Jacob Wrestles at Peniel

The same night he got up and took his two wives, his two maids, and his eleven children, and crossed the ford of the Jabbok. He took them and sent them across the stream, and like-wise everything that he had. Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak.

When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him.

Then he said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." Then the man said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel,

for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed." Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And there he blessed him. So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved."

The sun rose upon him as he passed Penuel, limping because of his hip.

Reading: Matthew 14 : 13 - 21

Supper for Five Thousand

When Jesus got the news, he slipped away by boat to an out-of-the-way place by himself. But unsuccessfully— someone saw him and the word got around.

Soon a lot of people from the nearby villages walked around the lake to where he was. When he saw them coming, he was overcome with pity and healed their sick. Toward evening the disciples approached him. "We're out in the country and it's getting late. Dismiss the people so they can go to the villages and get some supper." But Jesus said, "There is no need to dismiss them. You give them supper." "All we have are five loaves of bread and two fish," they said. Jesus said, "Bring them here." Then he had the people sit on the grass.

He took the five loaves and two fish, lifted his face to heaven in prayer, blessed, broke, and gave the bread to the disciples. The disciples then gave the food to the congregation. They all ate their fill. They gathered twelve baskets of leftovers. About five thousand were fed.



I've been a minister in the Salford Circuit since 2013 but it took until the first half of 2017 for me to really discover the manse garden. It coincided with our youngest son George returning to live with us with Bobby, his rabbit. I discovered that I could actually grow tomatoes and some other veg (small veg I hasten to add, and small tomatoes). I had to be on the ball remembering to water them and feed them as well as keeping the slugs etc at bay. I also rediscovered my love for cooking. My family say that I am a 'feeder', if you can understand what that means. I can put a pound of mince into a pan and somehow it grows into a meal that would feed the whole family if they came around unexpectedly. I also made meals that I have never tried to make before, Rick Stein, Jamie Oliver, Mary Berry etc but I decided that I could tweak the recipe to meet our needs.

My Gran Brown, she was a 'feeder' too. I used to stay at Gran Brown's most weekends after Grandad died. I'd get on the bus from Pollok up to 55 Ladybank Drive, Mossbank. And as I walked up the whitewashed stairs to the top flat, her flat was on the right-hand side, I could smell the pot of scotch broth cooking on the stove and the rock cakes being baked in the oven. My Gran made her own jam too and gooseberry jelly, and it was a real treat to go to Gran's. I would knock on the door and be met with a smile and warm welcome.

My gran would give me some food to take to Mrs Rue across the way, Aunt Dorothy, my dad's cousin, who lived underneath her downstairs and Miss McLeod and Mrs Horne on the ground floor, a mother and daughter who lived together. Somehow, I would return back upstairs to my Gran's flat with a plate pie and bags of various food, having been told, "here's a wee something for you and your Gran", that's what the neighbours would say. I'd return home on Sunday evening and look forward to the next weekend when we went to Gran's again.

The story of feeding of the 5000 reminds me of the warmth of Jesus' hospitality to everyone, not only his disciples. The disciples always seemed on the edge and ready to jump in and put people in their place, perhaps they felt they were protecting Jesus, but Jesus knew far more than they could ever have understood in their lifetime, about hospitality and a friendly warm welcome.

Before Jesus fed the 5000 that turned up unexpectedly after he had tried to find a place to have some 'me time' across the lake. Instead of reaching his quiet space, he spent his 'me time' with those who needed his healing touch, he spent time with them, feeding them; not only with food but in a spiritual way that they hadn't experienced before. They had heard about Jesus obviously and somehow knew that He wouldn't send them away. The disciples of course hadn't got the same patience, understanding and hospitable nature that Jesus was trying to impart onto them and those he met. He of course showed by example.

Have you ever had a visitor to stay at your home, who has stayed a little bit longer than you had expected, plans may have had to be changed? Or maybe you have been that visitor, outstaying your welcome! When I think about this



story that Matthew is telling, I can just picture the disciples saying to each other, 'Right, I think that's enough, we need to get, to send this crowd home, I'm starving; I need my tea, I need to see my family too'. It wouldn't be an impossible scenario, of course; they had been busy all day with Jesus. We would forgive them if they wanted to put their feet up.

But Jesus responded to the tired, hungry crowd and disciples by making it possible to gather food to put upon the table to eat. This food would satisfy not only their appetites from the food they would eat but feed their souls too. When we meet around a table together something special happens, I feel. Even when that table may be a makeshift one on the ground as you share a picnic together. However, you are able to share in table fellowship you are sure to have conversation or at least the opportunity to listen to each other. You can express how tasty the food is. You can chink glasses together and cups together. The people offering hospitality by the end of the meal surely must feel a warm feeling inside their bellies, having been able to facilitate this opportunity for table fellowship. When the meal is over the people who have been able to share the food have a wee warm glow, they feel good not only about the food you have eaten, but the opportunity to spend time together. You may even think that was so good for my soul, I feel blessed and most of you will understand what I mean by that.

The story that we have heard today, I simply accept that on that day unexpectedly Jesus was the instigator of a meal that began with five loaves of bread and two fish. I have heard this story so many times and I have imagined being a disciple, being Jesus, being one of the crowd or the person initially giving Jesus the bread and the fish. I have read many theological explanations on this passage. Some of you may be looking for in-depth theological explanation on the passage today. But sometimes we need to accept scripture simply as it is.

