



Open Door on Zoom: 18th October

Give us this day our daily bread

Welcome and Notices

At home, at work and at school,
In the garden and in the street,
In church and on zoom,
In our heads, our hearts and all around us:
God is with us.

God is with us



Our Harvest Thanks

'Let them give thanks to the Lord for his goodness and the wonders he does for his children. For he satisfies the longing soul and fills the hungry soul with good'. Psalm 107

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pZ-0Tw2zweU>

SONG: I Will Offer Up My Life

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kQkzHwz2eLE>

Saying sorry

Heavenly Father, we come to you this morning just as we are. We bring you the times this week when we have done things that do not live up to your name. When we have been quick to anger and slow to be patient. When we have not thought of others, but only of ourselves. When we have strayed from your will and your ways. And we are sorry. We come to you in our brokenness knowing that you love us deeply and long for us to grow into your likeness. Fill us with the knowledge of your love and help us to go out full of your spirit, knowing that when our lives shine your name shines in us.

Amen.

Bible Reading: Exodus 16: 1-4 (David Bard)

The whole Israelite community set out from Elim and came to the Desert of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai, on the fifteenth day of the second month after they had come out of Egypt. In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. The Israelites said to them, “If only we had died by the LORD’s hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death.”

Then the LORD said to Moses, “I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions.

Bible Reading: John 6: 25-35 (Dianne Conway)

When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, “Rabbi, when did you get here?” Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.”

Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?” Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.” So they asked him, “What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written: ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’”

Jesus said to them, “Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

“Sir,” they said, “always give us this bread.”

Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

Talk: Anna Lovewell

Bread! Could you live without it? I’m not sure that I could. In fact, I really love it too much. Fresh bread, made that day (because, let’s face it, bread that is a few days old just doesn’t cut it does it), It’s what you crave when you are hungry isn’t it. It’s so comforting, filling and satisfying. And it’s not just me. None of us can live without the stuff. In fact, if you were asked to only put 3 items in your shopping basket for the week I would imagine that amongst the toilet roll and milk, bread would be one of the top things on your list. Apparently, we each eat an average of 60 loaves of bread a year. That’s a whopping 300 loaves in my house! Bread certainly feels like a necessity and it certainly brings a new meaning to the ability to earn your own crust doesn’t it. But the ability to get my daily bread is something that I just take for granted.

This was not the case in the past. If you look back to the Tudor times for instance, the ability to get your daily bread was literally a matter of life and death. A quarter of harvests failed to the point of famine and massive rises in the death rate were seen shortly after. No wonder a successful harvest led to joyful festival celebrations thanking God for the goodness of the land and the life giving food that it gave them. As we simply reach for our supermarket loaf we can also forget that

there are people living in the world right now whose life, labours, hopes and anxieties all revolve around simply obtaining their daily bread. A necessity of life. The connection between their daily sustenance and the land and skills God has given them is felt more keenly by them than we can ever imagine. For **us** though, it is easy to feel like **we** are the sole breadwinners.

But when Jesus asks us to pray the Lord's prayer, he gives us a stark reminder not to rely on **ourselves** as the breadwinners. Instead, he asks us to come to our Heavenly Father and ask **Him** for our daily bread.

The Israelites in the Book of Exodus certainly needed reminding of that fact. After their escape from Egypt they had fled into the wilderness. But life there was hard. Forgetting God's goodness in rescuing them and their reliance on Him for their liberation, the people soon began to complain that life back in Egypt was better! In Egypt they at least had had good food to eat and they now started to think that God had led them out into the wilderness simply to starve. Maybe they knew better than God after all. Well, the Israelites were certainly hungry, just in more ways than they realised. So, despite their ungratefulness, God, in his goodness, promised to feed them.

