

# The Gathering

## 1 - Welcome - [OLIVER]

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Welcome to St Mary's Cathedral, Glasgow.

Today's gospel tells a story of Jesus taking a loaf of bread, giving thanks for it, and distributing it to a multitude of people. The writer records that there wasn't just enough for each person to get one piece. No, folk could eat as much as they wanted. No one was turned away; no one left out.

Let this be our experience here—a place where we come to be filled by God's lavish gifts at a feast where everyone gets first class accommodation

## 3 - Collect for Purity - [UCHE]

**Almighty God,  
to whom all hearts are open,  
all desires known,  
and from whom no secrets are hidden:  
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts  
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,  
that we may perfectly love you,  
and worthily magnify your holy name;  
through Christ our Lord.  
Amen.**

## 5 - Confession

[KELVIN] God is love and we are God's children.  
There is no room for fear in love.  
We love because God loved us first.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith.

[Silence]

**God our Father, we confess to you and to our fellow members in the Body of Christ that we have sinned in thought, word and deed, and in what we have failed to do. We are truly sorry. Forgive us our sins, and deliver us from the power of evil, for the sake of your Son who died for us, Jesus Christ, our Lord.**

[OLIVER] God, who is both power and love, forgive you and free you from your sins, heal and strengthen you by the Holy Spirit, and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **7 - Gloria - [SHAE]**

Glory to God in the highest,  
and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,  
almighty God and Father,  
we worship you, we give you thanks,  
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,  
Lord God, Lamb of God,  
you take away the sin of the world:  
have mercy on us;  
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:  
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,  
you alone are the Lord,  
you alone are the Most High,  
Jesus Christ,  
with the Holy Spirit,  
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

### **8 - Collect - [OLIVER]**

O God, you open wide your hand, giving us food in due season. Out of your never-failing abundance, satisfy the hungers of body and soul and lead all peoples of the earth to the feast of the world to come. We make our prayer through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever. **Amen.**

## The Ministry of the Word

### 11 - GOSPEL: John 6: 1-21 – [REBEKAH]

Alleluia. Alleluia

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John  
**Glory to Christ our Saviour.**

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 toward 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. When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were terrified. But he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land toward which they were going.

Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious gospel  
**Praise to Christ our Lord.**

## **12 - Sermon [KELVIN]**

One of the things that I've missed during covid time is going to other congregations to welcome new clergy into new jobs.

You learn a lot about a congregation and where they come from when you do.

When I turned to this week's gospel I found myself thinking of one of those institution services that I went to before covid.

After a lovely service, we all went into the hall and were met with groaning tables.

We were in the heart of North Lanarkshire and on one side of the room there were tables of hot pies. And on the other tables of cream cakes which looked as though someone had done a raid on the largest Greggs bakery imaginable.

And at this service there were quite a number of guests who had come over the border. (Not the border with Englandshire, the real border between this side of the country and a place called Edinburgh).

And the second best thing about the evening was hearing those people from Edinburgh saying, “Gosh, you don’t get hospitality like this in Edinburgh”.

But the best thing about the evening was replying, “Aye, you’ll have had your pies”.

It was a real feast. Everyone got stuck in. And I remember one of those pie-eyed visitors from the East coming up to me with half a pie in his hand and saying with reverence and bewilderment – “Provost, they’ve made a pie out of macaroni. An actual pie! Made out of macaroni. Isn’t it amazing?”.

Yes, I said, “the age of miracles is not over”.

And there was a white van that drew up next to the hall as they gathered up the pies and the cream cakes left over to take them to those who had not been able to come to the service and to save the food that would keep to be distributed in the local foodbank the next day.

And the van was full with the baskets of food that they gathered up.

The feeding of the five thousand is a familiar tale though of course, like all scripture, when we read it afresh in our own day, it may speak to who we are, afresh in our own time.

Right now, it feels to me as though the focus of the miracle has changed. Yes, the miracle of multiplication as the bread and the fishes are broken and shared and everyone has enough to eat.

But right now, it seems like a miracle that 5000 could eat together safely in big groups. A hundred here. Fifty there.

I feel jealous not of the food but of the casual way they can keep company with one another. The simple miracle of sharing space seems as extraordinary in the story this time as the miracle of the food.

