

Sunday 15 August 2021

This short act of worship has been prepared for you to use whilst we are unable to use Methodist Church premises. We invite you to spend a few moments with God, knowing that other people are sharing this act of worship with you.

Opening Prayer

Lord Jesus, you are the Bread of Life. As we worship today let us receive you and be renewed by you. Amen.

Hymn: Jesus, the joy of loving heart
(Singing the Faith 365)

Sing/ Read /pray /proclaim the words or listen to it here
https://youtu.be/X_U-R7aNG0Y

Jesu, the joy of loving hearts,
the fount of life and light of all;
from the best bliss that earth
imparts
we turn unfilled to heed your call.

Your truth unchanged has ever
stood;
you save all those who on you call;
to those that seek you, you are
good,
to those that find you, all in all.

We taste of you, the living bread,
and long to feast upon you still;
we drink of you, the fountain-head,

our thirsty souls from you we fill.

Our restless spirits long to be
with you, where'er our lot is cast,
glad when your gracious smile we
see,
blest when our faith can hold you
fast.

O Jesus, ever with us stay;
make all our moments calm and
bright;
chase the dark night of sin away;
shed on the world your holy light.
Ray Palmer (1808-1887) (alt.)

Let us pray together

Lord, the eyes of all look to you in
hope; and you give them what they
need.

You open your hand and satisfy the
hunger and thirst of every living
thing.

We, too, turn to you again, longing to be filled— to eat of the Bread of Life, to drink from your life-giving streams, to taste your goodness and live.

May the time we spend together in your presence nourish our hearts and minds; may it strengthen our relationship with you, and renew our commitment to live in this world as your faithful disciples.

For you alone are God, the Source and Sustainer of life. Forgive us when we rely on our own strength and wonder why we struggle. Renew us and feed us.

Our God is a gracious forgiving God. Jesus tells us we can start again. Our sins are forgiven. Thanks be to God.

Today's Reading from the Old Testament Ephesians 5: 15-20

¹⁵ Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is. ¹⁸ Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and

songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord,²⁰ always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Today's Gospel Reading: John 6: 51–58

⁵¹ I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."

⁵² Then the Jews began to argue sharply among themselves, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?"

⁵³ Jesus said to them, "Very truly I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. ⁵⁴ Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise them up at the last day. ⁵⁵ For my flesh is real food and my blood is real drink. ⁵⁶ Whoever eats my flesh and drinks my blood remains in me, and I in them. ⁵⁷ Just as the living Father sent me and I live because of the Father, so the one who feeds on me will live because of me. ⁵⁸ This is the bread that came down from heaven. Your ancestors ate manna and died, but whoever feeds on this bread will live forever."

Time to Reflect

How good is it to eat a slice of a freshly baked loaf of bread? How good is it to have a treat and buy a lovely filled sandwich from a delicatessen. We have a favourite one in Harrogate I need no excuse to pass. I am satisfied after partaking of the bread.

The day before our passage today, on the far shore of the lake, Jesus had fed over five thousand people by multiplying five loaves and two fish. They now gather round him again, looking for more. They expected more free and satisfying food. They did not expect a deep sermon! He tells them that such food cannot last, just like the manna from heaven that Moses gave their ancestors in the desert.

The true bread which he now offers is his own flesh. Some, of them were horrified. Many of his followers, indeed, were to leave him on hearing this.

Peter and the Twelve, however, remained faithful. They were with him at the Last Supper when he again took some bread, blessed it and gave it to them, saying 'Take it, and eat it, this is my body.' This is my body. Similarly with the wine. They knew that "eating of him"

meant receiving his goodness as a healthy and satisfying spiritual gift.

Bread nourishes us, so Jesus uses that term to describe himself. But 'living' bread is an attempt to reveal more deeply how profoundly he nourishes us. He offers us a relationship in which we can 'abide' in security. We need that life-giving relationship more than ever today in an unhealthy world. By taking of him, we can live for ever.

Take a time to sit quietly

A time of prayer

For our world and its pain and uncertainty, Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For our nation, our Queen and our government, Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For the city, town or village in which we live, and those who serve us in body, mind and spirit, Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

On those who are frightened, unwell, alone, or overwhelmed. On our church, on other churches we share with and the Church throughout the world, Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer.

For each of us, right now, longing for bread in our hunger, Lord in your mercy, hear our prayer. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father

Hymn: Listen to Bread is blessed
and broken (Singing the Faith 576)

<https://youtu.be/zWvFZZXHBhw>

**or sing a verse of a hymn that
comes to mind**

Bread is blessed and broken,
wine is blessed and poured:
take this and remember
Christ the Lord.

Share the food of heaven
earth can not afford.
Here is grace in essence --
Christ the Lord.

Know yourself forgiven,
find yourself restored,
meet a friend for ever --
Christ the Lord.

God has kept his promise
sealed by sign and word:
here, for those who want him --
Christ the Lord.

*John L. Bell (b. 1949) and Graham
Maule (b. 1958)*

A prayer of blessing

May God, Father, Son, and Holy
Spirit, Creator, Redeemer and
Sustainer, go with us now. May
God's Spirit be on us, on those we

love, and on those for who we
should pray, this day and always.

Original Materials by Rev. Ian
Pruden

All

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until the end of August 2021.