

Week 1

Resources needed:

Essential

From Rachel

- Postcard of picture for the week for each person

From you

- Pens
- A loaf of bread (big enough that everyone can have a piece and there be some left over)
- candles or flowers
- bowl of water
- copies of the words of the hymn & prayers

Optional

- Video of QI
- Photos/video of magic trick from circuit study day
- ppt file including picture to project

Call to worship:

In the breaking of bread we are known and we know
in the eating of bread we are fed for our journey
In the sharing of bread we become one family
in giving bread to others we act as God's people

So, as bread and Word are broken,
may we receive from God's hands and each others' hands
and may we give to each other, God and the world
that all may be fed, and find life in abundance.

Hymn StF 465 Guide me, O thou great Jehovah

.Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures;
he leads me beside still waters;
he restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths
for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,
I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—
they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.

What are we carrying?

As the crowds that followed Jesus brought their hopes and dream, joys and sorrows, their struggles and preoccupations. So we come to worship with our minds and memories full of the past week and beyond, and our minds and imaginations already looking to tomorrow and further planning, worrying and hoping.

Let us bring all we are, all we have been and all we will be as we offer our prayers to God:
our wonder and praise;
our recognition of past wrongs;
and all that we bring with us

Prayer of adoration

God of all times and all places and of this time and this place
we praise you for the glimpses of your glory we have seen this week
for your eternal presence in creation and beyond it,
for the times when we've been aware of your presence
and for those when your love has surrounded us even though we did not recognise it.
for all that you are
and for all that you have made
we praise you

God of all times and all places made human in Jesus, in one time and place
we praise you for the glimpses of your glory in in Jesus
for his life lived among us
for his death, resurrection and ascension
leading us to abundant life
for all that you are
and for all that you have done and are doing
we praise you

God of all times and all places but beyond time and space
we praise you for the glimpses of your glory we are given through your Holy Spirit.
As we worship, may that Spirit inspire and guide us that we may worship in spirit and in truth
for all that you are
for all you will do
we praise you

Amen

Prayer of confession (this or some other prayer of confession)

In silence we call to mind our sins

Silence

I confess to God and to you
that I have sinned in thought, word and deed;
may God have mercy on me.

**May God grant you pardon,
forgiveness of all your sins,
time to amend your life,
and the grace and comfort of his Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Silence

**We confess to you
that we have sinned in thought and word and deed;
may God have mercy on us.**

May God grant you pardon,
forgiveness of all your sins,
time to amend your life,
and the grace and comfort of his Holy Spirit. Amen.

Hymn StF 78 Give thanks

Introduction to the reading

John's Gospel the story so far...

The beautiful hymn to the Word that begins John's Gospel invites us into the mystery of who Jesus is, asking us first to come and see, to dip our toes into the waters edge and then enticing us deeper until we are immersed in the life of the Gospel, Jesus and God. It has been described as 'a magic pool in which an elephant may swim and an infant paddle.'

We began with that hymn to Word and Light and the story of John the Baptist followed by the beginnings of a group of disciples. In chapter 2 we meet Jesus' mother for the first time as she prompts him to perform his first sign by changing water into wine at a wedding in Galilee. Jesus then visits Jerusalem and drives the traders out of the Temple and is visited by Nicodemus, a Pharisee, at night.

Chapter 4 begins with a long and riddling conversation with a Samaritan woman at Jacob's Well in which Jesus talks of living water and when asked about the Messiah echoes God's words at the burning bush saying 'I AM'. The chapter ends with the healing of the son of an important man in Galilee, the second of Jesus' signs.

Chapter 5 is taken up with the healing of a man by the Pool of Bethesda in Jerusalem and the argument about working on the Sabbath that follows.

And with that we continue the yoyoing between Jerusalem and Galilee and are transported back to Galilee again and a chapter that like the previous one starts with signs or miracles and continues with arguments about their meaning and Jesus authority and identity...

