

**Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> August –  
Morning Worship for  
Trinity 9**

Led by Sue Nelms, LLM

<https://zoom.us/j/82311473640>

LORDSBRIDGE TEAM  
OF CHURCHES



**Opening Words**

God in Christ has revealed his glory.

**Come let us worship.**

From the rising of the sun to its setting  
**the Lord's name is greatly to be praised.**

Give him praise, you servants of the Lord.

**O praise the name of the Lord!**

**Gathering Prayer**

Faithful one, whose word is life:

come with saving power

to free our praise,

inspire our prayer

and shape our lives

for the kingdom of your Son,

Jesus Christ our Lord.

**Amen.**

**Hymn – Gather around for the table is spread**

Gather around for the table is spread,

welcome the food and rest!

Wide is our circle, with Christ at the head,

he is the honoured guest.

Learn by his love, grow in his grace,

pray for the peace he gives;

here at this meal, here in this place,

know that his Spirit lives!

Once he was known in the breaking of bread,  
shared with a chosen few;  
multitudes gathered and by him were fed,  
so will he feed us too.

Jean Holloway (born 1939) (One License 41491)

## Saying Sorry

What God has prepared for those who love him,  
he has revealed to us through the Spirit;  
for the Spirit searches everything.

Therefore, let us in penitence open our hearts to the Lord,  
who has prepared good things for those who love him. cf 1 Corinthians 2.9

Christ came in humility to share our lives:  
forgive our pride.  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

Christ came with good news for all people:  
forgive our silence.  
Christ, have mercy.  
**Christ, have mercy.**

Christ came in love to a world of suffering:  
forgive our self-centredness.  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

The Lord enrich us with his grace,  
and nourish us with his blessing;  
the Lord defend us in trouble and keep us from all evil;  
the Lord accept our prayers,  
and absolve us from our offences,  
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Saviour. **Amen.**

## Readings by Dorothy Morison

### Isaiah 55:1-5

**55** Ho, everyone who thirsts,  
come to the waters;  
and you that have no money,  
come, buy and eat!  
Come, buy wine and milk  
without money and without price.  
<sup>2</sup> Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,  
and your labour for that which does not satisfy?  
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,  
and delight yourselves in rich food.  
<sup>3</sup> Incline your ear, and come to me;  
listen, so that you may live.  
I will make with you an everlasting covenant,  
my steadfast, sure love for David.  
<sup>4</sup> See, I made him a witness to the peoples,  
a leader and commander for the peoples.  
<sup>5</sup> See, you shall call nations that you do not know,  
and nations that do not know you shall run to you,  
because of the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel,  
for he has glorified you.

For the Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

### Matthew 14:13-21

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

#### **Feeding the Five Thousand**

<sup>13</sup> Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. <sup>14</sup> When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. <sup>15</sup> When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, 'This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may

go into the villages and buy food for themselves.’<sup>16</sup> Jesus said to them, ‘They need not go away; you give them something to eat.’<sup>17</sup> They replied, ‘We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish.’<sup>18</sup> And he said, ‘Bring them here to me.’<sup>19</sup> Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. 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.<sup>20</sup> And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full.<sup>21</sup> And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

### **Reflection by Rev Priscilla Slusar**

Our gospel reading is a well-known miracle of Jesus’s and there have been many interpretations and commentaries written about it.

Some people try to explain it rationally – they say that the force of Jesus’ personality encouraged the crowd to take out their own food supplies and share it with their neighbours. It seems to me that this explanation is irrelevant. If we believe that Jesus is God then we believe that he can do any of these things – the real issue that we should be considering is not the “how” of these miracles but the “why”. Why is this miracle recorded in all 4 Gospels? What was Jesus trying to teach us in these miracles? What was the message he was giving us?

I think there are three messages for us:

- Giving
- Receiving
- Sharing

**Giving:** Jesus has just heard about the death of John the Baptist, his cousin and friend, and he really wants some time on his own - some peace and quiet. But the crowds have followed him and want to hear

his teaching and healing. Jesus doesn't turn them away. He shows compassion and gives them his time and attention.

