

Podcast
26th July 2020
Luke 9:10-17

Music

Welcome



Hello, and welcome to this week's worship podcast from New Kilpatrick Parish Church. I am Jeanette Peel, the probationary minister, at New Kilpatrick. Worship has not restarted in the church just yet, but preparations are under way for it to happen. But for now, we meet again through the sound of the weekly podcast.

A special welcome to the congregation of Cairns Church who have joined with us this week. It is lovely to share in our time together. But if this is your first time with us, or you have been here every week or somewhere in between, welcome. It is very different from meeting together in one place, but that does not mean we are not a church community, we very much are, and are here for you.

And over the next twenty minutes or so we will spend time in each other's company online, but as time moves on, we become closer to meeting in person. Until then, welcome.

This summer, we are looking at some of the stories and parables that emerge from the Gospel of Luke. And today, along with our Zoomday School, we are reflecting on the feeding of the 5000. Of course, this could very easily be a modern-day story of the reality some people live in; poverty, hunger, living on the breadline. Does that change our understanding of it?

But for now, let us come together, whoever we are and wherever we are.

Come, all who are hungry and go without.
Come, all who are broken by the daily struggle of life.
Come, all who are hurt, and find a healing place.
Come, all of you.

Come, all who are weary and have no strength.
Come, all who are hurting but have no more tears.
Come, all who are scared, and find safety.
Come, all of you.

Reading – Luke 9:10-17

On their return the apostles told Jesus all they had done. He took them with him and withdrew privately to a city called Bethsaida. When the crowds found out about it, they followed him; and he welcomed them, and spoke to them about the kingdom of God, and

healed those who needed to be cured. The day was drawing to a close, and the twelve came to him and said, "Send the crowd away, so that they may go into the surrounding villages and countryside, to lodge and get provisions; for we are here in a deserted place." But he said to them, "You give them something to eat." They said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish—unless we are to go and buy food for all these people." For there were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, "Make them sit down in groups of about fifty each." They did so and made them all sit down. And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke them, and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. And all ate and were filled. What was left over was gathered up, twelve baskets of broken pieces.

Prayer

Let us turn our hearts and minds to God in prayer. Let us pray.

Loving God, we gather in our homes and gardens, on our daily walks or on holiday, to meet with you this day. To gather in a space where we recognise that you are always with us, wherever that may be. We are still in a time when we are not yet meeting as one group, as a body of Christ in one place, but we feel that the moment is drawing ever near.

Until then we give thanks for the opportunity to worship in other ways, to still be a faith community without fear or anxiety. To worship wherever we may be and whenever that may be.

Loving God, today as all days, walk with us, sit with us, stay with us as we listen to your words, and always remain with us. As we engage our heads and hearts may we recognise and feel this deep within us. You are there and you are love, offering forgiveness and hope as we go through this day.

And now hear us come together, our single voices, raised in unity in the prayer Jesus taught his disciples, 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 debts,
as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation;
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory,
for ever.
Amen



Reflection

When we want to reflect on something or have a private conversation, if you are like me, you tend to want to go somewhere quieter, away from the hustle and bustle, or sometimes prying ears – especially children who miss nothing! This was Jesus’ intention for his disciples at the beginning of this passage, to head off privately and possibly find out what had happened when they had been sent out, or to provide them with some private teaching. Several times in the gospel stories we hear of Jesus withdrawing to a quiet place to pray and talk with God. Maybe this was to be one of those days. But as with all things, it never quite worked out like that.

The crowds found out where Jesus was going and decided to follow. But instead of sending them away, they were welcomed. Jesus extended a hand of hospitality and welcomed them by speaking of the Kingdom of God and healing people. However, as night began to fall, everyone was becoming hungry. The disciples wanted to send the crowd away, but Jesus emphatically told the disciples to feed them. I can imagine the pause between Jesus’ words and the look on their faces as that news sunk in. “You give them something to eat,” Jesus said. Us? With what? In the middle of nowhere. At night?

The strange thing is, it has not been long since the disciples were in a similar situation, on the receiving end of such hospitality from strangers. From neighbours. They seem to have forgotten about it already. Jesus had sent them out on their own missions to proclaim the Kingdom of God, and to heal the sick. In doing so, they had been told to take nothing with them, and stay with those who showed them hospitality and welcome. Yet here in this story. They seem to be doing the exact opposite. They are wanting to send everyone away and not provide for them. I suppose, feeding and offering hospitality to a couple of people is not quite the same thing as here. After all, they only have five loaves and two fish. Not quite enough to feed 5,000 people.



