



The Eighth Sunday after Trinity: 2nd August

We gather this morning to worship the God who calls us together as his church; as we prepare to meet him in song, in scripture, in prayer, broken bread and wine outpoured, we take time to still our hearts and minds.

Hymn 70: Be Thou My Vision

Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart;
Naught 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 heir;
Thou in me dwelling, and I in thy care.

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 Tow'r,
Raise thou me heav'nward, O Pow'r of my pow'r.

Riches I heed not, nor all the world's praise;
Thou mine inheritance through all my days;
Thou and thou only the first in my heart,
High King of heaven, my treasure thou art!

High King of heaven, when battle is done,
Grant heaven's joy to me, O bright heav'n's sun;
Christ of my own heart, whatever befall,
Still be my vision, O Ruler of all.

Greeting

Grace mercy and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Lighting of the Easter Candle

a symbol to us of Jesus light of the world

We long for the light of Christ in our world

Come Light of the World

Longing for peace, our world is troubled.

Longing for hope, many despair.

Your word alone has power to save us.

Make us your living voice.

Prayer of Confession:

Secure in the knowledge that God who created us, loves us dearly, let us now confess before him those sins with which we walk in darkness and which separate us from his light.

Lord, as we wait for you we are often impatient,

we are busy and don't listen;

we don't always recognise your longing for us

or our own longing for you.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, as we wait for you we do not always notice those in need,

we ignore the cry of the hungry

and the tears of the lonely

Christ, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, as we wait for you

we are sometimes challenged and made uncomfortable

by people different from us

and ideas different from our own.

Lord, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

May the Father of all mercies cleanse us from our sins,

and restore us in his image to the praise and glory of his name,

through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen

Children's Talk: Liz Partridge

The Feeding of the 5000, Matthew 14 13-21

Collect

Almighty Lord and everlasting God, we beseech you to direct, sanctify and govern both our hearts and bodies in the ways of your laws and the works of your commandments; that through your most mighty protection, both here and ever, we may be preserved in body and soul; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

Amen

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 55: 1 - 5

Come all of you who are thirsty, come to the waters; and you that have no money, come, buy and eat! Come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread, and your labour for that which does not satisfy? Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good, and delight yourselves in rich food. Incline your ear, and come to me; listen, so that you may live. I will make with you an everlasting covenant, my steadfast, sure love for David. See, I made him a witness to the peoples, a leader and commander for the peoples. See, you shall call nations that you do not know, and nations that do not know you shall run to you, because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, for he has glorified you.

Song: In Christ Alone

In Christ alone my hope is found,
He is my light, my strength, my song
This Cornerstone, this solid Ground
Firm through the fiercest drought and storm.
What heights of love, what depths of peace
When fears are stilled, when strivings cease
My Comforter, my All in All
Here in the love of Christ I stand.

In Christ alone! - who took on flesh,
Fullness of God in helpless babe.
This gift of love and righteousness,
Scorned by the ones He came to save
Till on that cross as Jesus died,
The wrath of God was satisfied
For every sin on Him was laid
Here in the death of Christ I live.

There in the ground His body lay,
Light of the world by darkness slain:
Then bursting forth in glorious day
Up from the grave He rose again
And as He stands in victory
Sin's curse has lost its grip on me,
For I am His and He is mine
Bought with the precious blood of Christ

No guilt in life, no fear in death,
This is the power of Christ in me
From life's first cry to final breath,
Jesus commands my destiny
No power of hell, no scheme of man,
Can ever pluck me from His hand
Till He returns or calls me home
Here in the power of Christ I'll stand.

Gospel Reading: *Matthew 14: 13 – 21*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

Glory to you, O Lord

Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, 'This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves.' Jesus said to them, 'They need not go away; you give them something to eat.' They replied, 'We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish.' And he said, 'Bring them here to me.' Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ

Sermon: Revd. Alan Partridge

So many memories, of events, of community but most of all of people who have become cherished companions and friends, in many sorrows and much happiness, of seeing God at work in you and through you. That is the greatest memory I will take with me and I rejoice in it. I have always sought to encourage you to take scripture seriously to read it with attention and apply it to your lives, above all to find Jesus there.