The last time I preached, I preached about a very sorry banquet – the one where John the Baptist got his head cut off and it was served up on a platter.

When we read the gospel as we do in chunks of verses that don't vary, no matter how many times we've gone through the lectionary, it can be easy to miss the artistry of the gospel writers as they weave the tales together. Today we read the story of the feeding of the five thousand from John, but I kind of wish the lectionary compilers had stuck with Mark.

For Mark is a pretty breathless writer. Things flow from one thing to the next with scarcely a moment to gather your thoughts. He begins just one chapter with that banquet of death that I was preaching on last time and then rushes headlong into the banquet of life that is the feeding of the five thousand.

In the course of just a few sentences, Mark changes the mood from horror to abundance. He switches the focus from death to life.

It feels to me today as though we are currently living right between these two stories. We have watched the horrible dance of death that covid has done with us. We have seen things we hoped for ruined. We know of those who have died, many of them apparently needlessly.

We need the biblical stories about death and destruction sometimes just to remind us that God is with us in times of lament as well as celebration.

But now we stand hungry.

Remember, that when they sat down around Jesus they had no idea what he was to going to do with the bread and the fish. They were just hungry people.

I don't know how the miracle of satisfying hunger is going to be worked out in our day.

But I know that Jesus started with simple things. A paltry meal from someone who hadn't learned to be selfish.

In Mark's gospel, the feeding of the hungry crowd is coupled with the dance of death in Herod's palace.

In John's gospel, the feeding of the hungry crowd is coupled with Jesus walking on the water and calming the storm.

So, how shall we pray this day?

For death to be turned into life.

For scarcity to be turned into abundance.

For hunger to be turned into satisfaction.

For all that whirls around us in the storm to be stilled and quiet.

I do not know how God will satisfy our hunger. But I do know that we are hungry.

We are hungry for freedom. Hungry for hope. Hungry for integrity in government. Hungry for safety. Hungry for company. Hungry for new experiences. Hungry for justice. Hungry for peace. Hungry for dignity. Hungry for hope. Hungry for joy. Hungry for peace. Hungry for love.

The age of miracles is not over.

Let us take that hunger into our prayers this week. Confident that we have heard of a God who brings death out of life, who feeds the hungry and who calms the storm.

In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

## **14 - Intercessions [TAYLOR]**

Let us pray for the life of the world;  
that God's peace may be known and may prevail:

For those in our own community in Glasgow working for  
sustainable transport systems,

Lord, hear us. Lord, graciously hear us.

For all who suffer injury, death or loss;  
that they may know the hope to which God call us:

For the people and situations near to our lives in need of our  
prayers, and those whose needs are known only to you,

Lord, hear us.  
Lord, graciously hear us.

For all who exercise rule and authority;  
that they may act with wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity:

For all members of the UK government and leaders worldwide  
tasked with managing and preventing the spread of COVID and  
administering vaccines,

Lord, hear us. Lord, graciously hear us.

For the Church which is Christ's body;  
that it may live for the praise of God:

For our bishop, Kevin, and for the churches of Holy Trinity,  
Motherwell and St Andrews, Wishaw

For this cathedral, St Mary's, and particularly for our stewards and  
welcomers, and those finding a way into the congregation,

Lord, hear us.  
Lord, graciously hear us.

For those who have died,  
May they rest in peace,  
And rise in glory.



## Communion

### 17 - Offertory - [OLIVER]

'But what are they among so many people?' the disciples asked. How can just a few things make a dent in such an enormous task?

For centuries, Christians have had the audacity to believe that a small number of people equipped with a little faith can do a lot. This church is a testament to those who brought what they had to be transformed by God.

To make a financial contribution that will nourish everyone who comes through these doors, visit [www.thecathedral.org.uk](http://www.thecathedral.org.uk) and click DONATE TO ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL. God is at work among those who supply the feast.

Let us present our offerings to the Lord.

**Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the splendour, and the majesty; for everything in heaven and on earth is yours.**

**All things come from you, and of your own we give you.**

### 18 - Eucharistic Prayer

[OLIVER] The Lord be with you.

