

Church Services in August

Please note a change of times for services at New Hutton (which will take us through to the end of October). It leaves more time for lunch, gardening, going out for a walk or to visit family and friends etc. Come and join us at 6pm.

1st August (Trinity 9)

4pm Holy Communion at Old Hutton

8th August (Trinity 10)

6pm Evening Prayers at New Hutton

15th August (Trinity 11)

4pm Afternoon Prayers at Old Hutton

22nd August (Trinity 12)

6pm Holy Communion at New Hutton

29th August (Trinity 13)

10am We join with St Mark's at Natland

As no-one should feel forced to return to church before they feel able/safe to do so Sunday Morning Worship at 10am will continue to be livestreamed via Facebook (please use the St Mark's Facebook page). Later in the day a link can be sent to you via email. If you haven't asked already just send Craig a request for the link please. Alternatively a link to the service can be found on St Mark's Church page, www.natlandnews.blogspot.co.uk

Please be assured of our prayers. Take care. Stay safe.



St Mark's Church Facebook page:

@churchofstmark

St Mark's Church page,

www.natlandnews.blogspot.co.uk

Readings, Reflections & Prayers for August

prepared by Angela this month

Sunday 1st August (Trinity 9)

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

When I read a Bible passage I often take a moment to notice which words or phrases jump out at me. The word or phrase may differ depending on how I'm feeling. Perhaps it's the same for you too? In this particular passage I'm struck by the phrase 'Sir, give us this bread always.' Jesus has just fed a crowd of 5,000 people (or more) and we get the impression that the crowd is eager to see Jesus do other amazing things. Jesus on the other hand doesn't just want them following him around to see what wonders he will do. He wants them to recognise who he really is and to come to him ie. trust in him, follow him, listen to him. He wants them to discover that once they do this their deepest hunger will be satisfied. Why not make this phrase 'Sir, give us this bread always' your prayer today. He won't disappoint.

Prayer

Sir, give us this bread always.
Fill my emptiness and my hunger each and every day.
Amen.

Sunday 8th August (Trinity 10)

Bible Reading: John 6:35, 41-51

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.' Then the Jews began to complain about him because he said, 'I am the bread that came down from heaven.' They were saying, 'Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How can he now say, "I have come down from heaven"?' Jesus answered them, 'Do not complain among yourselves. No one can come to me unless drawn by the Father who sent me; and I will raise that person up on the last day. It is written in the prophets, "And they shall all be taught by God." Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me. Not that anyone has seen the Father except the one who is from God; he has seen the Father. Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.'

Reflection

The crowd are still exercising Jesus with their questions and objections. Whatever he says they want to challenge or object to it. Just like the other week when they couldn't see past who his mum and dad were and what he was like as a young lad growing up in the neighbourhood. However Jesus presses on. He doesn't back down from making bold and powerful statements about who he is. Yes, his mum and dad were Mary and Joseph but that was only part of the story. Yes, he fed a hungry crowd but that was only part of the story too. Jesus comes to feed more than just a physical hunger. Jesus comes to remind us that when we follow him and put our trust in him it changes us not just for a few hours—like a meal might do—but for ever and for eternity. Jesus also starts to tell us with his words that he comes to give his life up for us too. Perhaps you are alarmed by the statements Jesus makes? Ask for the faith to take Jesus at his word. Give thanks for his body given (broken) for you. Pray that others might discover the same.

Prayer

Lord Jesus thank you that you died for me and thank you that you promise me eternal life. Help me to take you at your word and put my trust in you. Amen.

Sunday 15th August (Trinity 11)

Bible Reading: John 6:51-58

I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live for ever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.' The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, 'How can this man give us his flesh to eat?' So Jesus said to them, 'Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live for ever.'

