

Bulletin for Sunday 25th July 2021

Good Morning, Friends. I hope I may see more of you in person at worship over the Summer, but I wanted to let you know that for now it is hoped to continue producing the Bulletin for those that need it.

**** **Please see important notices at the end of this Bulletin again!!**

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

Hymn: For the beauty of the earth (R&S 41)

Prayer: Gracious God, you have given us so much:
you love and accept us just as we are,
and bless us without conditions or limits...
As we pause to worship, we wait for you,
listening for your word, for your presence with us...
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: 2 Kings ch. 4: verses 42-44 and John ch. 6 verses 1-21

Reflection: Have you ever been to a pantomime of Dick Whittington? Traditionally he carries his possessions wrapped up in a bundle and tied to the end of a stick which goes over his shoulder. In my imagination, the boy in this story looks a bit like that, with his lunch of his mum's homemade bread and some dried fish, tied up in a bit of clean cloth. How come he didn't eat it earlier? Perhaps he was too busy listening to Jesus, or too busy playing around with the other children? Anyway, he realises clearly enough what the problem is, as soon as Jesus and the disciples mention it, and he offers what he has.

Did Andrew feel embarrassed bringing this tiny contribution to Jesus - did the other disciples laugh at him, even? But then, all eyes were on Jesus; and Jesus took the offer absolutely seriously - just as the boy had surely intended. The idea that such a tiny meal could go so far was ridiculous... and yet, in Jesus' hands it did. Everyone was fed. They all got what they needed, and more than enough.

We each have gifts, talents, and experiences. Each of us is unique. If we bring what we have, and what we are, to God, and then share what God makes of it, life will be infinitely richer. Because in the bringing and the sharing, all will be blessed. Amen.

Hymn: For the fruits of all creation (R&S 42)

Prayer: Compassionate God,
as we remember how Jesus fed the crowds
both with words of justice and compassion
and with the crumbly home-made bread of a boy's lunch,
we pray for those in need in your world today:
for those desperate for food, clean water or shelter;
for those in need of healing for their pain or grief...
We hold before you the things which are worrying us,
and pray for our communities and those we love...
Source of the bread of life, hear all our prayers,
spoken and unspoken. In Jesus' name. Amen

Hymn: Brother, sister, let me serve you (R&S 474)

Blessing: May we have the grace to share what God gives us;
and may the blessing of God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be with us and with all those we love
now and always. Amen

The Elders, who have responsibility for safety and for worship in our churches, are aiming to open worship up gently and gradually, while keeping it as safe as possible. We all have our part to play in keeping each other safe, so you are encouraged to continue to wear masks at present, and to give everyone the space they need.

Remember, it is NOT POSSIBLE to make our churches completely risk-free!

Sunday morning (25th July) will be a Group Service at Pulborough. We are hoping the weather will allow us to worship, and celebrate being together once again, outside on the lawn.....

The After Church Coffee Zooms are being discontinued, at least for now, as we are able to share refreshments and conversations more easily in person.

The evening 'Sunday at Six' service, with hymns, continues on Zoom at 6pm.

Anne Lewitt