Then the practical problems of food occur. The disciples try to deal with it by suggesting that the crowd should be sent away but Jesus responds with the command, "You give them something to eat". They must have been horrified. Where would they find enough food? What they have is woefully inadequate – five loaves and two fish. Jesus takes the insignificant food and the gift is enlarged by the generosity of God. So, what is the message here for us? We need to be like the people in the story – we should follow Jesus in our lives, feeling excited by his presence, being determined to get near to him, sometimes feeling overwhelmed by words and actions. When we get near to him we offer our gifts to him, even though those gifts seem inadequate and paltry. We have to trust God to accept these gifts from us in the spirit that they are given – and not comment on how inadequate they are. We offer our love to God through our worship. When we worship we offer him the gifts of our music, our words and our prayers – even though we find it difficult to express in words what we think and feel. We trust that God will understand our thoughts even if the words are not strong and clear.

In our lives we offer God the gift of service in our care for our neighbours and community. We know that there is always more that we could do, that we are restricted by our busy lives, that we could do things better but we trust that God will understand that we are doing our best.

Our gifts seem poor but we offer them in love and with trust in God's graciousness to accept them.

**Receiving:** In the Gospel story Jesus takes the gifts and creates something wonderful from them. He gives thanks for the gifts of bread and fish and then distributes them to the crowd. There is enough food for everyone and twelve baskets of leftovers. Suddenly what had

seemed like a small and insignificant gift becomes something for everyone.

The way that Matthew records this recalls the Last Supper – Jesus “takes” the bread, “gives thanks”, and then “distributes” it. These are the traditional actions of a Jewish meal but it is also a strong reminder to us of what God has given to us in his son, Jesus.

We receive God’s love through the supreme act of sacrifice. God sent his son to die for us on the cross so that we have salvation and the hope of eternal life. Our poor gifts to God are returned to us in abundance. God gives us an example of love and service that puts our offerings to shame!

**Sharing:** In the Gospel story the food was shared between the people and they ate as much as they wanted until they were satisfied. There is a strong image of fellowship in this story: they were all there for the same purpose – to hear Jesus, everyone was sitting on the grass like a large picnic, and they were sharing food and chatting.

Sharing a meal is an important social occasion. This is often the way in which we celebrate events, for example birthday parties, or develop friendships, like having coffee and cake together, or even support each other at times of trouble. Sharing food and conversation brings us closer to each other and helps us to create bonds of shared experiences and support.

There are links with the sacrament of Holy Communion. We come to our worship in Holy Communion to share in the body and blood of Christ. The service is presented as a meal so that we remember the Last Supper but also so that we are reminded of the fellowship we share with each other. Jesus invites us to share in God’s love through the sacrifice of his body and blood as represented in the bread and wine. We share this experience with each other and this strengthens our feelings of fellowship and community. We are drawn together as the church through worshipping together.

So, this miracle has a lot to teach us about giving, receiving and sharing. In our worship and in our lives we offer our love and service to God, which seem like small gifts.

We receive His abundant love for us through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross.

We share in a sense of fellowship with each other as a church community and in our worship. Amen

### **Chant: Taste and see – Christopher Walker**

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Blessed the one who seeks refuge in him.

Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Psalm 34:8 (One License 96358)

### **Affirmation of Faith**

Let us affirm our faith in Jesus Christ the Son of God.

**Though he was divine,**

**he did not cling to equality with God,**

**but made himself nothing.**

**Taking the form of a slave,**

**he was born in human likeness.**

**He humbled himself and was obedient to death,**

**even the death of the cross.**

**Therefore God has raised him on high,**

**and given him the name above every name:**

**that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,**

**and every voice proclaim that Jesus Christ is Lord,**

**to the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

cf Philippians 2.6-11

### **Prayers of Intercession prepared by Dona McCullagh**

#### **We pray first for the Church**

Loving God, you call your Church to offer to you all that we are and all that we have, however small it may seem. Bless your people throughout the world, that we may trust you to receive our gifts and

use them for your kingdom. Strengthen all who minister in your name, and help your Church to be a place of welcome, hope and generous love. We pray especially this morning for our brothers and sisters in Burkina Faso, where many churches continue to worship in the shadow of violence and persecution. Give them courage, sustain them by your Holy Spirit, comfort those who mourn, and let their faithful witness speak of the hope that is found in Christ.  
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

