

A Message from Canon Imogen Nay: Lammastide: 'Loafmass'

An extract from Common worship

Brothers and sisters in Christ, the people of God in ancient times presented to the Lord an offering of first-fruits as a sign of their dependence upon God for their daily bread. At this Lammastide, we bring a newly baked loaf as our offering in thanksgiving to God for his faithfulness. Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life; those who come to me shall never be hungry and those who believe in me shall never thirst.' John 6.35



The Lammas loaf is brought to the president.
Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation;
you bring forth bread from the fields
and give us the fruits of the earth in their seasons.
Accept this loaf, which we bring before you,
made from the harvest of your goodness.
Let it be for us a sign of your fatherly care.
Blessed are you, Lord our God,
worthy of our thanksgiving and praise.
All Blessed be God for ever.

I've become quite acquainted with leaven or yeast during these past few months. Like many others I've been taken in by the sourdough bread craze. If you're not familiar with the process, the first thing you have to do is make the sourdough starter, which essentially means making your own yeast. It's quite an involved process, but once you have it, technically you can keep it for life. Passing it down to others and even through the generations.

I was given a book all about bread making and was delighted to find that there is a practice of naming your sourdough starter. The first of this company's starter was named after Canon Bruce Saunders from Southwark Cathedral who had blessed their first loaf. Now Bruce married Olav and I – so that was a satisfying link - and the bread company had been involved in celebrating Lammastide at the Cathedral. Lammastide (lammas means 'loafmass') is traditionally celebrated on the 1st August, and during the communion service a Lammas loaf is presented and blessed- a sign of thanksgiving for the first fruits of the wheat harvest. See the liturgy above.

There's something about not only making your own bread, but your own yeast which has resonated deeply with me and it seems a host of others during the last few months. It's a form of bread making that's been going on for 5000 years but which largely got forgotten when quick yeast was developed and sold. Watching the process of making yeast and getting up early in the morning to see if your dough has risen is quite a magical process.

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Tiny things having the potential to grow into broad, hospitable, generous things. Growth takes time, patience and faith. The conditions for growth are specific. If you get one ingredient wrong, like missing out the salt, for instance, your bread won't come out quite right. Similarly, like in the parable of the sower, the seed has to be in just the right place with just the right conditions.

Being in just the right place, with just the right conditions – this takes conscious effort, intention, purpose. Growing in faith doesn't just happen, we have to intend for it to happen. So the question for each one of us disciples, followers of Christ, is: **how do I intend to grow in faith and what do I need to do to make that happen?**

An invitation from Jean, our Children and Family's Minister.



Pray with Us:

Please pray for the work of the Salvation Army, Herts. and Essex Division: Major Norman Ord, Divisional Commander.

Pray for the Bishops of the Anglican Communion across the world invited to gather for the Lambeth Conference, now postponed until next year.

Pray for the city centre Central Baptist Church.

Please pray for those who are unwell including Jean Cooper, Rita James, Winnie Towers, Jill Withams and all those in need of our prayers.

Daily Gospel Readings for this week, to use in your daily prayer:

Monday: Matthew 14. 13-21

Tuesday: Matthew 14. 22-end

Wednesday: Matthew 15. 21-28

Thursday: Luke 9. 28-36

Friday: Matthew 16. 24-28

Saturday: Matthew 17. 14-20

Study with Us:

Study Notes on the Sunday Gospel: 2 August 2020

Romans 9.1-5 Ps 145.15-22 Matthew 14.13-21



Nothing can come between us and the love of Christ!

In today's readings, we celebrate the great love of God, who not only gives us life, but desires to sustain and nourish us generously too.

In the **Psalm**, one traditionally sung at meals, we praise the God who cares for all his creatures, supplying them with nourishment.

Paul writes in very stirring language of his desire that his own people may glimpse the love and grace of God. And in the Gospel Jesus responds out of compassion to the crowd, healing the sick and feeding the hungry.

Even whilst stricken with grief, Jesus's response to the people is one of compassion (**Gospel**). He heals the sick and feeds the hungry, with food left over to share. Jesus feeds the crowd in a way that foresees the food and drink he will offer us in the Eucharist.

Matthew 14: 13–21

The Feeding of the 5000 occurs with slight variations in all four Gospels. Indeed, it is the only miracle found in all the Gospels, so it was clearly deeply significant for the Gospel writers and their communities. In Matthew, it comes straight after the news that John the Baptist has been beheaded on the orders of Herod. Matthew follows Mark's account very closely but differs in some important aspects: here there is an emphasis on Jesus's compassion for the people; the disciples are the ones who should provide food; and there are strong parallels between this event and the Last Supper, with the institution of the Eucharist (Matthew 26: 26–29). Matthew gives fewer details than Mark, increasing the symbolic significance of the story.

This episode echoes several multiple feeding stories in the Old Testament: the manna that fed the Israelites in the desert (Exodus 16); the quails in the wilderness (Numbers 11: 31–35); Elijah and the widow at Zarephath (1 Kings 17:8–16); and Elisha, who fed a hundred people with two barley loaves (2 Kings 4: 42–44).

