

St Peter's Scottish Episcopal Church, Kirkcaldy



Sunday 25th July 2021 Pentecost 9 (Trinity 8)

Please print and bring this sheet with you if you are attending the service and wish to follow the readings and sing the hymns. (SPB refers to the Scottish Prayer Book Liturgy for those who follow this service)

Introit Hymn: Fill your hearts with joy and gladness

1.

Fill your hearts with joy and gladness,
sing and praise your God and mine!
Great the Lord in love and wisdom,
might and majesty divine!
He who framed the starry heavens
knows and names them as they shine.
Fill your hearts with joy and gladness,
sing and praise your God and mine!

3.

Praise the Lord for times and seasons,
cloud and sunshine, wind and rain;
spring to melt the snows of winter
till the waters flow again;
grass upon the mountain pastures,
golden valleys thick with grain.
Fill your hearts with joy and gladness,
sing and praise your God and mine!

2.

Praise the Lord, his people, praise him!
wounded souls his comfort know;
those who fear him find his mercies,
peace for pain and joy for woe;
humble hearts are high exalted,
human pride and power laid low.
Fill your hearts with joy and gladness,
sing and praise your God and mine!

4.

Fill your hearts with joy and gladness,
peace and plenty crown your days;
love his laws, declare his judgments,
walk in all his words and ways;
he the Lord and we his children--
praise the Lord, all people, praise!
Fill your hearts with joy and gladness,
sing and praise your God and mine!

Welcome:

Grace and peace to you from God our Father
and the Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Collect for Purity:

**Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

Gloria:

**Glory to God in the highest, and peace to God's people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks, we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us;**

**you are seated at the right hand of the Father: receive our prayer.
For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

Collect:

O God, the protector of all who trust in you, without whom nothing is strong, nothing is holy: increase and multiply upon us your mercy, that with you as our ruler and guide, we may so pass through things temporal, that we lose not the things eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. **Amen**

Collect SPB:

O God, whose never-failing providence ordereth all things both in heaven and earth: We humbly beseech thee to put away from us all hurtful things, and to give us those things which be profitable for us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

First reading:

2 Kings 4. 42-44 (SPB Romans 8.12)

Second reading:

Ephesians 3. 14-21

Gradual hymn:

To God be the glory

1. To God be the glory, great things he hath done!
So loved he the world that he gave us his Son,
who yielded his life an atonement for sin,
and opened the lifegate that all may go in.
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
let the earth hear his voice!
*Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,
let the people rejoice!*
*O come to the Father thru Jesus the Son,
and give him the glory, great things he hath done!*

2. O perfect redemption, the purchase of blood,
to every believer the promise of God;
the vilest offender who truly believes,
that moment from Jesus a pardon receives.
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,...

3. Great things he hath taught us, great things he hath done,
and great our rejoicing thru Jesus the Son;
but purer, and higher, and greater will be
our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see.
Praise the Lord, praise the Lord,...

Gospel acclamation: **Alleluia! Alleluia! Your words are spirit, Lord and they are life: you have the message of eternal life. Alleluia.**

Gospel:

John 6. 1-2 (St Matthew 7.15)

When gospel is announced: **Glory to Christ our Saviour.**

At end: Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious Gospel. **Praise to Christ our Lord.**

Sermon:

The Revd Canon Christine Fraser

We might be tempted to gloss over the miracle stories about Jesus that are recorded in the Gospels. Taken at face value, most of them stretch our credulity, perhaps further than we are willing to go, and for what? Is it necessary to believe that Jesus really walked on water, or magically multiplied the loaves and fishes? Why do we keep telling these improbable stories?

The story we heard in the Gospel of John today — about Jesus feeding the 5,000 — stands out in the Gospels. The Gospel writers clearly thought this story was important. It shows up in Matthew, Mark, and Luke — since these three share a common source and repeat a lot of material, this is not surprising. But John also includes it, which is interesting, because there's not much overlap between John and the other Gospels. And on top of that, Matthew and Mark like this story so much that they tell it twice! The second telling is almost identical, except in that version only 4,000 people are fed. The point is, this story about feeding the multitudes was important enough to make it into the Gospels six times. And there are only four Gospels.

Let's dig in and see if we can discover why the Gospel writers thought this story was so important. To begin: it's more than a miracle story. In the Gospel writers' hands, the miracle becomes a parable. The feeding of the 5,000 is a parable about what we are called to do and who we are called to be. If we are going to follow Jesus, at some point, he's going to turn to us and say: You give them something to eat. And it matters how we respond to his command.

The more you begin to imagine the world of this story, the more you see that it's not about magic at all. It's about how we see the world, and what we do with what we already have. In a way, the magic has already happened: God has already given us a world out of nothing, already provided sun and earth and water and seeds—how much more magic do we need? Everything we have comes from God and will return to God.

