

### Welcome to worship

It is good indeed to be together across the circuit as we meet in churches, homes, hospitals and care homes to praise God. As we do so we remember that God is always with us in every time and place and so we pause now to focus on his presence. You may also wish to light a candle a symbol of Jesus, the light of the world.

### Call to Worship from Psalm 51

O Lord, open my lips,  
and my mouth will declare your praise.  
For you have no delight in sacrifice;  
if I were to give a burnt-offering, you would not be pleased.  
The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit;  
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

### HYMN: StF 556 Just as I am without one plea

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rmCN-w\\_Gk](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8rmCN-w_Gk)

Just as I am, without one plea  
But that Thy blood was shed for me  
And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee  
O Lamb of God, I come! I come

Just as I am, though tossed about  
With many a conflict, many a doubt  
Fighting and fears within without  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come

Just as I am, poor, wretched, blind  
Sight, riches, healing of the mind  
Yea, all I need, in Thee to find  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come!

Just as I am, Thou wilt receive  
Wilt welcome, pardon, cleanse, relieve  
Because Thy promise I believe  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come

Just as I am, thy love unknown  
Has broken every barrier down.  
Now to be thine, yea thine alone  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Just as I am, of that free love,  
The breadth, length, height and depth to prove

Here for a season, then above  
O Lamb of God, I come, I come.

Charlotte Elliott (1789-1871)

### Prayers

Lord God, giver of life,  
you bless us with all we need –  
and with so much more.  
Keep us from being so focused on physical needs  
that we neglect our spiritual food.  
Feed us with your word,  
satisfy us with your presence,  
and strengthen us by your Spirit –  
that we may share your eternal life.

**Amen.**

Merciful God,  
we thank you that you are to be trusted,  
that you are faithful and provide for all our needs.  
When we feel alone in the desert,  
that is where we meet you.  
In the wilderness of our lives,  
we can turn to you and know that you will sustain us.  
We worship you,  
and we thank you that in you there is always hope.

**Amen.**

### Prayer of Confession

Lord, when we fail to trust you in all things:  
**forgive us, and help us to trust you more.**  
When we complain that you have forsaken us,  
you have left us, abandoned us:  
**forgive us, and help us to trust you more.**  
When we choose to go our own way  
because your way doesn't seem to make sense:  
**forgive us, and help us to trust you more.**  
When we don't challenge injustice,  
and instead, accept things as they are:  
**forgive us, and help us to trust you more.**  
When we keep asking for more signs,  
more proof, more of everything:  
**forgive us, and help us to trust you more.**  
When we trust a little, then snatch it back:  
**forgive us, and help us to trust you more.**  
**Amen.**

### Assurance of Pardon

When we have not trusted God with our lives and  
walked away,  
we can always come back into God's everlasting arms,  
knowing that we are loved and forgiven.  
**Amen.**

**HYMN: StF 161 Speak O Lord, as we come to you**  
[Speak, O Lord - Keith & Kristyn Getty - YouTube](#)

- 1 Speak, O Lord, as we come to you  
to receive the food of your holy word.  
Take your truth, plant it deep in us ;  
shape and fashion us in your likeness,  
that the light of Christ might be seen today  
in our acts of love and our deeds of faith.  
Speak, O Lord, and fulfil in us  
all your purposes, for your glory.
  - 2 Teach us, Lord, full obedience,  
holy reverence, true humility.  
Test our thoughts and our attitudes  
in the radiance of your purity.  
Cause our faith to rise, cause our eyes to see  
your majestic love and authority.  
Words of power that can never fail ;  
let their truth prevail over unbelief.
  - 3 Speak, O Lord, and renew our minds ;  
help us grasp the heights of your plans for us.  
Truths unchanged from the dawn of time  
that will echo down through eternity.  
And by grace we'll stand on your promises,  
and by faith we'll walk as you walk with us.  
Speak, O Lord, till your Church is built  
and the earth is filled with your glory.
- Keith Getty (*b.* 1974) and Stuart Townend (*b.* 1963)

**Bible reading: John 6: 24-35**

So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus.