We know what happened next don't we. God promised to '*rain bread from heaven*' (Exodus 16:4). And so the next morning, when the dew was lifted, there remained on the ground, '*a small round substance, as fine as frost...and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey*' (Exodus 16: 14. 31). God fed them with bread. Manna from heaven. And it truly was lifegiving for them. Each day more manna would appear and the Lord told the Israelites to gather as much of it as each of them needed. Not more or less. God provided fresh manna each and every day, giving them exactly what they needed with the surplus becoming foul smelling and melting in the sun.

When God fed his people he reminded them of his love for them which was freely given. He was reminding them of their dependence on him for the basics of life and he was reminding them that he would provide completely for their needs each and every day. And so too with us.

In the words of our prayer Jesus reminds us that every day we can go to God and ask for the basics of life, the physical necessities, the simple and ordinary things that we need. Food, clothing, shelter. It's amazing to think that our glorious creator God, while sustaining the whole of heaven and earth, is also concerned that even the smallest child has food to eat. None of these things are beyond his care. And we told by Jesus not to worry about them. As He tells us in Matthew 6, 'your heavenly father knows you need them'. We are taught to be content with the present and leave the future in the loving hands of God. Instead, each and every day, Jesus invites us to come to our Father in a spirit of humble dependence; to ask Him, not for riches or abundance, but for what we need for that day and trust that he will provide.

But was this the end of the story for the Israelites? It's true that God had fed them but were they really full? God gave them food for their bellies but what they really needed was food for their souls. As Moses reminded the Israelites in Deuteronomy Chapter 8, '*in your hunger He gave you manna to eat...so that you might understand that man does not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord*' (Deuteronomy 8:3). They needed more than just physical bread to give them life. They needed God. And more specifically, they needed Jesus.

"I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry". When Jesus spoke this message to the people of Israel, they would have connected his words to their literal hunger in that moment and to the provision of manna God gave their ancestors in the desert, their reliance on God for lifegiving bread. But this time, things were different. Jesus was the bread given by their

Heavenly Father. He was the bread they didn't deserve but given freely in love. He was the bread that was soon to be broken for them all. And He was the bread that would rise again in glory.

And so, our daily bread is nothing less than Christ himself, the bread of life. It is only through the gift of His living bread that we can truly find life in all its fullness. We all need to be daily nourished by the living Christ, through his word and his teaching. And like the manna in the desert, we can receive Christ's bread anew every single day. Each morning we can come to him afresh asking Him to bear our burdens and bring us comfort and encouragement. His food will strengthen us for the journey and satisfy our hearts. And in broken bread and wine outpoured we know we are forgiven and can spend a lifetime in God's love. When we ask God for our daily bread, we discover the full depths of our relationship with God as we depend on him for everything that we need. We need look nowhere else.

So what do we do with this gift of daily bread that God gives us? As with everything, we need to look to Jesus. When Jesus received bread, he always gave thanks. Jesus reminds us to lift our eyes in thanks from the good gift that we receive to the gift giver Himself. See God in the sun ripening the very last of the autumn vegetables. See God in the farmers working hard in the field gathering in the potatoes and also the mother who works an extra night shift to be able to feed her children. See God in the man who delivers your shopping and the friend whose warm smile gives you the bit of encouragement you needed to get through the day. See God in all of these things and give thanks.

After he gave thanks, Jesus broke the bread and shared it for many. In fact, Jesus was always feasting wasn't he. He was always sharing bread with people and invited all the most unlikely people to sit at his table with Him. So too, God never intended **us** to eat alone. He will give us enough that **our** that we can share what we have with others. This might be the physical sharing of **food** when we know that we have more than we need. It might be the sharing of God's **word** with someone else. Or it might be the sharing of God's **love**, even if it is just in a smile, giving another person a small taste of our Father in heaven. Remember for a minute how Jesus turned the disciples' offering of just five loaves into a feast for thousands. Likewise, as we share our daily bread, God often performs the miracle of multiplying our offering, however humble and meagre. Even if we think it is not enough.