Our passage from Genesis shows Jacob as a good example of what it can feel like when we make things so complicated. It can cause us to wrestle with things in our minds. It can make us toss and turn in bed at night, right into the wee small hours trying to figure out this and that. The morning light breaks through and you can't help but feel achy and tired and even a little tetchy. Jacob's hip ached as he wrestled with God. Why can we not sometimes read scripture and hear God's word simply uncluttered. We sometimes expect far much more than what we can see, hear, feel, touch right in front of us, that we can be in danger of forgetting what the initial words are saying to us personally mean.

Jacob felt pain as he wrestled with God. Jesus must have felt the pain in his heart at the death of his dear friend John the Baptist that happened just before the feeding of the 5000. Jesus also felt the needs of the people who he stopped his 'me' time to offer them his time. On that day he put food on their table and gave them food for their soul through simply making himself available to them, but not only being available to them. He shared and he cared for them, every single one of them and had confidence when he broke that first piece of bread,

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that the bread he would have in his hand would be able to go around everyone and there would still be more for those who may decide to come unexpectedly.

When I climbed the stair to my Gran Brown's flat at 55 Ladybank Drive, Mossspark. I was met with a smile, I was met with a warm bowl of soup, rock cakes with home made jam. We could leave the week that had gone past behind us, sit together in front of the fire, nothing complicated but it was good for Gran's soul and it was good for mine too.

After Jacob's wrestle with God, 'the sun rose upon him', Jesus broke bread with his disciples and many more. As you break your bread today, or dip into that bowl of soup, or cut into whatever food you choose to eat, simply remember that Jesus is with you as he was with the community of people who needed him mostly that day. Feeding our tummies and feeding our souls. Let Jesus feed you too. Amen.

Hymn: Community of Christ

*Community of Christ,
who make the Cross your own,
live out your creed and risk your life
for God alone:
the God who wears your face,
to whom all worlds belong,
whose children are of every race
and every song.*

*Community of Christ,
look past the Church's door
and see the refugee, the hungry,
and the poor.
Take hands with the oppressed,
the jobless in your street,
take towel and water, that you wash
your neighbour's feet.*

*Community of Christ,
through whom the word must sound
cry out for justice and for peace
the whole world round:
disarm the powers that war
and all that can destroy,
turn bombs to bread, and tears of anguish
into joy.*

*When menace melts away,
so shall God's will be done,
the climate of the world be peace*

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*and Christ its Sun;
our currency be love
and kindness our law,
our food and faith be shared as one
for evermore.*

Let us pray for all people everywhere
According to their need.

Let us pray:
For the Church of Christ throughout the world
For its unity in Christ
For the fulfilment of its mission
For all ministers of the gospel
For all Christians here and throughout the world.
Strengthen your Church in the service of Christ;
That we and all who confess your name
May be unified in your truth,
Live together in your love,
And reveal your glory in the world.

Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Let us pray:
For all the nations and peoples of the world
For all who serve the common good
For our own country and government
For all in authority
For all those involved in serving others.

Give wisdom to all in authority;
Direct this and every nation
In the ways of justice and of peace;
That we may honour one another,
And seek the common good.

Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Let us pray:
For those we know and love
For the local community
For our families and friends
Near and afar.

Give grace to us,
To our families and friends,

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And to all our neighbours,
That we may serve Christ in one another,
And love as he loves us.

Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Let us pray:
For all who suffer
For the sick
For those who mourn
For those without faith
For those who serve the needy
For the NHS and all Key Workers
During this continued Covid 19 pandemic.
Comfort all those who suffer
In body, mind or spirit;
Give them courage and hope in their troubles;
And bring them the joy of your salvation.

Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Let us remember all who have died,
Giving thanks especially
For those who have died in the faith of Christ.

We commend all people to your unfailing love,
That in them your will may be fulfilled;
And we rejoice at the faithful witness
Of your saints in every age,
Praying that we may share with them
In your eternal kingdom.
Lord, in your mercy,
Hear our prayer.

Merciful Father,
Accept these prayers for the sake of your Son,
Our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.

Let's sing our final hymn together. Our final hymn is number 410, Lord your Church on earth is seeking.

Hymn: Lord You Church on Earth is Seeking

*Lord, your Church on earth is seeking
your renewal from above;
teach us all the art of speaking*

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*with the accent of your love.
We would heed your great commission:
sending us to every place -
preach, baptise, fulfil my mission,
serve with love and share my grace.*

*Freedom give to those in bondage,
lift the burdens caused by sin.
Give new hope, new strength and courage,
grant release from fears within:
light for darkness; joy for sorrow;
love for hatred; peace for strife.
These and countless blessings follow
as the Spirit gives new life.*

*In the streets of every city
where the bruised and lonely dwell,
let us show the Saviour's pity,
let us of his mercy tell.
In all lands and with all races
let us serve, and seek to bring
all the world to render praises,
Christ, to you, Redeemer, King.*

Let us say the Lord's prayer together:

*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.*

The Lord give you strength, strength to his people.
The Lord bless his people with peace. **Amen.**

**We go into the world
To walk in God's light,
To rejoice in God's love
And to reflect God's glory. Amen.**

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My Jesus, My Saviour - Darlene Zschech

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Community of Christ - Shirley Erena Murray

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Lord, Your Church On Earth Is Seeking - Hugh Sherlock

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