Reflection

We've still catch echoes of the feeding of the 5,000 as we hear Jesus speaking to the Jews who had come to argue with him. Agreed it probably does sound quite strange eating flesh and drinking blood, though for many Christians gathering around a table to

share in bread and wine has been something done for thousands of years. This food and this drink provide us with sustenance for the journey of life and faith. This body and blood are a frequent reminder of Jesus' great love for us shown in his life given up for us on the cross. All are welcome at the Lord's table. The only requirement is a longing to be fed with this spiritual food and drink that we might go out into the world strengthened to live and work for him. Why not come and share? Why not take and eat? We celebrate Holy Communion on the 1st Sunday of the month at Old Hutton at 4pm and the 4th Sunday of the month at New Hutton at 6pm. And, if you are unable to get to church contact one of the Ministry Team and we will gladly come to you.

Prayer

by Angela Ashwin

Jesus, I receive your love
poured out for me
in bread and wine.
accept this gift of my life
brought to the altar.
Do your work in me,
and let me be, like you,
taken, blessed,
and given for others;
for in spite of my sin,
you know that I love you. Amen.

Sunday 22nd August (Trinity 12)

Bible Reading: John 6:56-69

Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live for ever.' He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum. When many of his disciples heard it, they said, 'This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?' But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, 'Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But among you there are some who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. And he said, 'For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.' Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. So Jesus asked the twelve, 'Do you also wish to go away?' Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.'

Reflection

In this particular passage I'm struck by the phrase 'Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.' We're told that some of those who had been following Jesus—also called his disciples (but not the 12) – had had to give up following Jesus. Something got in the way of them fully trusting in him. So he goes on to check with the 12 whether they feel the same. But it would appear that they've reached the point of no return. We've had quite a few weddings recently across our churches which has been wonderful for us. During the service there is a point of no return as the couple declare their ability and their intent to marry, and proceed to make their vows. It would appear the disciples were in a similar position—he'd made promises to them and they to him and they were standing by him. Pray for all recently married for strength to keep the vows they have made. Pray for Christians everywhere and for courage to keep the promises made to Jesus to believe and to trust in him.

Prayer

Lord help me to follow you and to trust you however hard it may be at times. Amen.

Sunday 29th August (Trinity 13)

Bible Reading: Mark 7.1-8, 14-15, 21-23

Now when the Pharisees and some of the scribes who had come from Jerusalem gathered around him, they noticed that some of his disciples were eating with defiled hands, that is, without washing them. (For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, do not eat unless they thoroughly wash their hands, thus observing the tradition of the elders; and they do not eat anything from the market unless they wash it; and there are also many other traditions that they observe, the washing of cups, pots, and bronze kettles.) So the Pharisees and the scribes asked him, 'Why do your disciples not live according to the tradition of the elders, but eat with defiled hands?' He said to them, 'Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as it is written, "This people honours me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching human precepts as doctrines." You abandon the commandment of God and hold to human tradition.' Then he called the crowd again and said to them, 'Listen to me, all of you, and understand: there is nothing outside a person that by going in can defile, but the things that come out are what defile.' For it is from within, from the human heart, that evil intentions come: fornication, theft, murder, adultery, avarice, wickedness, deceit, licentiousness, envy, slander, pride, folly. All these evil things come from within, and they defile a person.'

Reflection

We've spent the last eighteen months being reminded about the importance of good hygiene and we've perhaps never washed (or hand sanitised) our hands as much as during the pandemic. We're probably not going to change our ways I guess even after the pandemic is over. Good hygiene is important. Today's reading is all about hands and the claim that Jesus' disciples are eating with defiled hands. I don't imagine Jesus was condoning a lack of good hygiene, rather challenging those who confronted him with a deeper truth that there's more to good living than **just** washing our hands. It's also about paying attention to what it inside us and has the potential to come out—all kinds of evil intentions that we need to be wary of. Keep washing your hands. Look after yourself and others. Look out too for what might be other dangers ie. pride, hypocrisy, greed, envy and slander to mention but a few. Hold them up to the light of Jesus and ask to be made clean.

Prayer

Lord I am tempted by so many things and am often far from being clean. Wash me. Cleanse me. Forgive me. Restore me. In Jesus' name. Amen.