Let's look this morning then, at two miracles that contrast for us the power of the disciples and the power of God, if you like the power of men and the power of Jesus. I think these are almost the most famous miracles in the New Testament, certainly the feeding of the five thousand is the only miracle recorded in all the gospels apart from the resurrection.

So notice first of all Jesus Christ's compassion verses 13-14. Jesus has compassion on all conditions of people, adults and children male and female and here he is in the Decapolis, a mixed race area of some Jews and many Greek speaking gentiles pagans. Word had clearly got around about Jesus, not surprisingly really. In Matthew 9 we can read about Jesus raising a girl from the dead, a sick woman being healed, about restoring the eyesight of two blind men and a demon

possessed mute being healed and people said after this, nothing like this has ever been seen in Israel. So not surprisingly the following crowds are keen to hear his teaching, to see more, we read of 5,000 men, the children and women were not recorded there, so maybe 25,000 people who are to be fed.

The success, the fame bring pressures: crowds have expectations. In verse 19 he has to get them to sit down they are straining to get the best view. Verse 14 again is a key verse for us, we read Jesus landed, saw the crowd and had compassion upon them. That word compassion in the Greek means his bowels twisted within him a strong emotion. He is deeply moved by their confusion their need, he longs to help their spiritual confusion and misunderstandings. Jesus mercy and compassion extends to all, even when he wanted some rest he had taken a boat to get away from the crowds now he postpones that rest, privacy, his time alone with his heavenly father to meet the needs of those people.

In this time, of pandemic and fears, we are bombarded by so much need we feel overwhelmed but there is no compassion fatigue with Jesus.

Then verses 15 and 16 show us his concern for them. The disciples alert him it is late, there is no food in this area: send the crowd to the local villages. Jesus' response? They don't need to go away hungry you give them something to eat. The disciples are anxious they know they have too little food for anything like such a crowd. Verse 17 suggests they did not have much in themselves: 5 loaves and 2 fish. The disciples are sensible but limited in their grasp of who it was who stood before them. Jesus has compassion, he cares and he will provide for physical needs, Mark talks of the people as being like sheep without a shepherd, well the good shepherd was there on that hillside. This may be a rebuke to us, too often we are blind to the needs of others not just spiritual ones. Jesus has a rounded concern for the people's needs.

Now comes a challenge. The disciples had been with Jesus for two years they had seen far more than these crowds, but they were spiritually dull. They looked on Jesus with human eyes very often. They looked on the crowds with human eyes and were fear filled, what if there was a riot? Only 5 loaves 2 fish. It is a half-hearted response, perhaps even sarcastic? What a bit of luck we have found just what we need! These few loaves ludicrously meagre resources, laughable, a picnic supper at best.

But Jesus takes the bread, gives thanks and breaks it and there was enough and more than enough for all. This was a miracle of creative power. He takes pitifully inadequate resources provided by the disciples and multiplies them over and over again and there is more left at the end that there was at the beginning! Such is the power of Jesus the messiah.

What does the miracle say? Is it testament to his compassion only? I think not, Jesus is making a statement for those who can see it of who he was and what he had come to do.

In the Old Testament it speaks again and again of the messiah. Ezekiel speaks of him as a shepherd to God's people, Deuteronomy 34 15-18 speaks of One who would be a prophet like Moses. What did Moses do? He fed the people in the wilderness, and there was a popular belief among Jesus that the messianic age would see the return of bread from heaven just like manna in the wilderness once was long ago.

Jesus fulfils those deeper longings, that deeper need, but he subverts the popular expectation. They were waiting for the messiah, a warrior king. In John, we read the crowd tried to take him and make him king, but Jesus would not have it. That type of power is not sufficient. Using it only produces a temporary, a limited peace or provokes hatred and revenge! Here is a better way. Jesus kingship will be very different.

