

2nd August 2020 6pm The Feeding of the 5,000: Compline

Service led by Felicity Hawke, meditation by Val Whiteman, reading by Ann Gibbons

Introduction.....	1
Preparation.....	1
Hymn: Blessed Assurance.....	2
Psalm 134 [CW].....	2
Reading: Matthew 14:13-21 [NLT].....	3
Gospel Canticle: The Nunc dimittis (The Song of Simeon).....	3
Meditation.....	4
Intercessions.....	5
The Conclusion.....	6
Hymn: Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone).....	7

Introduction

[Felicity Hawke:]

Good evening. Welcome to this service of Compline from St. John's Church in Kenilworth. My name is Felicity Hawke, and I'll be leading the service. Also this evening you'll see Ann Gibbons and Val Whiteman. The order of service was sent to the link on my email yesterday and by Denise this morning, and a version of it is also available to download from the St. John's website¹. So I hope you can follow and respond where indicated.

But before we start, just a few notices. The next two Sundays will be a little different from what we've been used to. Next Sunday is Mary Sumner Day, when the church remembers the founder of the Mothers' Union. There is a branch Mothers' Union here at St. John's which has its own Facebook page. If you want to find out more about what we do, we're part of a worldwide charity with four million members. And the central Mothers' Union will be broadcasting two services on Sunday, one at 8:30 in the morning, and one at 9 o'clock in the evening. You can find them on the Mothers' Union Facebook page and on the YouTube channel next week. And I'll see if the link and the order of service can be put on the John's website as well. So we won't be doing our own service. But I hope you'll be able to watch one of those, and take part in one or both.

The following week on the 16th of August, we're hoping to have a small open-air service outside the church at six o'clock, focusing on an environmental theme. Now this will obviously be dependent on the weather. So if it's wet, we may put the content onto the usual St John's channel and suggest that you do the activities at home or visit church perhaps at a later date. So keep an eye on the website and the Facebook page for updates. Finally, remember that the church is now open for personal reflection on Wednesdays from 10 till two and Sundays from 11 till three.

Now back to this evening, let's have a moment of quiet, to concentrate our minds on God and to think about what we have done today.

Preparation

The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night and a perfect end.

All **Amen.**

Our help is in the name of the Lord

All **who made heaven and earth.**

¹ www.stjohn316.co.uk

A period of silence for reflection on the past day follows.

All **Most merciful God,
we confess to you,
before the whole company of heaven and one another,
that we have sinned in thought, word and deed
and in what we have failed to do.
Forgive us our sins,
heal us by your Spirit
and raise us to new life in Christ. Amen.**

O God, make speed to save us.

All **O Lord, make haste to help us.**

All **Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.
Alleluia.**

Hymn: Blessed Assurance

1. Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
Born of His Spirit, washed in His blood.

Refrain:

This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Saviour all the day long;
This is my story, this is my song,
Praising my Saviour all the day long.

2. Perfect submission, perfect delight,
Visions of rapture now burst on my sight;
Angels, descending, bring from above
Echoes of mercy, whispers of love.
Refrain

3. Perfect submission, all is at rest,
I in my Saviour am happy and blest,
Watching and waiting, looking above,
Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.
Refrain

Psalm 134 [cw]

¹ Come, bless the Lord, all you servants of the Lord, ♦
you that by night stand in the house of the Lord.
² Lift up your hands towards the sanctuary ♦
and bless the Lord.
³ The Lord who made heaven and earth ♦
give you blessing out of Zion.

All **Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

Reading: Matthew 14:13-21 [NLT]

[Ann Gibbons:]

Jesus feeds the five thousand.
This [is] after He had heard of the death of John the Baptist.

¹³ As soon as Jesus heard the news, he left in a boat to a remote area to be alone. But the crowds heard where he was headed and followed on foot from many towns. ¹⁴ Jesus saw the huge crowd as he stepped from the boat, and he had compassion on them and healed their sick.

¹⁵ That evening the disciples came to him and said, “This is a remote place, and it’s already getting late. Send the crowds away so they can go to the villages and buy food for themselves.”

¹⁶ But Jesus said, “That isn’t necessary—you feed them.”

¹⁷ “But we have only five loaves of bread and two fish!” they answered.

¹⁸ “Bring them here,” he said. ¹⁹ Then he told the people to sit down on the grass. Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, looked up toward heaven, and blessed them. Then, breaking the loaves into pieces, he gave the bread to the disciples, who distributed it to the people. ²⁰ They all ate as much as they wanted, and afterward, the disciples picked up twelve baskets of leftovers. ²¹ About 5,000 men were fed that day, in addition to all the women and children!