God provides something out of nothing. That is the basic story of creation, and it is the way God provided manna for his people in the wilderness. But this story is different. Jesus does not make something out of nothing here. No — he takes what God has already provided. He draws out the resources that are already present in the community.

John has altered one important detail in the way he tells the story. In each of the other Gospels, it isn't Jesus who asks, "Where are we to buy bread?" Instead, that question belongs to the disciples — and in Matthew, Mark, and Luke, when the disciples ask this question, Jesus turns to them and says, "You give them something to eat."

But of course, the disciples can see that feeding so many people would be impossible. As Andrew points out, all they can find is five barley loaves and two fish belonging to a boy in the crowd. But then, Jesus gets them to see what's there with new eyes. The disciples are coming from a place of fear, of scarcity: there will never be enough! Six month's wages would not buy enough bread to feed them! What Jesus shows us is that, whatever we have, whatever God has already given us, is always enough. If we look at it in the right way. If we decide to share. If we let go of our fear and stop holding onto to what's "ours" so tightly. If we can do those things, we absolutely have enough bread to feed the whole world.

And, it turns out, to throw a really big party. Imagine this crowd that Jesus confronts. Jesus sees a picnic for 5,000 people, a picnic with everyone spread out on the grass, enjoying the sunset on the lakeshore and the cool evening breeze. That's how Jesus wants us to see the world: 5,000 people on the lakeshore isn't a problem, it's a party. Whatever we brought with us is what we have to share, and there's plenty for everyone, and more left over besides. This is a pretty compelling picture of what the Kingdom of God is like.

Here's another way of looking at it: this story about feeding the five thousand is the first supper, instead of the last supper. Jesus sat down and broke bread with his friends many times over the course of his ministry, not just that last night in the upper room. It's important to remember that the last supper is not the only Eucharistic feast in the Gospels. Every time Jesus broke bread with friends, it was a thanksgiving meal (for that is what eucharist means—thanksgiving).

Jesus follows the same pattern at this first supper as he does at the last supper. Here is how Mark records the scene: "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." Take, bless, break, give: those are the actions of the eucharistic feast. Jesus wants us to take what we have, whatever it is, whatever's already here, and bless it: in other words, give it to God. And then break it open, divide it up, and give it away. Joyfully. So that all will have enough.

Jesus does this with bread, every time he shares a meal. And he does this with his life: lives it for God, breaks it open, gives it to us. And this is what Jesus wants with our lives too: You give them something to eat. It's not enough to simply pray that God will change things, will feed the hungry and clothe the naked. God needs us to participate in this eucharistic action. God is calling us to take our lives, and bless them, and be broken open, and then given away in service of others.

It's the breaking that can be hard to face. But you cannot be a follower of Jesus without the risk of being broken. Serving a meal to a homeless person or taking communion to someone dying of cancer — sometimes, such an encounter is going to break your heart. It would be easier to stay safe where you never have to face that reality. But we don't have that option: you give them something to eat.

Take, bless, break, give. No matter how hard or impossible this seems, the end result is worth it: everyone ate until they were satisfied, and when they gathered up what was left over, they filled twelve baskets. This vision is possible. We already have what we need, right here in our midst.

Nicene Creed:

**We believe in one God, the Father, the almighty,
maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.
We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one substance with the
Father.
Through him all things were made.
For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven;
by the power of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate of the Virgin Mary, and
was made human.
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.
On the third day he rose again in accordance with the Scriptures;
he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.
We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from
the Father.
Who with the Father and the Son is worshipped and glorified.
and has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come.
Amen.**

*Intercessions:
Group* Composed and prayed on behalf of the congregation by a member of the Intercessors

Lord as you have called us to your service, make us worthy of your calling and hear us as we pray to you through the grace of your Son.

We pray for the world and all people, for an end to war and suffering, for reconcilers and peacemakers, for those most affected by climate change and for those who work to prevent it, for those who govern us and represent us and for our church of St Peter in Kirkcaldy and for this country
Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

In the Diocesan cycle of prayer we pray for Bishop Mark the Primus and his Diocese of Moray Ross and Caithness, for the College of Bishops and our Diocesan Bishop Ian. Praying also for the church of St Columba, Stanley and Carrie Applegath and Lay Reader Graham Martin-Bates. at The Bield at Blackruthven we pray for Robin Anker-Peterson and Kirrilee Reid. Here in Kirkcaldy we pray for our Rector Christine and all who help with ministry. On a distant shore we remember Archbishop Stephen and the people of the Karen.
Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Creator God we pray for our friends and members of our congregation on holiday. Thank you for the refreshment which holiday brings, for the freedom from routine and for the new experiences and opportunities as new places are explored. Thank you for the gift of your wonderful creation and ask you to help us to be good stewards especially in our leisure time.
Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Loving God friend of those in need, your Son Jesus has healed so many in body, mind and spirit. We hold before you those known to us and those known only to you, those seeking healing, those in need within the church and the world. Praying this morning for those members of our congregation who keep the faith at home – Sheila Brown and June West.
Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