When they found him on the other side of the lake, they said to him, 'Rabbi, when did you come here?' Jesus answered them, 'Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his seal.' Then they said to him, 'What must we do to perform the works of God?' Jesus answered them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.' So they said to him, 'What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, "He gave them bread from heaven to eat." ' Then Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.' They said to him, 'Sir, give us this bread always.'

Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.'

**Reflection by Josie Keys**

One of the most memorable stories about Jesus which has come into our national consciousness is "the feeding of the 5000". In fact Jesus fed great crowds of people on more than one occasion and we puzzle how thousands could be satisfied by 5 loaves and 2 smoked fish, the contents of one boy's lunch box. One of these occasions is told in the verses which come just before the reading set out here. What a busy and tiring event that must have been: imagine Glastonbury Music Festival or maybe your church Christmas Fayre. The next day there is a feeling of anti climax and the workers at the event just want to relax after the clearing up is done. So our reading today is about the morning after the night before and it begins with Jesus and his men leaving for a break, but the crowd still wanted more from them. This great feast had been good – "let's do it again" they think. They chase after Jesus by boat following him to the other side of the lake.

I can imagine Jesus heaving a resigned sigh as he sees people climbing out of their boats on the shore; being Jesus, he understands their motives – they want to see another miracle, they want more bread like yesterday. Jesus gives them a sermon in a sentence: "Do not work for food that goes bad instead work for the food that lasts for eternal life...."(v.27)

"What do you mean? What must we do then to please God?"

"Only believe: believe that God sent me to feed your hunger". There is a hidden meaning here in Jesus' words, because those people, like us perhaps, are hungry not only for lunch but for a meaning in life. Jesus knows they are well acquainted with the story of their ancestors being miraculously fed with manna in the wilderness and he taps into this knowledge: "It wasn't Moses who gave you that food but God in heaven who provided for you with the bread that gives life".

"Give us this bread then", they say and Jesus replies with 6 small words which have a huge meaning:

## "I AM THE BREAD OF LIFE"

In his gospel John reports things which he calls "signs of God's Kingdom" and this saying of Jesus is one such sign. When you believe in Jesus and trust that he is God's Son on earth, then he is near you, you live under God's reign, in God's family. He will supply your every need, not just your wants. More than the daily sandwich for lunch or toast at breakfast, Jesus can fulfil your needs and satisfy your spiritual hunger.

An old hymn - "Fight the good fight" (somewhat outdated sentiments, of course) ends like this: "Only believe and thou shalt see that Christ is all in all to thee". Today we will sing "Break thou the bread of life dear Lord to me" which not only sees Jesus as the bread which satisfies but also as the Word – the Word of which John wrote at the start of his Gospel: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God".

We find Jesus the Word within the word of scripture which can open our eyes to the feast of truth and light which is Jesus and which feeds our spirits with heavenly bread. That does not mean we will never go hungry again but it does give assurance of a sustaining presence in our life.

**HYMN: StF 153 Break thou the bread of life, O Lord to me**  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OAigUNye\\_jl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OAigUNye_jl)

Break Thou the bread of life, dear Lord, to me,  
As Thou didst break the loaves beside the sea;  
Beyond the sacred page I seek Thee, Lord;  
My spirit pants for Thee, O living Word!

Thou art the bread of life, O Lord, to me,  
Thy holy Word the truth that saveth me;  
Give me to eat and live with Thee above;  
Teach me to love Thy truth, for Thou art love.

Oh, send Thy Spirit, Lord, now unto me,  
That He may touch my eyes, and make me see:  
Show me the truth concealed within Thy Word,  
And in Thy Book revealed I see the Lord.

Bless Thou the truth, dear Lord, to me, to me,  
As Thou didst bless the bread by Galilee;  
Then shall all bondage cease, all fetters fall;  
And I shall find my peace, my all in all.

Mary Artemisia Lathbury (1841-1913)  
Alexander Groves (1842-1909)

## Prayers of Intercession

Heavenly Father, giver of all good gifts,  
we pray for all people who willingly use their time and gifts  
in the service of others.

We pray for all who set up and work in charitable organisations:  
bless them as they so freely give of their time and talents.

We pray for people who work together to bring healing,  
for all who work in hospitals, homes, the community:  
bless them as they bring blessing to others.