This is the word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.

All **Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.**

For you have redeemed me, Lord God of truth.

All **I commend my spirit.**

Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit.

All **Into your hands, O Lord, I commend my spirit.**

Keep me as the apple of your eye.

All **Hide me under the shadow of your wings.**

Gospel Cantic: The Nunc dimittis (The Song of Simeon)

[Felicity Hawke]

All **Save us, O Lord, while waking,
and guard us while sleeping,
that awake we may watch with Christ
and asleep may rest in peace.**

¹ Now, Lord, you let your servant go in peace: ♦
your word has been fulfilled.

² My own eyes have seen the salvation ♦
which you have prepared in the sight of every people;

³ A light to reveal you to the nations ♦
and the glory of your people Israel.

All **Glory to the Father and to the Son
and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning is now
and shall be for ever. Amen.**

All **Save us, O Lord, while waking,
and guard us while sleeping,
that awake we may watch with Christ
and asleep may rest in peace.**

Meditation

[Val Whiteman:]

When I heard Penny's talk this morning on this passage, it was really interesting. If you listened at 10 o'clock, this is I'm afraid the second time through the feeding of the 5,000 for today. And it's very interesting that we both picked up in totally different things.

There are parallel passages to this one and all the gospels, including John. So it's obviously important for us to understand what Jesus is saying through His actions and His life at this point. And I won't have time, obviously, to go through everything. So what I was thinking of was, one of the ways we can approach scripture is through Ignatian meditation, which basically means entering into the story imaginatively. Some people can do this very easily and they enjoy it, and other people absolutely hate it. So if you haven't tried it, maybe try it after the service at some time tonight. What you should do is, sit yourself quiet; read the story a couple of times so that you know it, it's familiar to you, so read it over so you can get it fixed in your head; and then choose a viewpoint: somebody in the story. You can be a bystander totally outside it if you want, or you could be one of the crowd, you could be a disciple, whatever you like. You choose where you tell the story from. And then you retell it from that viewpoint. You notice the details. You notice that people don't get on buses and cars. It's an awful long way to walk to where Jesus is. You get tired before you get there. You notice that it's dusty underfoot, for example, but Mark says the grass is green, so maybe it's spring. You retell yourself this story. And when you get there, you realise that there are an awful lot of people there. There are 5,000 men, plus women and children. What do you think? Are they queuing nicely for Jesus to heal them? Are the disciples keeping order? There must have been an awful lot of noise.

And then comes the miracle. Now what I'd like to do at this point is to move into looking at the scene from the crowd's point of view. They don't know that Jesus was escaping to have some quiet time because His cousin had just been judicially murdered by Herod. They didn't know the authorities were ganging up. They didn't know the danger that Jesus must have felt Himself in.

So why did they come to see Jesus? Well, the motives must have been as various as the crowd. Some, I'm assuming, were sincere seekers who had heard about Jesus and wanted to know more, some desperate for healing. Some, possibly because there were a lot of men there, hoping for a revolution, because Jesus could be the Messiah, and He might be going to free them from the Roman yoke. Others possibly just plain nosy. "Somebody's going, so I'll go and find out too."

And then they have their meal, a surprise banquet. They had, it says, enough to eat: bread and fish. So the staple of life, but with a relish to it. So if you can imagine yourself one of the crowd, how do you feel after that? Again, the change is going to vary with individuals. Do you think it's a good day out? You know, a bit of a surprise but quite nice. Is it a life-changing encounter? Is it

a real disappointment because you were expecting the Messiah to do wonderful things with a sword? Any or every nuance of change in between, I'm imagining. I'm assuming they didn't have access to the commentators that we do, who make links between the feeding of the 5,000 and the Last Supper, between this and the manna in desert that God provides, or even between this and the banquet at the end of the age. They probably didn't see Jesus even as the Creator God, as He is, who gives them, as He gives to all of us, sustenance for every day. So, what did they see?

And after you've imagined yourself into the passage, entered into it, we all are left with the same questions that the original crowd had. How did you understand what happened? Will it change you? I find it really interesting that God doesn't compel us to believe. He gives us the evidence of who Jesus is, but it's up to us to notice, up to us to make a response in faith. You may say after the service, "We had really good fellowship in the church this evening, I really felt part of the church;" or you may say, "I met with the living God, and things won't ever be the same for me again." I suppose partly it depends on whether we, all of us, spend time looking away from our own reactions to the reality of Christ who died and lives for us.

