

Bulletin for Sunday 15th August 2021

Good Morning, Friends.

Let's pause as we prepare to worship..... and then praise God as we sing:

Hymn: New every morning is the love (R&S 536)

Prayer: God of love and life, as we worship you this morning
we offer you thanks and praise with our whole hearts.
As we turn to you, we find you present with us,
here and now, in our hearts and in our homes;
so make us more continually aware of you,
in all that we think, and say, and do today.
You go ahead of us into our communities,
so we ask your blessing on everything we do,
and everything we give, in your service,
now and always. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen

followed by The Lord's Prayer

Reading: John chapter 6 verses 51 to 58

Reflection: 'You are what you eat'... except that you're not, of course. It's more complicated than that (although apparently there is some truth in the story that if you eat a completely ridiculous number of carrots, the beta-carotene will make you a slightly orangey colour)! Food and drink are a huge part of life, from essential nutrition to cultural identity, social enjoyment and psychological comfort. We are certainly affected by what we eat. But even more so we are all formed and changed by the other things we consume. The radio station we choose to tune into; the parts of the newspaper we choose to read; our choice of music; and nowadays, for many, the way we interact with the online world... our consumption of these helps to shape the way we think and feel and ultimately act.

Jesus says that he is the living bread, sent from God. The language he uses - talking of the need to eat his flesh and drink his blood - is graphic and shocking, but it's worth remembering that in that culture blood was understood to represent life. Bread is something most of us eat; something very basic and very nourishing. Jesus promises that he is the bread of life, and that eating that bread leads to eternal life. If our consumption of ideas and attitudes from the world around us tends to shape who we are, how much more will the bread of life, sent by God, change who we are and how we live, if we accept it and allow it to really feed and sustain us? Amen

Hymn: Bread of heaven! on thee we feed (R&S 442)

Prayer: Compassionate God, provider of all good things,
we pray for those suffering physical hunger and thirst:
those whose crops have failed for some reason
as well as those who can't afford or can't find food....
We pray for those suffering spiritual hunger:
folk searching for something beyond themselves,
seeking answers and safe places to ask questions....
We pray for those needing the bread of comfort:
sufferers from mental or physical illness; their carers;
those who are grieving; and those who fear the future...
And we pray for those we love... and worry about....
God of love, hear all our prayers,
spoken and unspoken. In Jesus' name. Amen

Hymn: Great God, your love has called us here (R&S 339)

Blessing: May we be fed by the bread of life... and share it with others;
and may the blessing of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be with us and with all those we love
now and always. Amen

As we gradually open up, we all have a part to play in keeping each other safe; so please continue to wear masks indoors, and to give everyone space.

And bear in mind, it's impossible to make our churches completely risk-free.

The After Church Coffee Zooms have been discontinued; but the evening 'Sunday at Six' service, with hymns, continues on Zoom at 6pm.

Anne Lewitt