We pray for those who dedicate their lives to serving God  
in religious orders and communities:  
bless them in their gifts of prayer, hospitality and service.

We pray for people with the gift of words,  
for teachers, writers and communicators:  
bless the seeds that they sow.

We pray for those who don't feel as if they have a gift,  
or feel as if it goes unnoticed:  
bless them with the knowledge that they matter to you.

We pray for our church as a welcoming community,  
constantly being built up by our love for you.  
Bless us, Lord.  
**Amen.**

**Our Father..**

## Blessing of our Gifts

Lord God, our Creator, Redeemer and Sustainer, we give you thanks that you provide for us physically and spiritually. Accept and bless these our gifts of time, money and ourselves, that through all that we offer, your love may be shared and your name glorified.  
**Amen.**

## A METHODIST LOVEFEAST

We come to share in this Love Feast as we recall the many meals Jesus shared with his disciples during his ministry.

Jesus said "People will come from east and west and north and south, and will take their places at the feast in the kingdom of God." The first shall be last and the last

shall be first, but we are invited.  
Heavenly Father as we share in this feast we praise You  
for Your provision for us. You have been generous to us,  
you have heard our cry, you have provided food for all.

Father of earth and heaven,  
your hungry children feed,  
your grace be to our spirits given,  
that true immortal bread.  
Grant us and all our race  
in Jesus Christ to prove  
the sweetness of your pardoning grace,  
the manna of your love.  
(Written by John and Charles Wesley for a love feast)

*Please take the cake/ bread  
or biscuit as we eat together*



We remember the fellowship enjoyed  
within the body of Christ

*We drink the water*



Silence as we recall God's grace and goodness

Let us pray.  
**God of our salvation,  
we thank you that we share again with the risen Christ  
and with all who love him in earth and heaven.  
We pray that, strengthened by his grace,  
we may serve you faithfully all our days;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

**HYMN: StF 663 I the Lord of sea and sky**  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2zr9SMm1gll>

I, the Lord of sea and sky,  
I have heard my people cry.  
All who dwell in dark and sin  
my hand will save.  
I, who made the stars of night,  
I will make their darkness bright.  
Who will bear my light to them?  
Whom shall I send?

*Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord?  
I have heard you calling in the night.  
I will go, Lord, if you lead me.  
I will hold your people in my heart.*

I, the Lord of snow and rain,  
I have borne my people's pain.  
I have wept for love of them.  
They turn away.  
I will break their hearts of stone,  
give them hearts for love alone.

I will speak my words to them.  
Whom shall I send?  
*Here I am, Lord. ....*

I, the Lord of wind and flame,  
I will send the poor and lame.  
I will set a feast for them.  
My hand will save.  
Finest bread I will provide  
till their hearts be satisfied.  
I will give my life to them.  
Whom shall I send?  
*Here I am, Lord. ....*

Daniel L Schutte (b. 1947)

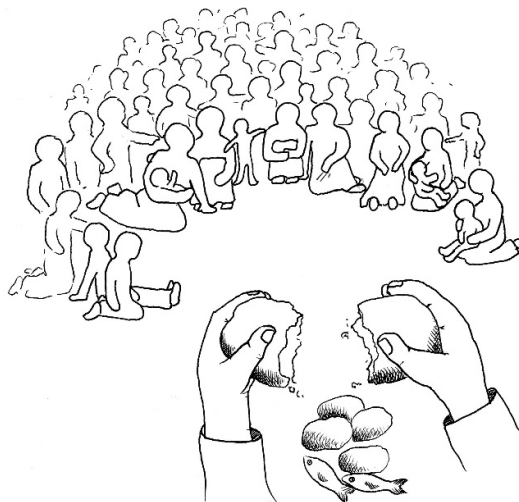
### **A prayer of dismissal**

As we seek to do what you want, Lord,  
may we bring bread to the hungry –  
food for bodies and food for souls,  
strength for the journey, and hope for the future.  
In Jesus' name.

**Amen.**

**THE GRACE**  
We say together...

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



Prayers taken from [www.rootsontheweb.com](http://www.rootsontheweb.com)  
Artwork by Revd Ally Barrett <https://reverendally.org>  
CCL: 7749