



## **Worship resources Trinity 7**

Feasting and covenants. These two ideas are always linked in Scripture and they signify God's commitment to us and God's invitation for us to be included in God's family. While this is certainly Good News for us, it is also a huge challenge when we face the truth that we are to become agents of God's covenant and carriers of God's invitation. This means both proclaiming and living out the inclusivity of the Kingdom and facing issues of hunger and poverty in our world and our communities.

May we feast on God's grace as we worship, and go out to create both physical and spiritual feasts at every chance we get.

### **INTRODUCTIONS**

*For use by lectors, in order of service, parish bulletins and magazines*

#### **Genesis 32 : 22-31**

This is an important and historic moment in the stories of God's dealings with his ancient people. Jacob has married two of his cousins, and when he falls out with his uncle he begins the journey back to Canaan. On the way he has an awesome encounter with an angel, and receives the new name which became that of his descendants for ever: Jacob becomes Israel.

#### **Psalms 17: 1-7, 16**

#### **Romans 9 : 1-5**

It almost breaks Paul's heart that his fellow-Jews, whose whole history has been in covenant-relationship with God, have rejected the very Saviour they longed for, the Jesus in whom God has come to this world.

#### **Matthew 14 : 13-21**

Jesus seeks some peace, but people are too demanding - and the divine generosity can never refuse those in need. Echoing the ancient experience of manna in the wilderness, Jesus provides food for thousands of people - more than they could ever desire or deserve.

[Click here to view the readings](#)

[http://bible.oremus.org/?show\\_adj=no&passages=Genesis  
%2032:%2022-31%0Acw%20Psalm%2017:%201-7,%2016%0ARomans  
%209:%201-5%0AMatthew%2014:%2013-21](http://bible.oremus.org/?show_adj=no&passages=Genesis%2032:%2022-31%0Acw%20Psalm%2017:%201-7,%2016%0ARomans%209:%201-5%0AMatthew%2014:%2013-21)

## **COLLECTS OF THE DAY**

### **Collect One**

Lord of all power and might,  
who art the author and giver of all good things;  
Graft in our hearts the love of thy Name,  
increase in us true religion,  
nourish us with all goodness,  
and of thy great mercy keep us in the same;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

### **Collect Two**

Lord of all power and might,  
the author and giver of all good things:  
Graft in our hearts the love of your name,  
increase in us true religion,  
nourish us with all goodness,  
and of your great mercy keep us in the same;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Because of God's great mercy we are bold to call out our needs and hopes in prayer. Let us offer our prayers for the Church, for the world, and for ourselves as we strive to follow Christ, praying, "O God of mercy," and responding, "Hear our prayer."

For the Church in an increasingly secular world, that we might be a welcoming home for those who have grown up outside of the faith community and an expression of God's grace to all.  
O God of mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

For our government, especially our Prime Minister \_\_\_\_\_, and our Member of Parliament \_\_\_\_\_ that they may enable intelligent and compassionate legislation for all those who need care and healing.

O God of mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

For all parents with children who have unique physical or social needs, that they might find in God a source of love and strength, and find in us a source of support for their struggle.

O God of mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

For the sick and the dying and those who watch over them, especially \_\_\_\_\_, that they may be comforted.

O God of mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

For ourselves as we work to be faithful, that we might be open to the surprises of our relationship with God and always ready to see God with new and fuller knowledge.

O God of mercy,

**Hear our prayer.**

O God, your son responded to the faithful boldness of the Canaanite woman. Help us to pray and live with courage like hers that we may experience your grace as fully as she did and discover the unexpected abundance of life that trusts in you.

We pray trusting in your mercy. **Amen.**

**POST COMMUNION**

Lord God,  
whose Son is the true vine and the source of life,  
ever giving himself that the world may live:  
May we so receive within ourselves  
the power of his death and passion  
that, in his saving cup,

we may share his glory and be made perfect in his love;  
for he is alive and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
now and for ever.

## PRAYERS

To fulfil the ancient promise of salvation, O God,  
you made a covenant with our ancestors  
and pledged them descendants more numerous than the stars.  
Grant that all people may share in the blessings of your covenant,  
accomplished through the death and resurrection of your Son  
and sealed by the gift of your Spirit. Amen.

Through dreams and visions, O God,  
you broaden the horizon and hope of your people,  
that they may discover the meaning of your covenant,  
even in the midst of trial and exile.  
Increase the number of those who believe in your word  
so that all people may joyfully respond to your call  
and share in your promises. Amen.