And of course, it is impossible to ask for our daily bread without thinking of the millions of people who did not have their daily bread today and will not have it tomorrow. We need to remember that we are not praying 'give **me** this day **my** daily bread' but 'give **us** this day **our** daily bread'. Our prayer reaches above and beyond ourselves. We pray for and alongside all those who hunger and cry out in our hearts for God to be with those who have little. And as we pray alongside these people, we need to ask ourselves whether we are also willing to physically stand by those whom we pray for. What offerings can we bring to the table?

So, are you hungry? Do you fancy some bread? Well you know where to get it. Ask your Father who loves you for your daily bread. Come to him without fear or worry. Depend on Him. And know that in His great love he will provide for you physically and spiritually, all in His way and in His time. So, go ahead and feast. Fill yourself with Christ's bread each day and know that he is everything that you need.

SONG: Everything (Lauren Daigle)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zgvV_iQW400

The Lord's Prayer

We say together

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
Your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in
heaven.**

Give us today our daily bread.

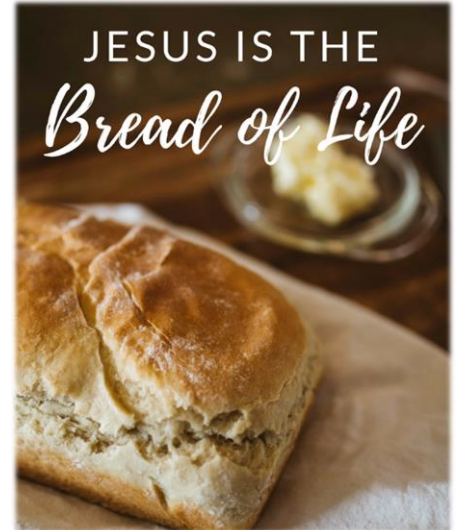
Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours.

Now and for ever.

Amen.



A Question for Reflection:

- Think of a recent day. In what ways did God give you everything you needed for that day?

Prayers: Sally Bard

Let us pray to our heavenly Father with confidence in the name of Jesus.

God, our creator, give us this day our daily bread, for we are wholly dependent on you for all we need. Thank you for our community and for the beautiful and abundant harvest that surrounded us this year. Thank you for the seasons with their variety of colours and shapes and weather. Thank you for all who are involved in the daily bread you give us for our health and strength. We remember and pray for farmers, factories workers, lorry drivers, shopkeepers, delivery drivers, and the people running our food bank at John Huntingdon's Charity.

Lord of the harvest,

We depend upon you.

Please help those who don't have the abundance we have, whose daily lives are dictated by poverty and scarcity. We remember before you all struggling for their daily bread this day because of failed harvests, perhaps due to climate change, or disease, or conflicts, or forced migration. Heavenly Father, you look with compassion on them all, sustain them today. Strengthen each one who is helping another and demonstrating your love.

Lord of the harvest,

We depend upon you.

Lord Jesus, you said 'My food is to do the will of him who sent me'. You told your disciples 'I am the Bread of Life, whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst'; and 'Whoever comes to me I will never cast out' ... (*John chapter 6*): teach us more about this spiritual nourishment; may we hunger for spiritual food, may we hunger for yourself; increase in us a desire to do your will, so that your kingdom of justice and righteousness may grow.

Lord of the harvest,

We depend upon you.

In Jesus name we pray. Amen

SONG: Yesterday, Today and Forever

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bjOLDaSfIHQ>

Blessing:

'Thanks be to you, Lord Jesus Christ, for all the good things you have given me. Most merciful redeemer, friend and brother, may we know you more clearly, love you more dearly and follow you more nearly, day by day'

Richard of Chichester 1253

If you have any prayer or pastoral needs, please don't hesitate to contact
 Revd Petra Shakeshaft (07847 307416, petra_paul.shakeshaft@ntlworld.com)
 Sally Bard (01223 501165, sally.bard2@gmail.com)