So now Jesus dismisses the crowd and goes up onto the mountain side to pray. Jesus will rule from the cross.

The verses that follow tell us of the disciples in their boat again, this time alone, battling a rising storm terrified and they are even more so when they see Jesus walking on the water to them. Jesus reply is take courage, it is I, don't be afraid!

In Greek ego eimi picking up on God's self-given name at the burning bush in Exodus 3:13, I am who I am. Jesus echoes it here and having made the statement he acts to calm the waters saying in effect when the storm rages I have control. A claim to divinity and then he says take courage, do not be afraid. This is how God addresses ancient Israel, now Jesus says it to us.

What a day the disciples are having! They are convinced now; Peter steps out falteringly I'm sure, dark deep waters, but Jesus is there!

I wonder do you recognise who Jesus really is? How has that changed you? Will you allow him to do more in your life, with your life?

Will you step out with him now?

Affirmation of Faith

Brothers and sisters, let us affirm together, our common faith in Jesus Christ.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father, source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist?

I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son, who took our human nature, died for us and rose again?

I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known in the world?

I believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the church.

This is our faith.

We believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Prayers of Intercession

High and Holy God,
we give you thanks that you are with us,
that you hold us and love us and listen to the longings of our hearts.

We thank you for this place; this building that has held the prayers,
the longings, the joys and celebrations, the grief and sorrow,
the seasons of the lives of the people of this village.
We give thanks too, for human creativity
and for the technology that allows us to join together
with those in their homes within the village and beyond.

We pray for all the many Christian congregations
gathering in their many places and manners and at different times this day.
We ask your blessing on all who come to worship you.
Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer

Creator God, near us and in us,
we thank you for the beauty of the earth and for the many blessings you give us.
fill our hearts with gratitude for all your gifts
and hear our prayer for those who are in need.
We pray for the hungry and homeless
that they may find shelter and sustenance;
for those who live in places of war and conflict,
that they may know peace;
for those who are sick, lonely or afraid,
for the depressed, the anxious, the dying and the bereaved,
bring them your healing and consolation.
Lord, in your mercy
hear our prayer.

Sustainer God, the source of life and love,
we hold before you our beginnings and our endings.
We pray especially today for Alan and Liz
and give thanks for the many blessings they have brought to this community.
We thank you for their witness to your love in this place
and for the many people you have given them to minister to,
and to minister alongside.
We pray that in this time of global and national uncertainty,
they and we may find assurance and confidence in your gospel of truth
and that this ending may be a glorious beginning.
Give them hope and courage and the knowledge
that as your love goes with them, so does ours;
that, as they leave us behind, they take with them our prayers and our gratitude.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Lord of all life,
take this community in your loving hands.
Shape us and mould us to your will.
Give us wisdom and discernment in these times of trial and change
and help us to seek all that you intend for us,
all that you long for us
and all that you give to us.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

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

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

The Peace

The peace of the Lord be always with you
And also with you.

Song: Behold (Then Sings My Soul)

Behold the Father's heart
The mystery He lavishes on us
As deep cries out to deep
Oh, how desperately He wants us

The things of earth stand next to Him
Like a candle to the sun
Unfailing Father
What compares to His great love

Behold His holy Son
The Lion and the Lamb given to us
The Word became a man
That my soul should know its Saviour

Forsaken for the sake of all mankind
Salvation is in His blood
Jesus Messiah
The righteous died for love

It wasn't over
For He is the risen one

Then sings my soul
Then sings my soul

How great Your love is
How great Your love is

Behold I have a friend
The Spirit breathing holy fire within
My ever present help
Speaking truth when I can't find it

Light up this broken heart and light my way
'Til my time on earth is done
Oh, Holy Spirit
Breathe in me like Kingdom come

Oh, Holy Spirit
Let Your work in me be done

Then sings my soul
Then sings my soul
How great Your love is
How great Your love is

My God
He who was and is to come
Prepare the way
Until the work on earth is done

Watch as the clouds He rides swing low
Lift up the sound as He makes our praise His throne
Behold the Lord our God will lead us Home