Jesus withdrew by boat to a lonely place

The exact location of the lonely place is not identified. It was probably in the region of Bethsaida, close to the shores of the Sea of Galilee, not far from villages or towns where the crowd would have been able to buy food.

All we have is five loaves and two fish

The food – five loaves and two fish – which the disciples carried with them, would probably be enough to feed their own group. The loaves would likely be made of barley grain (wheat was reserved for rich people); while fish, a staple food at that time, could be dried, cured or salted, and was easily carried. Jesus raised his eyes to heaven and said the blessing.

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Jesus blesses the food as in a traditional Jewish meal. However, his words are the same as those of the Last Supper: taking, blessing, breaking, giving. For today's Christians, they are very much associated with the Eucharist.

Those who ate numbered about five thousand

The size of the crowd may be inaccurate since oral tradition always tends to increase numbers. But it represents the whole of Israel, where the symbolism is reinforced by the remaining baskets, twelve being the number of the tribes of Israel.

Let's pray this week for courage to take the risk of really hearing what God is saying to us; what sacred nourishment he is freely offering us. May we put ourselves into his hands, asking that he will deepen his life in us and in our anxious, unjust world.



News

Cathedral Eucharist 10.30am on Sundays

We are delighted that the Cathedral is now open for public worship on Sundays and you are invited to join us for the **Cathedral Eucharist** at 10.30am. Please note there is no longer a requirement to reserve a place/book a ticket for Sunday's 10.30am Eucharist service. **Following the latest Church of England guidance, it is now expected that all visitors to the Cathedral, for worship or private prayer, wear a facemask.**

Junior Church is also back in Guy Harlings Garden. Please click on the link below to book in as numbers are currently limited in order to comply with government guidelines. You are very welcome to join Jean for some fun activities. <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/junior-church-in-the-garden-tickets-115041363816>

On – line giving via the website: A huge thank you to everyone who has used the on-line giving link and donated recently. We really appreciate your gift as we continue to work in these challenging times. If you would like to donate on-line, simply go to the home page of the website and click on the link, or click <https://givealittle.co/campaigns/0c7bf37c-62f7-4011-b9f0-854ead22f93a>

A Cathedral "Bring it Yourself" Coffee Morning is taking place on **Saturday 1st August 10 - 12 noon** in Guy Harlings Garden. Come along, bring your own chairs, drinks and nibbles and spend time outside with friends, at a SOCIAL DISTANCE - **no charge!** To book in contact Yvonne Spence tel: 01245 465108 or yvonnespence@hotmail.com.

Book Group: This month we are reading Honour by Elif Shafak, a novel which explores the experience of living between different societies. We will be meeting via Zoom to discuss the book on Monday 3 August at 7.30. All are welcome to join us – email sallydilley@tiscali.co.uk for more information.

Take a look at the **Pilgrimage Journeys** page on the website (<https://chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk/pilgrimage-journeys.html>) with stories from your own pilgrimage walks. More journeys will be added throughout the summer, so if you have been on a pilgrimage, both near and far, please send your stories to Canon Imogen Nay imogen.nay@chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk

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Also, on the **Church at Home** page of the website, a new series on mental health and well-being has started. Produced by the charity Kintsugi Hope, these 12 minute 'sermons' cover many different topics. Catch up on the first two, 'Anxiety' and 'Resilience', now.

The Annual Report and Accounts for 2019 can now be viewed and downloaded from the website. From the menu at the bottom of the home page (in blue) click on Annual Report (under useful links).

Many thanks to all those who came to our first ever **Muddy Church**. We identified the trees in Guy Harlings Garden and looked at Bible verses that mention trees, as well as enjoying the space together. The next Muddy Church will be on Sunday 23rd August 3-4.30pm. All are welcome, a booking link will be advertised soon.

Foundation Course in Pastoral Care

Many people offer Christian pastoral care in parishes and the aim of this course is to give confidence them and to develop their skills.

The short courses are appropriate for anyone who provides care informally or more formally.

Either: 10 Tuesday evenings from September 8th to November 10th, 7pm to 9.30pm

Or: 10 Thursday evenings from September 10th to November 12th, 7pm to 9.30pm.

ALL courses on zoom, accessible via laptop, smartphone or iPad.

We ask you to provide a letter of support from your church leader.

More information from Di Hardy: dhardy@chelmsford.anglican.org 01245 294449

Or Judy Cecil: jcecil@chelmsford.anglican.org

Information and application form at: chelmsford.anglican.org/lay-ministry/pastoral-assistant

Being Resourced:

Bible Reading notes for the September - December period now on sale at the Bookstall in the Cathedral. You can pay for them either by putting the correct money in the slot in the wall or by using our new contactless giving plate.

If you would like to receive the **Dean's letter** emailed to you once a week and you do not already receive it, please email clare.broome@chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk

Growing in Faith resources in a weekly email. If you would like to receive it, please sign up via the 'Church at Home' page of the website or email imogen.nay@chelmsfordcathedral.org.uk



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