



Sunday 25th July 2021

Dear friends,

If you have the Internet, you will find a video to accompany this sheet on YouTube from Sunday morning – search for Isle of Man Methodist Church and you will find it on our YouTube channel.

Our prayers are with you all,

Isle of Man Methodist Staff Team.

Welcome

Call to Worship

Let us bring ourselves to God,
whatever our age and gifts.

Let us prepare to share in worship,
giving thanks for all that God shares with us.

Let us open our hearts and minds to know more of
God's unconditional love and care,
and be ready to share it with others.

Hymn (StF 51): Great is thy faithfulness

Sing/ Read /pray / the words below

- 1 Great is thy faithfulness, O God my Father,
there is no shadow of turning with thee;
thou changest not, thy compassions, they fail not;
as thou hast been thou for ever wilt be:

*Great is thy faithfulness! Great is thy faithfulness!
Morning by morning new mercies I see;
all I have needed thy hand hath provided.
Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.*

- 2 Summer and winter, and springtime and harvest,
sun, moon and stars in their courses above,
join with all nature in manifold witness
to thy great faithfulness, mercy and love:

- 3 Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth,
thine own dear presence to cheer and to guide;
strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow,
blessings all mine, with ten thousand beside!

Thomas O. Chisholm (1866-1960)

Prayer of Adoration

God, our generous provider,
as the young boy offered all he had to Jesus –
five loaves and two small fish –
we come today offering you
everything we have:
a pocketful of faith, a bit of time,
ourselves, our gifts, our talents.
And we know that, however small our gift or offering,
you will do amazing things with it,
far more than we can ever hope, believe or imagine.
Thank you, awesome God. **Amen.**

Readings: 2 Kings 4:42-44 & John 6:1-21

A time of reflection

The story of feeding the five thousand is one in a series of bread miracles in the Bible. And you can perhaps see why it has become such a familiar story. It brings us a setting we can visualise, several characters playing their part (Philip and Andrew for example). But it all started with a boy who was bold enough to approach adults who had a problem, and to dare to offer what little he had to become part of the solution.

For us then today, the story perhaps illustrates how God wants to receive whatever we bring to him - and that everyone can make a contribution, because nothing is too little to offer in God's kingdom. Even our smallest gift or effort will be multiplied by God so that all may receive and be satisfied. Is that idea reflected in your opinion of yourself? Could you really work alongside God in this way?

Well, I'm sure we all feel a bit inadequate at times wondering what on earth I could offer – what gift or contribution can I make to God's kingdom.

So, just reflect for a moment...

In the story of the feeding of the five thousand - do you relate to the boy with the packed lunch, feeling too small and insignificant to expect to be noticed, yet willing to help? Or perhaps you feel like Andrew, the hesitant disciple wondering why he had opened his mouth to say, 'Let's feed all these with this little'? But he said it anyway.

Or can you relate to Elisha, from our Old Testament reading, who was given too much food for himself but not enough for his followers. What would you have done? Saved it for your journey? Rationed it out? Elisha shared it, and God multiplied it.

To give all that we have, wholeheartedly, requires a certain amount of faith- faith that we will still have what we need after we have given. When we trust God for our daily bread, every day, we can be generous with today's bread as we offer what we have in God's service.

You might be thinking to yourself - what difference can anything I do possibly make to people's lives? And that's a natural response - for we are all fallible, finite human beings, only able to do so much, no matter how committed we might be. Yet, if we imagine this excuses apathy or disillusionment, we need to think again. For, as the story of the feeding of the five

thousand so graphically illustrates, that is to reckon without the love of God in Christ. In this astonishing story, we have seen in action the God who takes what seems to be a little and turns it into something great; the God who is able to take an apparently wholly inadequate response and use it in a way that defies human understanding.

The young boy in the story could so easily have reasoned that his loaves and fishes could achieve nothing among so many, but he didn't, offering them instead to be used as Jesus saw fit. So then, may we in response, never undervalue the little we have to offer, but instead let us remember that in God's hands it can yield the most unexpected of results.

What will you offer in contribution to God's kingdom?

Rev Bryan Yardy

Hymn (StF 254): Seek ye first the kingdom of God

Sing/ Read /pray / the words below

- 1 Seek ye first the kingdom of God,
and his righteousness,
and all these things shall be added unto you;
Allelu-, alleluia:

*Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia,
allelu-, alleluia!*

- 2 Ask, and it shall be given unto you;
seek and ye shall find;
knock, and the door shall be opened unto to you;
Allelu-, alleluia:

- 3 We shall not live by bread alone,
but by every word
that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord;
Allelu-, alleluia:

Karen Lafferty (b. 1948)

Prayers of Intercession

Let's pray...

Let us pray to God for the world,
that its peoples may have what they need:

freedom;
justice;
security;
peace.

God our nourisher,
we offer you our prayers and ourselves:

Take us, bless us, use us.

Let us pray to God for humankind,
that every man, woman and child
may have what they need:

food;
shelter;
medicine;
education.

God our nourisher,
we offer you our prayers and ourselves:

Take us, bless us, use us.

Let us pray to God for those who suffer,
that they may have the help they need:

healing;
comfort;
forgiveness;
hope.

God our nourisher,
we offer you our prayers and ourselves:

Take us, bless us, use us.

Let us pray to God for ourselves,
that we may receive what we most need:

faith;
love;
strength;
wisdom.

God our nourisher,
we offer you our prayers and ourselves:

Take us, bless us, use us.

In the name of Jesus, the Bread of Life. **Amen.**

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.**

Closing Prayer

Lord, help us to remain thankful –
for even the simple things.

Keep us focused on your loving, generous nature, so
that we can freely share what we have and who we are.

Let us be cheerful givers and humble receivers,
that all may have enough and be satisfied.

Amen.