As we read try to imagine the story as if you are hearing it for the first time

Reading

John 6 (NRSVA) Feeding the Five Thousand

6 After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming towards him, Jesus said to Philip, 'Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?' He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered him, 'Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little.' One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, 'There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?' Jesus said, 'Make the people sit down.' Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, 'Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost.' So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, 'This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world.'

When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

Time to Reflect

Take a moment to allow the story to sink in...

If you were to place yourself in the story where would you be?

Would you be a crowd member with a grumbling stomach,
a disciple challenged to find food,
a child darting through the crowd or pestering mum for food,
or maybe a mum wishing you hadn't left the sandwiches on the kitchen table!?

How do you feel?

What jumps out at you?

Depending on your congregation you could leave a minute or so silence to allow people to think or you could ask people to have a conversation with their neighbour (allow 2-3 minutes only)

Hymn StF 161 Speak, O Lord, as we come to you

Sermon/ drama/ etc

Where Is Bread?

ABBOT'S LEIGH 8.7.8.7 D ("God Is Here!")

"Where is bread?" the great crowd murmured —
Thousands strong, yet all in need.
"Where is bread?" your people wondered,
Faced with such a crowd to feed.
Who, Lord Jesus, could have guessed it?
One small boy brought food to share.
Taking what he gave, you blessed it;
All were fed, with much to spare.

Where is bread? We know their yearning;
Every day, we wish for more.
God, in time, we're slowly learning:
All we own can make us poor.
Our possessions can possess us,
Leaving hunger deep inside.
Christ our Bread, come now and bless us;
At your feast, we're satisfied.

"Where is bread?" the call is rising;
Millions cry who must be fed.
God, your answer seems surprising:
"You, my Church, you give them bread."
Bread to fill each hungry spirit,
Bread for hungry stomachs, too!
Give us bread and help us share it.
Richly blest, may we serve you.

Biblical References: John 6:1-15; Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:32-44; Luke 9:10-17
Tune: Cyril Vincent Taylor, 1941 ("God Is Here!")
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Prayers

Prayer of Thanksgiving

This could be done by people coming forward to float lit candles or flower heads in a bowl of water.

Alternatively you could have silence before the prayer in which people are encouraged to think of their own thanksgivings

We say together

**God of abundant meadows and full baskets
we thank you for your gifts to us,
for your abundant life which fills our lives, our world and our universe.**

**May our eyes be opened
so that we can see your abundance
in our lives
and in the life of the world.**

**May our hands be opened
so we may receive your plenty from others
and share your generosity with others
In the name of God,
Eternal, Son and Spirit we pray
Amen**

Prayer of Intercession

God of abundant meadows and full baskets
who heard the cry of your enslaved people and led them to freedom
who heard the cry of your hungry people and fed them

hear our prayers
and let our cries come to you.

We pray for the needs of this world
for those enslaved by fear, terror, war, poverty, hunger, oppression
for those crying out for freedom, justice, food for their children and themselves, peace and
life in all its fullness

Silence

hear our prayers
and let our cries come to you.

We pray for the church throughout the world, for our circuit, & for this church
that we may live in God's life
for all who are seeking life in its fullness
for all crying out to hear, feel and know God's love

Silence

hear our prayers
and let our cries come to you.

We pray for those who are in need
those who are ill and those who care for them and worry about them
those who face difficult decisions and those who cannot see a way forward
those who are grieving and those who sit with them

Silence

hear our prayers
and let our cries come to you.

We bring these and all our prayers in the name of Jesus who taught us when we pray to
say

The Lords Prayer

Offering, and Dedication

Hymn STF 81 Now thank we all our God

Blessing

As we leave we receive bread, a sign of God's abundance and plenty to feed us as we live as God's people in the coming week.

Go into the world

to feed those who are hungry, weep with those who grieve and bring healing and hope.

Go into the world

to see God's abundant life wherever you go and in whoever you meet

and to share God's abundant life wherever you go and in whoever you meet

And may the blessing of God

Father, Son and Holy Spirit

be with you now and always

Amen