



Written Service Sunday August 6th 2023

A service of worship for use at home

Prepared by Susan Johnson

Charity number

1134226

Welcome to worship.

Hymn 368 StF When morning guilds the skies may Jesus Christ be praised

When morning guilds the skies,
my heart awakening cries,
May Jesus Christ be praised.
Alike at work and prayer to Jesus I repair.
May Jesus Christ be praised.

Does sadness fill my mind?
A solace here I find,
May Jesus Christ be praised.
When evil thoughts are near,
these words will calm my fears,
May Jesus Christ be praised

To God, the Word on high,
the hosts of angels cry:
May Jesus Christ be praised!
Let mortals too upraise
their voices in hymns of praise:
May Jesus Christ be praised!

Let earth's wide circle round
in joyful notes resound:
May Jesus Christ be praised!
Let air and sea and sky
from depth to height reply:
May Jesus Christ be praised!

Be this, while life is mine
my song of love divine.
May Jesus Christ be praised!
Be this the eternal song
through all the ages long:
"May Jesus Christ be praised"

Let us pray.

May Jesus Christ be praised. We come this morning to offer you our praise and worship , for you are the one who has called us to follow him and live our lives so that others might know of the love of God and the power of the Holy Spirit.

Living Lord, we come just as we are, with our joys and sorrows, with our worries and our things that we want to say thank you for, We bring all these things to you now in the quietness.

We simply ask Lord that as we worship we would be reminded of your love, you compassion and your mercy. We look to you for forgiveness and also strength that we might better follow your ways. In Jesus name we pray.

Lord's prayer

Our Father who art in heaven hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come your will be done , on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today 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

StF 495 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 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;
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!
interpreted by love!

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;
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;
O still, small voice of calm.

These words lead us to the hills around Galilee .Today our reading is the well known story of the feeding of the five thousand. I have chosen to use the living bible and as you hear it being read I would like to think about any word or phrase or action that seems to stay in your mind.

Reading - Matthew 14:13- 21 Jesus Feeds Five Thousand (The Living Bible)

¹³ As soon as Jesus heard the news, he left in a boat to a remote area to be alone. But the crowds heard where he was headed and followed on foot from many towns. ¹⁴ Jesus saw the huge crowd as he stepped from the boat, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

¹⁵ That evening the disciples came to him and said, “This is a remote place, and it’s already getting late. Send the crowds away so they can go to the villages and buy food for themselves.”

¹⁶ But Jesus said, “That isn’t necessary—you feed them.”

¹⁷ “But we have only five loaves of bread and two fish!” they answered.

¹⁸ “Bring them here,” he said. ¹⁹ Then he told the people to sit down on the grass. Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up toward heaven, and blessed them. Then, breaking the loaves into pieces, he gave the bread to the disciples, who distributed it to the people. ²⁰ They all ate as much as they wanted, and afterward, the disciples picked up twelve baskets of leftovers. ²¹ About 5,000 men were fed that day, in addition to all the women and children!

What you have just done is a religious practice called Lectio Divina – divine reading when we read a passage and ask God to reveal something new to us.

Pause for a moment and think about the words or phrases that stay in your mind.

I wonder what was Mathew’s purpose in writing this story. It was written about 60 years after the death of Jesus and during that time Matthew would have heard many different versions of the

event. Quite a fascinating process to write what he did as always Matthew was both looking backwards to the history of the Israelites and also forward to the links between the event and new Christian faith.

The story reminds his Jewish readers of the stories of Elisha, a prophet from the 9th Century who, when he understood that Elijah, the prophet who had taught him so much, would soon pass away, asked to be blessed with a double portion of Elijah's spirit. Elijah was then carried straight into heaven by a chariot of fire. Elisha picked up Elijah's mantle and used it to cross the Jordan again on dry land. He received the double portion he had asked for and performed many miracles in Israel. Jesus was likened to Elisha with perhaps more than the double portion.

The loaves are also compared to the manna in the wilderness that appeared to Moses after the crossing of the red sea.

Looking forward, in the sharing of this bread and fish Matthew looks forward to the messianic banquet prepared for all people. He anticipates the Lord's supper.

Did you pick up on these things or where other things more important to you?

I noticed from beginning that Jesus needed time alone – he had just heard of the death of his cousin, John, and needed time to come to terms with that news. However, that was not to be as the crowds followed him.