As you heard the prayer of Isaac and Rebekah, O God,  
and guided them in the way of your love,  
so listen now to those who call upon you.  
Move us to praise your gracious will,  
for in Christ Jesus you have saved us from the deeds of death  
and opened for us the hidden ways of your love.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord God, friend of those in need,  
your Son Jesus has untied our burdens  
and healed our spirits.  
We lift up the prayers of our hearts for those still burdened,  
those seeking healing,  
those in need within the church and the world.  
Hear our prayers  
that we may love you with our whole being  
and willingly share the concerns of our neighbours. Amen.

Holy One,  
hear our prayers and make us faithful stewards  
of the fragile bounty of this earth

so that we may be entrusted with the riches of heaven. Amen.

We praise your abiding guidance, O God,  
for you sent us Jesus, our Teacher and Messiah,  
to model for us the way of love for the whole universe.

We offer these prayers of love  
on behalf of ourselves and our neighbours,  
on behalf of your creation and our fellow creatures.

Loving God,  
open our ears to hear your word  
and draw us closer to you,  
that the whole world may be one with you  
as you are one with us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Loving God,  
open our ears to hear your word  
and draw us closer to you,  
that the whole world may be one with you  
as you are one with us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God beyond all seeing and knowing,  
we meet you in the night of change and crisis,  
and wrestle with you in the darkness of doubt.  
Give us the will and spirit  
to live faithfully and love as we are loved. Amen.

Glorious God,  
your generosity floods the world with goodness  
and you shower creation with abundance.  
Awaken in us a hunger for food to satisfy both body and heart,  
that in the miracle of being fed  
we may be empowered to feed the hungry in Jesus' name. Amen.

O Lord God, in whom we live and move and have our being, open  
our eyes that we may behold thy presence ever with us. Draw our  
hearts to thee with the power of thy love. Teach us to be anxious  
for nothing, and when we have done what thou givest us to do,  
help us, O God our Saviour, to leave the issue to thy wisdom. Take  
from us all doubt and mistrust. Lift our hearts up to thee in heaven,  
and make us to know that all things are possible to us through thy

Son our Redeemer. Amen (*Bishop Brooke Foss Westcott, 1825-1901*)

Jesus, may all that is you flow in us. May your Body and Blood be our food and drink. May your Passion be our strength and our life. Jesus with you by our side enough has been given. May the shelter we seek be the shadow of your Cross. May we not run from the love which you offer, but hold us safe from the forces of evil. On each of our dyings shed your light and your love, and keep calling to us until that day comes when with your saints, we may praise you for ever. Amen (*adapted from Anima Christi*)

Dear God, our human lives are full of change. We know that life always moves on and nothing stays the same. We find change frightening, sad or difficult. Help us to be brave. Help us to be positive and above all, help us to remember that You alone do not change and will always be with us. Amen

Gracious God, with each returning day may we face our concerns and duties with goodness and grace. Let us be cheerful in our undertakings, faithful in business and able to reach the day's end with contentment and honour; through Christ our Lord. Amen  
*Robert Louis Stevenson, 1850-94*

Heavenly Father who loves us, help us to love ourselves, and to love our neighbours as much as ourselves. Amen.

Creator God, we give thanks for the work of the Hospice Movement, and we pray for those who work with the dying and the suffering. We pray that they will be given strength and courage in their work, and inspiration to go forward in Your Name. Amen

O God our dance in whom we live and move and have our being: so direct our strength and inspire our weakness that we may enter with power into the movement of your whole creation through our partner Jesus Christ. Amen

Gracious God, your Son Jesus Christ fed the hungry with the bread of life and the word of your Kingdom. Renew your people

with your heavenly grace, and in all our weakness sustain us by your true and living bread, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

## LECTIONARY NOTES    1

### ***Genesis 32:22-31:***

This is just a fantastic passage. We all wrestle with God, but there are lots of ways to go about it. Jacob's approach is great - Jacob wrestles, holds his own, and demands a blessing. OK, so it is God's messenger - but good enough. How do you wrestle with God?

Are you willing and able to ask God to bless you? Demand it even?

"I have seen God face to face." Have you? When? Where? How?

### ***Psalms 17:1-7, 15:***

This psalm fits well with our passage from Genesis, because the psalmist is bold and demanding. The psalmist declares himself to be free from deceit, able to withstand testing, feet not slipping from God's path.