[KELVIN] **And also with you.**

[OLIVER] Lift up your hearts.

[KELVIN] **We lift them to the Lord.**

[OLIVER] Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

[KELVIN] **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Worship and praise belong to you, Father,  
in every place and at all times.

All power is yours.  
You created the heavens and established the earth;  
you sustain in being all that is.

In Christ your Son our life and yours  
are brought together in a wonderful exchange.  
He made his home among us  
that we might for ever dwell in you.

Through your Holy Spirit  
you call us to new birth  
in a creation restored by love.

As children of your redeeming purpose  
we offer you our praise,  
with angels and archangels  
and the whole company of heaven,  
singing the hymn of your unending glory:

### **SANCTUS & BENEDICTUS - [SHAE]**

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord,  
God of power and might.  
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

Glory and thanksgiving be to you,  
most loving Father,  
for the gift of your Son born in human flesh  
He is the Word existing beyond time,  
both source and final purpose,  
bringing to wholeness all that is made.  
Obedient to your will he died upon the Cross.  
By your power you raised him from the dead.  
He broke the bonds of evil

and set your people free  
to be his Body in the world.

On the night when he was given up to death,  
knowing that his hour had come,  
having loved his own,  
he loved them to the end.

At supper with his disciples  
he took bread and offered you thanks.

He broke the bread,  
and gave it to them, saying:

“Take, eat.

This is my Body: it is broken for you.”

After supper, he took the cup,  
he offered you thanks,

and gave it to them saying:

“Drink this, all of you.

This is my Blood of the new covenant;  
it is poured out for you, and for all,  
that sins may be forgiven.

Do this in remembrance of me.”

**We now obey your Son's command.  
We recall his blessed passion and death,  
his glorious resurrection and ascension;  
and we look for the coming of his Kingdom.  
Made one with him, we offer you these gifts  
and with them ourselves,  
a single, holy, living sacrifice.**

Hear us, most merciful Father,  
and send your Holy Spirit upon us  
and upon this bread and this wine,  
that, overshadowed by his life-giving power,  
they may be the Body and Blood of your Son,  
and we may be kindled with the fire of your love  
and renewed for the service of your Kingdom.

**Help us, who are baptised into the fellowship of Christ's Body  
to live and work to your praise and glory;  
may we grow together in unity and love  
until at last, in your new creation,  
we enter into our heritage  
in the company of the Virgin Mary,  
the apostles, and prophets,  
and of all God's children living and departed.**

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,  
with whom, and in whom,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all honour and glory be to you,  
Lord of all ages,  
world without end.

**Amen.**

#### **19 - Breaking of the Bread - [OLIVER]**

The living bread is broken for the life of the world.  
**Lord, unite us in this sign.**

#### **20 - Lord's Prayer - [KELVIN]**

As our Saviour has taught us,  
so we pray:

**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.  
Do not bring us  
to the time of trial  
but deliver us from evil.**

**For the kingdom, the power  
and the glory are yours,  
now and for ever.  
Amen.**

## **21 - Communion - [OLIVER]**

God is with us wherever we are.

As we gaze in adoration we feed on God in our hearts and minds that we may in turn feed the world.

O God, even as this broken bread was scattered over the hills, and was gathered together and became one, so let Your Church be gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom; for yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever.

**Amen.**

## **24 - Post Communion Prayer - [UCHE]**

O God, as we are strengthened in these holy mysteries, may our lives be a continual offering, holy and acceptable in your sight; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

## **25 - Blessing - [OLIVER]**

At the end of the miraculous feast at which so many people were fed, Jesus told his disciples to gather up everything left over. Nothing would be lost.

God's love has overflowed in this service—enough to have a lot remaining to take with us and share with the world.

My thanks to all who have brought the gifts that were multiplied here.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord: And the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

**Amen.**

**Voluntary - [STEVEN]**

Vesper Voluntary I (Andante) - Elgar

**Image**

Unknown

*The Feeding of the Five Thousand*, about 1400–1410, Tempera colors, gold, silver paint, and ink

Leaf: 33.5 × 23.5 cm (13 3/16 × 9 1/4 in.), Ms. 33 (88.MP.70), fol. 267v

The J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles, Ms. 33, fol. 267v