Merciful God, we pray for all who grieve for loved ones who have died. Be with them in their sorrow, lead them with your love to accept their loss and to go on with their lives. In a time of silence let us pray for all those whom we have loved but may see no longer in this life..... From our congregation we name Margaret Hitchin, Richard Pattinson and Janet Soutar whose anniversaries fall at this time. May they with all the faithful departed rest in peace and rise to glory.

Lord, in your Mercy: **Hear our Prayer**

God of power, hear our prayers, and through the ministry of your, Son free us from the all that is evil in the world. Lead us as we go forward into another week strengthened and upheld by your love, the knowledge of the Gospel and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

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

Confession

and Absolution: God is love and we are God's children. There is no room for fear in love. We love because God loved us first. Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith.

Silence

**God our Father, we confess to you
and to our fellow members in the Body of Christ
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed,
and in what we have failed to do.**

We are truly sorry.

**Forgive us our sins,
and deliver us from the power of evil.
For the sake of your Son who died for us,
Jesus Christ, our Lord.**

(May) God, who is both power and love, forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by his Spirit and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

Peace:

We meet in Christ's Name let us share his peace.

The service continues in the Green Liturgy Booklet at Page 4. There will be no offertory collection during the service, please place your offertory in the dish at the door before or after the service.

Offertory hymn: What a friend we have in Jesus

1.

What a Friend we have in Jesus,
all our sins and griefs to bear!
What a privilege to carry
everything to God in prayer!
O what peace we often forfeit,
O what needless pain we bear,
All because we do not carry
everything to God in prayer.

3.

Are we weak and heavy laden,
cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Saviour, still our refuge,
take it to the Lord in prayer.
Do your friends despise, forsake you?
Take it to the Lord in prayer!
In His arms He'll take and shield you;
you will find a solace there.

2.

Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble anywhere?
We should never be discouraged;
take it to the Lord in prayer.
Can we find a friend so faithful
who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness;
take it to the Lord in prayer.

4.

Blessed Saviour, Thou hast promised
Thou wilt all our burdens bear
May we ever, Lord, be bringing all to
Thee in earnest prayer.
Soon in glory bright unclouded there
will be no need for prayer
Rapture, praise and endless worship
will be our sweet portion there.

Communion Prayer: (For those at home)

God of infinite mercy. We thank you for Jesus our Saviour who feeds his people and gives them eternal life. Though we cannot consume the gifts of bread and wine we thank you that we do receive Christ's saving presence, the forgiveness of sins and all other benefits of his passion. Grant that we may continue for ever in the risen and ascended life of our Saviour. Amen. (This prayer is said during the online Provincial service).

The Lord's Prayer:

**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.**

Communion hymn: Seek ye first the kingdom of God

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| 1. Seek ye first the kingdom of God
And His righteousness
And all these things shall be added unto you
Allelu, alleluia | Knock and the door shall be opened unto
you
Allelu, alleluia |
| 2. Ask and it shall be given unto you
Seek and ye shall find | 3. Man does not live by bread alone
But by every word
That proceeds from the mouth of God
Allelu, alleluia |

Sentence: We give thanks to you Lord, for you are gracious
And your mercy endures forever

Concluding Prayer: **God of grace, we have received the memorial of the death and resurrection of your Son. May your love, poured into us, bring us to your promises. We ask this in the name of our Redeemer, Jesus Christ. Amen.**

Blessing: The peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord: and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. **Amen**

Dismissal: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord. **In the name of Christ. Amen.**

Recessional hymn: Lord for the years

1. Lord, for the years your love has kept and guided, urged and inspired us, cheered us on our way, sought us and saved us, pardoned and provided: Lord for the years, we bring our thanks today.

2. Lord, for that word, the word of life which fires us, speaks to our hearts and sets our souls ablaze, teaches and trains, rebukes us and inspires us: Lord of the word, receive your people's praise.

3. Lord, for our land in this our generation, spirits oppressed by pleasure, wealth and care: for young and old, for commonwealth and nation, Lord of our land, be pleased to hear our prayer.

4. Lord, for our world where men disown and doubt you, loveless in strength, and comfortless in pain, hungry and helpless, lost indeed without you:

Lord of the world, we pray that Christ may reign.

5. Lord for ourselves; in living power remake us-

self on the cross, and Christ upon the throne,
past put behind us, for the future take us:
Lord of our lives, to live for Christ alone.

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