

# 2 Aug 2020

## Worship Sheet for Sunday 2 August – The Alternative Party – Feeding of the 5000.

In Matthew Chapter 14 we learn more about Jesus (and his disciples) with his feeding of the 5000 and their reaction to it. In many ways it marks a launch of his ministry to the wider population inc families.

Call: Remembering when we could gather as a congregation, **we worship now in our own homes.**  
Remembering how Jesus drew the crowds, **we worship knowing he draws us still in solidarity.**  
Remembering how Christ fed the hungry, **we worship now for food for the soul, each solitary one of us a part of that glorious noisy throng.**

Pray Lord, we'd probably freak out if we came across thousands of people at the beach and the government would be up in arms and yet deep down we long to be able to be able to safely gather together for worship and even just to be in a larger gathering together. Yet, we acknowledge that you bind us together in love even when our contact is limited. You have been true to your promise to be with us always, to support and encourage when we need to keep our distance from one another. We've known the strength of prayer and the encouragement of modern communications such as phones and online. Much though we hanker after more – touch, handshake, a hug you hold us in your everlasting arms. Help us to be grateful for what we have and enjoy that rather than bemoan our lot – help us to hold fast to your dear Son and in him to all who love him; make our worship real and meaningful and above all help us to sense your loving touch among each of us, among us all. Forgive us our shortcomings and give us grace to forgive others. Hear us as we pray the Lord's Prayer Our Father.... Amen.

Read Matthew 14 verses 13-21. John's demise and the Feeding of the 5000.

Thought We read in the passage of John's sad end. Herod is tricked into executing him because of a rash promise made to Herodias his wife at her party. Having been pleased with her daughter's dancing he offered her a choice of reward. Her mum put her up to asking for John's head on a plate. Sick joke! Feeble response for Herod to agree. Move on – huge crowds gather to hear Jesus, some no doubt mourning John. Jesus' teaching is going down well with all ages and folk are reluctant to go home. Normally, the organisers are responsible for the food but the disciples are in panic. Yet, Jesus has it under control and blessing the bread it is broken and distributed and all are fed, and there are leftovers. We don't need to explain every detail. And yes you can make something of the wee boy and his packed lunch if you like. But the real miracle is people's eyes being opened to see Jesus as someone REALLY special from God who can scratch where they itch. In practice we aren't allowed to gather in large numbers for share communion but going forward perhaps we need to be more ready to share the good news to younger people, to families and to eat and talk together about Jesus? Spending time together, especially with all ages is something that isn't nearly as common as once it was, but actually the Church is pretty good at it – and if there is food involved so much the better. Sharing the good news of Jesus is for all ages and there's no reason we can't have fun too!

Praise A verse from Carolyn Gillette's hymn In Cana at a wedding feast v2 about feeding of 5000.  
Pray Heavenly Father, we are so grateful that Jesus came among us in love. He enjoyed spending time with people, even those who were normally excluded or ignored. He was prepared to talk, to listen, to eat with all who would have him. Teach us to be as open to him and to others so that the good news of Jesus would be seen as inviting, as relevant, as interesting for so many more people, young and old. Give us imagination to reach out to all ages in a caring and accepting way, that strives to remove barriers rather than build them – and if at times it might include food and fun then so be it and may Jesus be seen to be there! We pray on for outreach events for young people and families over the summer – even if they are different to what was planned. Help us too to be considerate of other's needs – overseas as well as here, for those whose usual existence is tough enough without the added pressures of Covid. We pray that people would take care now that things are opening up so that they do not put others at unnecessary risk. In our prayer walk we pray for those who live or work in Charlton Place and Condor Crescent. SILENCE

Lord hear our prayers spoken and silent and answer them for the sake of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen Blessing May the Lord bless you. Amen.

Sermon, prayers and news (or links to them) will be uploaded to our website [www.oldandstandrews.com](http://www.oldandstandrews.com) and the Old and St Andrew's Facebook page. Feel free to copy this and pass it on to Church members or friends who might not use the web or social media

Further links about some streamed services can be found on the Church of Scotland website [www.churchofscotland.org.uk](http://www.churchofscotland.org.uk)

See updates on things like this on Montrose Old and St Andrew's Church Facebook page

**New : The Dial a Reflection phone line is operational. You can phone in for the mini service from Sunday (and as an option too, the sermon) on a landline local number for those who don't have access to the internet. Calls charged at local rate and may be free if you have inclusive calls with your phone package.**

**01674 902624**

**The material will be changed weekly in time for Sunday mornings**

**While government regulations now allow for churches to open for communal services, we need to adhere to many requirements including social distancing, hygiene, extra cleaning and disinfecting, removal of hymn books, cushions etc, limited numbers, no singing, masks highly recommended – as well as having procedures in place should someone display symptoms. Notwithstanding changes in advice for those deemed to be at greater risk, many of our congregation still need to be especially careful. The Kirk Session agreed to work on preparing for reopening (some steps having already been taken) though that will take time but also took the view that currently the experience of Church that we would be permitted to offer would fall well short of what we would want to provide and which the congregation would expect. We want to be ready, but we want to be ready for meaningful worship. Additional steps will be taken to try to reach out to those who don't have access to internet or social media but in the meantime please pass on details of the dial a reflection.**

**It is good to see things being freed up and the numbers far lower than they were but we still need to be careful.**

**Please continue to pray for one another and support where you can and remember all involved in the preparations for reopening when the time is right. Ian**