Sometimes we need to be bold with God - not for God's sake, but for our sake. Fear of God's justice has its place, but confidence in our status as God's beloved children with whom God seeks relationship also has its place.

Read the in-between verse too. For once, they are not totally, just partially, about God smiting enemies. They do also include the phrase "apple of the eye" - did you know that was from the Bible?

### ***Romans 9:1-5:***

This is an odd little snippet of scripture. What is here? Paul's passion that his people, the Israelites, would hear God's message. He has "great sorrow and unceasing anguish" for them as he worries about their salvation. Who do you worry about? Whose walk with God are you anguished over, hoping for them that they find the hope you have found?

**Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52:**

Did you know that the feeding of the 5000 is the only miracle recorded in all four gospels?

Food holds such a critical place in the scriptures. Jesus talks about being spiritually fed lots of times. But he doesn't overlook the importance of alleviating literal hunger!

Some look at this as a literal miracle. Others read this passage as a miracle of sharing and abundance in a more figurative sense. I say: either way, it is a miracle indeed. People were hungry, then were fed. People were enabled to stay and hear Jesus preach.

Abundance - there was more than enough to go around. This is a great statement for today - we live in a world of abundance, but perceive ourselves to be in a world of scarcity. Jesus tries to show us our abundance. Can you see it? Live it? *By Beth Quick*

**LECTIONARY NOTES 2**

**REFLECTIONS ON THEME:**

The two ideas that come together in this week's readings are God's covenant with God's people, and the invitation to feast with God. Of course, these are simply two ways of expressing God's commitment to us, and of showing the care, compassion, faithfulness, grace and salvation of God that the psalmists celebrate and rely on. In Genesis, Jacob is visited by God and, in the struggle, is both wounded and blessed – which is always the case when we are touched by God in our broken world. In Isaiah, the restorative invitation of God is proclaimed loud and clear. In Romans, Paul celebrates the Israelite people – the descendants of Jacob – to whom were given the invitation and the covenant, and expresses his longing for them to respond to God's new invitation and new covenant in Christ. Finally, in the Gospel, the crowds who come to Jesus discover that they are welcomed, taught and fed, discovering, truly, a new Moses in Christ – one who gives them both a new law and a new manna.

**CONNECTING WITH LIFE:**

**GLOBAL APPLICATION:** It is hard to read Isaiah's prophecy and the Gospel story of the crowd which is fed without thinking about the reality of poverty in our world. The challenge of the Scriptures becomes even more urgent when we recognise that there is enough food being produced to feed all the people in our world. The problem is not with the food, it is with people not having



money or opportunity to get the food they need. The story of the feeding is a prophetic word challenging us to work for ways to provide for the needs of everyone. This may mean working against unfair farming subsidies, or unjust trade laws, or it may mean ensuring that the way we buy and use our food is supportive of just practices. These are complex issues, but eating simply, minimising waste, and buying from producers and distributors that pay a fair wage and engage in just practices is a relatively easy first step. The readings from this week's Lectionary can also be expanded beyond just this one issue, though. God's gracious covenant with humanity is a challenge for us to recognise the dignity and humanity of all people, and to ensure that our attitudes, our ethics and our worship are free from exclusionary or diminishing language and practices, from dominance and power abuses, and from compliance with any system that unfairly oppresses or disadvantages some in favour of others. Essentially, we are called to become the people of God, welcomed at God's table, and living as global citizens with a world-centric perspective and a God-inspired longing for healing, justice, peace and inclusion of all. It's a dream, perhaps, but one worth striving for.

**LOCAL APPLICATION:** In our communities, homes and churches we all have resources that can be used to care for, to 'feed' others. As people of God we are recipients of God's commitment to, God's covenant with, us. We are those who know God's provision and abundance – even if we aren't financially wealthy. The call we must face, though, is to be those who can trust in God's care for us, and lean into God's commitment to us, and allow this to release us in generosity, in inclusivity and in service of others. Paul's care for his Jewish brothers and sisters meant that he was willing to sacrifice and serve them wholeheartedly. And Jesus' words to the disciples ring through the centuries to us: "You feed them". This means that we cannot avoid the responsibility of learning to care for and seek to serve those in our neighbourhoods, churches and even our own families. It means that we cannot hoard what we have, but must be willing to live simply and share what we have, inviting others to sit at the table with us. It means that we must be willing to become God's provision, God's welcome, God's commitment and God's service to others. Inevitably, we will find ourselves wrestling with God over these challenges, because it is never easy to be called by God. And inevitably we will find our hearts broken, our souls and bodies wounded by the grief and need we will find ourselves facing as we seek to serve others. But, in spite of this, we will also know the joy and 'reward' that comes when we know we are being used by God, and we are growing the community that knows and shares God's feast.