Jesus had compassion on the crowds but he challenged the disciples to feed them themselves.

There is an image in the Methodist Art Collection of the feeding of the 5 thousand in modern dress, sitting on the side of a hill, eating from fish and chip papers. Quite striking. Jesus himself is hidden from you and you can just see his arms and hands reaching out to bless the food in front of him.

But what does this mean for our lives today? What is relevant from this story from over 2 thousand years ago. Some might see it as a miracle story in that the food increased. Some might say that because of who and how Jesus was the crowd were encouraged to share their food with the neighbours seated near them, for after all you would not head up into the hills to listen to a preacher with out food. However, you interpret the story the focus is on **Jesus**

- on his compassion on the people

– on his demand that his followers feed others

-And that there was more than enough for everyone .

The challenge for us today is that of compassion – of care - of desire to share what we have with others in need. To bless those that we can. May the living Jesus help us see in this coming week the needs of those around us and help us to serve them. Amen

Hymn StF 611 Brother sister let me serve you.

Brother, sister, let me serve you;
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

2. We are pilgrims on a journey,
and companions on the road;
we are here to help each other
walk the mile and bear the load.

3. I will hold the Christ light for you
in the nighttime of your fear;
I will hold my hand out to you,
speak the peace you long to hear.

4. I will weep when you are weeping;
when you laugh I'll laugh with you;
I will share your joy and sorrow,
till we've seen this journey through.

5. When we sing to God in heaven,
we shall find such harmony,
born of all we've known together
of Christ's love and agony.

6. Brother, sister, let me serve you;
let me be as Christ to you;
pray that I may have the grace to
let you be my servant too.

Prayers of intercession – using The Lord's my Shepherd StF481

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want;
He makes me lie in pastures green.
He leads me by the still, still waters,
His goodness restores my soul.

He guides my ways in righteousness,
And He anoints my head with oil,
And my cup, it overflows with joy,
I feast on His pure delights.

*And I will trust in You alone,
And I will trust in You alone,
For Your endless mercy follows me,
Your goodness will lead me home.*

And though I walk the darkest path,
I will not fear the evil one,
For You are with me, and Your rod and staff
Are the comfort I need to know.

Read one verse and chorus then hold before God those who are seeking rest, who are needing to find peace in their situation. Think of a situation –those who are hungry or in danger or needing strength and faith. Ask God to bless them

Read one verse and chorus then we thank God that he guides our ways. Help us to listen and to hold before God our leaders in the church, local and government and world leaders. May they give and receive compassion and follow the ways of justice and peace.

Read one verse and chorus then we ask God's blessing on those who walk the darkest path; the fearful, the hungry, those who are in despair, those who are alone and isolated. May we bring human comfort to those in distress

Hymn StF 350 I cannot tell

1. I cannot tell why He, whom angels worship,
Should set His love upon the sons of men,
Or why, as Shepherd, He should seek the wanderers,
To bring them back, they know not how or when.
But this I know, that He was born of Mary,
When Bethlehem's manger was His only home,
And that He lived at Nazareth and laboured,
And so the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is come.

2. I cannot tell how silently He suffered,
As with His peace He graced this place of tears,
Or how His heart upon the Cross was broken,
The crown of pain to three and thirty years.
But this I know, He heals the broken-hearted,
And stays our sin, and calms our lurking fear,
And lifts the burden from the heavy laden,
For yet the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is here.

3. I cannot tell how He will win the nations,
How He will claim His earthly heritage,
How satisfy the needs and aspirations
Of east and west, of sinner and of sage.
But this I know, all flesh shall see His glory,
And He shall reap the harvest He has sown,
And some glad day His sun shall shine in splendour
When He the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is known.

4. I cannot tell how all the lands shall worship,
When, at His bidding, every storm is stilled,
Or who can say how great the jubilation
When all the hearts of men with love are filled.
But this I know, the skies will thrill with rapture,
And myriad, myriad human voices sing,
And earth to heaven, and heaven to earth, will answer:
At last the Saviour, Saviour of the world, is King.

Blessing

May we, who have been blessed through our
knowledge of Jesus' compassion and love, be
the ones who share the very nature of God
with others this week.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and
the love of God, and the fellowship of the
Holy Spirit be with us all, now and evermore.
Amen