Eucharistic Prayer

The Lord be with you

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

Lord of all life, you created the universe, where all living things reflect your glory. You give us this great and beautiful earth, to discover and to cherish. You give us sun and moon and star-lit sky, everything that gives us light, light for our eyes, our hearts, our minds, light which causes all things to grow. You made us all, each in your image, yet wonderfully different. You breathed into us your life-giving Spirit that we may join with the angels singing your praise:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

We thank you, loving Father, because, when we turned away, you gave Jesus, your Son, who gave his life for us on the cross and showed us the way to live. Send your Holy Spirit that these gifts of bread and wine may be for us Christ's body and his blood.

On the night before he died, when darkness had fallen, Jesus took bread. He gave thanks, broke it, and shared it with his disciples, saying: 'This is my body, given for you. Do this to remember me.'

After they had eaten, he took the cup of wine, gave thanks, and shared it with his disciples, saying: 'This is my blood, poured out for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins.'

So Father, with this bread and this cup we celebrate his love, his death, his risen life. As you feed us with these gifts, send your Holy Spirit, and change us more and more to be like Jesus our Saviour.

Help us, Father, to love one another, as we look forward to that day when suffering is ended, and all creation is gathered in your loving arms. And now with all your saints we give you glory, through Jesus Christ, in the strength of the Spirit, today and for ever. **Amen.**

Awaiting his coming in glory as our Saviour taught us, so we pray

**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.**

Breaking of Bread

We break this bread to share in the body of Christ

Though we are many, we are one body because we all share in one bread.

(1 Corinthians 10. 16-17)

Jesus, Lamb of God have mercy on us.

Jesus, bearer of our sins, have mercy on us.

Jesus, redeemer of the world, grant us peace.

The Giving of Communion

God's holy gifts for God's holy people.

**Jesus Christ is holy, Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**

Prayer After Communion

**Lord, we have broken your bread and received your life.
By the power of your spirit keep us always in your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Hymn 382: Let All the World in Every Corner Sing

Let all the world, in every corner, sing:
My God and King!
The heavens are not too high,
His praise may thither fly,
The earth is not too low,
His praises there may grow,
Let all the world in every corner sing,
my God and king!

Let all the world in every corner sing,
my God and king!
The church with psalms must shout,
no door can keep them out;
But, above all, the heart
must bear the longest part.
Let all the world in every corner sing,
my God and king!

A prayer for Alan and Liz

Father, thank you for bringing Alan and Liz to St Mary's and for their ministry and friendship which is valued by so many in Sawston.

Thank you for Liz's love and friendship and the support she has been to Alan over the years. Father, Liz has shared your love with so many children and shown them what it means to be part of a family in Jesus, something that they will carry with them for the rest of their lives. Let her know how much she is loved and be with her in her new adventures.

Heavenly Father, thank you for Alan. For his care, his wisdom and love. Through Alan's ministry we have been able to grow in our understanding of You and know better our identity in Christ Jesus.

Through Alan's teaching we see your lessons for us. In his smile and warm welcome we see your loving arms. In his faithful leading we glimpse your gentle shepherding. In His compassion and love we see your love and compassion. In his selfless serving of the village we see your sacrifice for us.

Alan's love and trust for you is written on his heart and it is visible for all to see. May he continue to shine your light in everything he does, knowing that he will always be in our thoughts, hearts and prayers.

We thank you for the end of a wonderful chapter of life and also for an exciting new beginning that they have waiting for them. Only you know the plans you have in store for Alan and Liz and but we know that you will hold them in your loving care in the days to come.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord

Amen.

The Blessing

Go into the world peacefully; be courageous and bold; hold onto all that is good; keep your thoughts and words gentle; cheer up the sad ones; support the weak ones; help the sick ones; befriend the lonely ones; honour everyone; love and serve God; wait patiently for his Son, and the blessing of God almighty the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit be with you and those you love today and always. Amen

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ. Amen.

If you have any prayer or pastoral needs, please don't hesitate to contact

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