## SERMON OUTLINE 1

**Matt 14:13-21 the crowds followed him...**

Jesus has just learned of the death of John the Baptist & so *withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place* - time to grieve for John in peace... But such was his popularity that on *hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns (13)* – hey just had to be with Jesus!

**1. The Compassion of Jesus: 14** *When Jesus landed & saw a large crowd he had compassion upon them & healed their sick.* Always the servant of others, Jesus had so little time for himself

**2. The Companions of Jesus: 15-17** - the disciples were alarmed about the situation - *This is a remote place & it's already getting late.*

This little incident illustrates 2 things-

**a) how little faith they had:** *send the crowds away so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food (15).*

**b) how little food they had:** When J said that *they do not need to go away - you give them something to eat (16)*, the replied: *we have here only 5 loaves & 2 fish* - supplied by a young lad (**John 6.9**) - more than enough for Jesus!

**3. The Comfort of Jesus: 18-21** - as he relieved the whole situation - taking the food, blessing, breaking & distributing it. Earlier he had *healed their sick* - now he filled their stomachs! *They all ate and were satisfied (20)* - with enough left over *for 12 basketfuls of broken pieces* – even scraps weren't to be wasted! It was a memorable event - great miracle - wonderful Saviour!

It illustrates how Jesus always meets all our needs - body and soul. It left a lasting impression on those present and those they told later - the only miracle recorded by all 4 evangelists!

What sort of impression does it make on you? *By Norman Porteous*

## SERMON OUTLINE 2

### ONLINE SERMON SOURCES

**Sermons that work** - “Today’s gospel tells another story of food – lots of food. There is so much food, that they have some left over!

This isn't a banquet like the wedding of Cana story in John's gospel, but food to tide one over, food for a journey, simple food: bread and fish. This isn't even a meal, really. It is food to just get by. The food of our gospel story is basic fill-the-hole-in-your-stomach food, something to take the edge off, something for survival."... Excerpt from good all round sermon on "the feeding of the five thousand".

<http://episcopaldigitalnetwork.com/stw/2014/?cat=8>

**Day 1** - Life's Turning Points, based on Genesis 32:22-31. Some of life's crucial turning points are recognisable only in retrospect. As we look at the pattern of the pilgrimage of the man for whom the people and the nation of Israel is named, we can see turning points that parallel our own. The first turning point for Jacob came like many of ours do. He was in trouble. He was fleeing from the scene of his actions. Turning points in our spiritual journey have to come again and again. We can be renewed and rejuvenated in his service.

[http://day1.org/1106-lifes\\_turning\\_points](http://day1.org/1106-lifes_turning_points)

## **CHILDREN**

**Worshipping with children** - Two good outlines for children's talks. CS Lewis and Narnia are used to effect. Aslan the Lion, the one who wrestles for Christ. The answer given to the children when they ask if Aslan is a man.

The talk on the Gospel suggests creating the whole sermon around imaging yourselves as different people in this story. Ponder what they might have been thinking, feeling, and learning as the meal came together - Jesus, the disciples... and us in our church today.

<http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.com/2011/06/year-proper-13-18th-sunday-in-ordinary.html>

**Sermons4kids** - Super size it! You will need something with the McDonald's logo on it. Mac D's was not the first to super size a meal, is the lead in to the feeding of over five thousand people.

<http://www.sermons4kids.com/super-size-it.html>

[Faith Formation Journeys](#), Children's Sermon, Pentecost 7A

<http://faithformationjourneys.blogspot.co.uk/2011/07/childrens-sermon-pentecost-7a-july-31.html>

### **HYMN SUGGESTIONS**

[For The Beauty Of The Earth](#)  
[Here, O My Lord, I See Thee](#)  
[I Hunger And I Thirst](#)  
[Guide Me, O Thou Great Jehovah](#)  
[Break Thou The Bread Of Life](#)  
[All Who Are Thirsty](#)  
[You Are](#)  
[Never Let My Hunger Die](#)  
[Hungry](#)  
[The Feast](#)

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