I always think of faith as a rather tender little plant, and we're always trying to dig it up and see how deep the roots are. And I think that's a **big** mistake. When I tried this meditation earlier in the week, I was unexpectedly hit by the sheer love of Jesus, for everyone, even the bystander I was imagining myself to be.

So let's pray that we may be able to, as it were, step away from ourselves this week, and focus on Christ in the coming week. Let's ask Him to let us do that by the power of His Spirit within us.

Amen.

Intercessions

[Felicity:]

Thank you, Val. Now we come to our prayers.

Lord God, thank you for this past week, for all that we've done, the people we've met and spoken to, the kindness we have given or received, the signs of your grace and glory that we've seen. As we start a new week, give us hope. Make us open to ways we can work for your kingdom. Show us what to pray for.

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

Lord, we pray for those in authority at this time. We may not always agree with decisions made and rules brought in - or not. But we pray for all those who have to make these difficult decisions locally, nationally, and even internationally. Give them wisdom, courage and integrity. And give us the grace to accept what we have to do, however difficult, inconvenient or unpleasant. And help us all to work for the good of all, and not just for our own good.

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

We pray for all those who are sick, whether from COVID-related illness or other things. We remember those who are near and dear to us in a moment of silence.

Lord, heal those who are sick, comfort those who mourn. Give courage to those who are struggling, and love and perseverance to those who care for them in whatever way,

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

We join together in saying the Lord's Prayer.

All **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 for ever.
Amen.**

The Collect

Visit this place, O Lord, we pray,
and drive far from it the snares of the enemy;
may your holy angels dwell with us and guard us in peace,
and may your blessing be always upon us;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

The Conclusion

[Val:]

In peace we will lie down and sleep;
All **for you alone, Lord, make us dwell in safety.**
Abide with us, Lord Jesus,
All **for the night is at hand and the day is now past.**
As the night watch looks for the morning,
All **so do we look for you, O Christ.**
Come with the dawning of the day
All **and make yourself known in the breaking of the bread.**

So let us say the blessing together, remembering all of us in our separate homes jointly worshipping our God. So let us say together:

The Lord bless us and watch over us;
the Lord make his face shine upon us and be gracious to us;
the Lord look kindly on us and give us peace.

All **Amen.**

Thank you for joining us for our service. Thank you to Felicity and to Ann and also, above all to Charlie for running the show. We conclude the service with Amazing Grace, that wonderful hymn

Hymn: Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)

1. Amazing grace, How sweet the sound
That saved a wretch like me.
I once was lost, but now I'm found,
Was blind, but now I see.

2. 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved.
How precious did that grace appear
The hour I first believed.

Chorus:

My chains are gone
I've been set free
My God, my Saviour has ransomed me
And like a flood His mercy rains
Unending love, Amazing grace

3. The Lord has promised good to me
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be,
As long as life endures.

Chorus

4. The Earth shall soon dissolve like snow
The Sun forbear to shine
But God, Who called me here below
Will be forever mine.

Chorus

[Transcribed by Hamish Blair with help from <https://otter.ai>]

[**CW**] Common Worship: Services and Prayers for the Church of England, material from which is included here, is copyright © The Archbishops' Council 2000 and published by Church House Publishing. The order for Compline can be found here: <https://www.churchofengland.org/prayer-and-worship/worship-texts-and-resources/common-worship/service-word/service-word-morning-evening-prayer-night-prayer#mm6e1>

[**NLT**] Extract from Holy Bible, New Living Translation copyright 1996, 2004, 2007, 2015 by Tyndale House Foundation. Used under [by permission](#) of Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., Carol Stream, Illinois, 60188. All rights reserved.

Blessed Assurance – Author: Francis ('Fanny') Jane Crosby, 1820-1915 (written 1873) – Public Domain
Free to download and use within church online services (provided correct licenses are in place) – please visit www.emw.org.uk/onlinesongs for more information.
<https://www.emw.org.uk/2020/06/blessed-assurance/>

Amazing Grace (My Chains are Gone) – Author of original hymn: John Newton, 1725-1807 (written 1772, published 1779) – Public Domain
Author of chorus and musical setting: Chris Tomlin © 2006 sixsteps Music, Vamos Publishing, worshiptogether.com songs
Free to download – as above
<https://www.emw.org.uk/2020/06/amazing-grace-my-chains-are-gone/>