And yet they do. They break the customs, the rituals, the laws. In smaller groups of fifty, everyone is filled and satisfied with enough food and plenty is left over; twelve baskets of broken pieces, the story tells us. Whatever happened, whatever the miracle was, this was such an important story that it appears in all four gospel narratives. Lives were changed and the disciples understanding of ‘feed them’ was realised. Maybe this is what Jesus was preparing the disciples to do. He was preparing them to look after his people after he was gone, to ensure they had enough and to proclaim the good news of God. In doing so they would live out his commandments. They would honour God and love their neighbour, whoever that was, and wherever they were. God was at work in that place through Jesus.

In among the heartbreak of all that has happened during this pandemic, we have seen similar events take place in our current society. At the beginning of lockdown, voluntary and third sector charity organisations sent out requests for help, not only for food and essential items, but for human resources to help make, deliver food and goods, and support those most in need. At the beginning some of these organisations had very little, and what they had went fast. But people responded. Those with more, shared. Those with extra gave

what they did not need. Food banks can respond to those who are no longer able to feed their families. Charities still cook and deliver hot pre-cooked meals to the most vulnerable and isolated. Local community groups have been set up to make essential deliveries of medicines or other necessities for those who cannot safely go out. The question the disciples asked, “who, us?” is the one that Jesus tells us the answer too. “Yes. You.” We are all his disciples who need to answer his call of loving God and being a neighbour, but not just in times of crisis. Feed the hungry. Give water to the thirsty. Care for the sick. Look out for each other.

This is where, and when, our faith speaks volumes. Amen.

Poem

The One Loaf by Joy Mead

Out of fire is comes
With bodily contours
Satisfying to all senses:
A warm loaf; seedy and grainy
Soft and being-shapes,
Its yeasty smell, homely
And heavenly,
Of fungus and damp autumn
Woodlands ... and the sun’s warmth.

All life is here:
Ordinary, good and beautiful:
Growing things and cow dung,
Woody roots and seeds,
Long dead in the soil;
All in this given
Bread of our beginnings;
all in our breaking
And sharing
Our one loaf.



Prayer

In our time of prayer, there will be a short period of silence for your own individual prayers. Let us pray.

Loving God, in a world where a small minority have more than they could ever need while the majority go hungry and do without the essentials of life, we have to question where our priorities lie. In a just and fair world, all would be equal and never need go without. In recent months we have discovered neighbour looking out for neighbour, families

reconnecting in a way they would not have done before, and new friendships forming across divisions, by knocking down walls and helping each other up. As we move out of a restricted pandemic may we find these new ways become a tradition, may they continue and grow and strengthen communities as we grow within them.

May we still provide for those that have least and be the hands and action of your love for all people, where faith and action is extended beyond the confines of a building into the very neighbourhood just as Jesus taught.

Today, may we remember, all those who are hurting, grieving, sick, scared of what the future will bring. Encourage us to go out in your name to comfort and heal and love them.

And now we bring you the names of those we know, and those we do not know, who are in need of our prayers, may we be their words in the silence. We name them in the stillness and the silence.

Gracious God, accept these, our prayers, our being, our doing, so that we might be neighbours to others, friend, and stranger. One and all. For always.
Amen.

Benediction

God of small beginnings
and rising hopes,
may we see eternity
in each wheat grain:
ours for today's bread
and tomorrow's planting;
food of life; gift to the future
and seed of hope.

Joy Mead

And may the grace of God,
the love of Jesus,
and the breath of the Holy Spirit,
be with us and remain with us,
now, tomorrow and for ever more. Amen.

Announcements

Our online worship, however you may access it is here for you whenever you need it. We know things are changing slowly but this part of our worship remains. This new is more familiar and we thank you for sharing in it with us.

Each week you can find us here or online at nkchurch.org.uk where you can engage with us in different ways. The church website and bulletin will keep you updated with all the latest news and projects that New Kilpatrick are engaging in.

A special thank you to Sylvia Ferguson and Eliese Fleck , who shared in our time together to make this podcast. Until we meet again next week, goodbye for now.

Music