### **We pray for the World**

God of abundance, we pray for a world where so many still hunger: for food, for safety, for justice and for peace. We remember places torn apart by war and conflict, where fear silences generosity and hatred destroys fellowship. Guide the leaders of the nations in wisdom, that the gifts of your creation may be shared more fairly and that all people may live in dignity and hope. We pray for all those affected by the wildfires in the UK that have so far seen more than 55,000 acres burned this year across the UK, and by the devastating wildfires in France and Spain. We pray for those whose homes and livelihoods are under threat, and for firefighters and emergency services; comfort all who have been forced to flee, and grant wisdom to those working to care for your creation and for one another in these difficult days.  
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

### **We pray for the Community**

We thank you for every quiet act of kindness offered in our own community: for neighbours who care for one another, for volunteers, carers and all whose generosity often goes unnoticed. Bless our families, our schools, our workplaces and all who seek to serve others. Help us never to think that our own gifts are too small to make a difference, but to offer them gladly into your hands, trusting that you can use them to bring blessing far beyond what we can imagine.  
Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**



## **We pray for those who are suffering**

Compassionate God, we pray for all who are sick, whether in body, mind or spirit; for those who are anxious, lonely or overwhelmed; for those who struggle with grief, financial hardship or uncertainty about the future. Be close to those whose strength is failing, those whose hopes for the future seem small, and those who feel they have little left to give. Remind them that they are loved beyond measure, held in your unfailing care, and surrounded by your presence.

We remember in a moment of silence those known to us personally...

**Silence is kept.**

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

## **We pray for those who have died and those who mourn**

Merciful Lord, we commend to your loving care all who have died, giving thanks for the promise of eternal life in Christ. Comfort those who mourn, especially when grief feels heavy or hope seems distant. May they know your presence beside them, your peace within them, and your promise that nothing can separate us from your love.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

## **And we pray for ourselves**

Gracious God, receive the offering of our worship, imperfect though it is. Fill us afresh with your generous love, and teach us to share that love with those around us. When we feel that our gifts are too small, help us to remember that in your hands they can become a blessing beyond our imagining. As we continue our worship today, unite us by your Holy Spirit, though we are gathered in different places, and strengthen the fellowship we share in Christ.

Merciful Father, **accept these prayers for the sake of your son, our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

## **Collect**

Almighty God,  
who sent your Holy Spirit

to be the life and light of your Church:  
open our hearts to the riches of your grace,  
that we may bring forth the fruit of the Spirit  
in love and joy and peace;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and forever. **Amen**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

As our Saviour taught us, so we pray:

**Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

### **Hymn – I come with joy, a child of God**

- 1 I come with joy, a child of God,  
forgiven, loved and free,  
the life of Jesus to recall,  
in love laid down for me.
- 2 I come with Christians far and near  
to find, as all are fed,  
the new community of love  
in Christ's communion bread.

- 3 As Christ breaks bread, and bids us share,  
each proud division ends.  
The love that made us, makes us one,  
and strangers now are friends.
- 4 The Spirit of the risen Christ,  
unseen, but ever near,  
is in such friendship better known,  
alive among us here.
- 5 Together met, together bound  
by all that God has done,  
we'll go with joy, to give the world  
the love that makes us one.

Brian Wren (b.1936) © 1971, 1995 Stainer & Bell Ltd (CCLI 2403078, One Licence 95155)

## Notices

### Conclusion

Creator God,  
you give seed for us to sow, and bread for us to eat;  
make us thankful for what we have received  
and generous in supplying the needs of others  
so all the world may give you thanks and glory,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

And may the blessing of God Almighty, Father, Son and Holy Spirit  
be among us and remain with us always.

**Amen**

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