

## Words of Light and Hope 18<sup>th</sup> August 2024

Helena Crockford LLM

Bread of Life

The Gospel readings for the last two Sundays have included verses from John's Gospel on the theme of bread: *Jesus said to them, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. John 6.35*

**Humble and basic and everyday as bread is, it can be a symbol of our interconnectedness across peoples, times and cultures and also of strange and wonderful processes of transformation in the midst of daily life. These poems capture something of this.**

Naomi Shihab Nye is a Palestinian-American poet. She wrote:

*"How to make bread"*

Grain into wheat, wheat into flour, flour into bread, bread into hands, hands into life, life into bread.

**Paul Laurence Dunbar was the first African-American poet to find national recognition in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. He wrote:**

*'Life'*

**A crust of bread and a corner to sleep in, A minute to smile and an hour to weep in, A pint of joy to a peck of trouble, And never a laugh but the moans come double; And that is life! A crust and a corner that love makes precious, With a smile to warm and the tears to refresh us; And joy seems sweeter when cares come after, And a moan is the finest of foils for laughter; And that is life!**

Malcolm Guite, the poet-priest now based in Norfolk follows Jesus in leading this metaphor right back to God himself.

*"Where to get bread?"*

An ever-pressing question That trembles on the lips of anxious mothers, Bread for their families, bread for all these others; A whole world on the margin of exhaustion. And where that hunger has been satisfied *Where to get bread?* The question still returns In our abundance something starves and yearns We crave fulfillment, crave and are denied. And then comes One who speaks into our needs Who opens out the secret hopes we cherish Whose presence calls our hidden hearts to flourish Whose words unfold in us like living seeds Come to me, broken, hungry, incomplete, I Am the Bread of Life, break Me and eat.



REEPHAM & WENSUM VALLEY  
TEAM CHURCHES

# Pew Notes

**25th August: 12:30pm:** Lyng Church BBQ, Lyng Rectory

**25th August 10am– 4pm:** Classic car show & family fun day, Elsing Hall

**9th September: 7:30pm—9pm:** Bible study the first letter of St John, 1 Church Farm Close, Weston Longville

**14th September 9am– 5pm:** Norfolk Churches Trust Bike Ride

### Services for next week: Sunday 25h August

9:00am Mattins, St Andrew's, Thurning

9:00am Mattins (BCP), St Mary's. Bylaugh

10:30am Harvest Service, St Margaret's, Swannington

10:30am Holy Communion, St Mary's, Reepham

10:30am Holy Communion (BCP), St Mary's Sparham

10:30am Words & Praise, St Mary's Elsing

**The Rev'd. Helen Rengert**, 01603 879275 [revdhelenrwv@gmail.com](mailto:revdhelenrwv@gmail.com)

**The Rev'd. Keith Rengert**, 01603 879275 [revdkeith@gmail.com](mailto:revdkeith@gmail.com) (Sunday only)

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**FACEBOOK:** Reepham & Wensum Valley Events

**WEBSITE:** [www.reepham-and-wensum-valley-team-churches.org.uk](http://www.reepham-and-wensum-valley-team-churches.org.uk)

**Pew Notes are available to download from the RWV website and the E-newsletter**

**If you have any safeguarding concerns, please contact your Parish Safeguarding Officer. Details in the church porch or on the RWV website.**

**1 Kings 2:10-12; 3:3-14**

David slept with his ancestors, and was buried in the city of David. The time that David reigned over Israel was forty years; he reigned seven years in Hebron, and thirty-three years in Jerusalem. So Solomon sat on the throne of his father David; and his kingdom was firmly established. Solomon loved the LORD, walking in the statutes of his father David; only, he sacrificed and offered incense at the high places. The king went to Gibeon to sacrifice there, for that was the principal high place; Solomon used to offer a thousand burnt offerings on that altar. At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream by night; and God said, "Ask what I should give you." And Solomon said, "You have shown great and steadfast love to your servant my father David, because he walked before you in faithfulness, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart toward you; and you have kept for him this great and steadfast love, and have given him a son to sit on his throne today. And now, O LORD my God, you have made your servant king in place of my father David, although I am only a little child; I do not know how to go out or come in. And your servant is in the midst of the people whom you have chosen, a great people, so numerous they cannot be numbered or counted. Give your servant therefore an understanding mind to govern your people, able to discern between good and evil; for who can govern this your great people?" It pleased the Lord that Solomon had asked this. God said to him, "Because you have asked this, and have not asked for yourself long life or riches, or for the life of your enemies, but have asked for yourself understanding to discern what is right, I now do according to your word. Indeed I give you a wise and discerning mind; no one like you has been before you and no one like you shall arise after you. I give you also what you have not asked, both riches and honor all your life; no other king shall compare with you. If you will walk in my ways, keeping my statutes and my commandments, as your father David walked, then I will lengthen your life."

**Psalm 111 *Confitebor tibi***

1 Hallelujah! I will give thanks to the LORD with my whole heart, in the assembly of the upright, in the congregation.  
 2 Great are the deeds of the LORD! \* they are studied by all who delight in them.  
 3 His work is full of majesty and splendor, and his righteousness endures for ever.  
 4 He makes his marvelous works to be remembered; the LORD is gracious and full of compassion.  
 5 He gives food to those who fear him; \* he is ever mindful of his covenant.  
 6 He has shown his people the power of his works \* in giving them the lands of the nations.  
 7 The works of his hands are faithfulness and justice; \* all his commandments are sure.  
 8 They stand fast for ever and ever, \* because they are done in truth and equity.  
 9 He sent redemption to his people; he commanded his covenant for ever; \* holy and awesome is his Name.  
 10 The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom; \* those who act accordingly have a good understanding; his praise endures for ever.

**Ephesians 5:15-20**

Be careful then how you live, not as unwise people but as wise, making the most of the time, because the days are evil. So do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. Do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery; but be filled with the Spirit, as you sing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs among yourselves, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times and for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

**John 6:51-58**

Jesus said, "I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats of this bread will live forever; and the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh." The Jews then disputed among themselves, saying, "How can this man give us his flesh to eat?" So Jesus said to them, "Very truly, I tell you, unless you eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you have no life in you. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will raise them up on the last day; for my flesh is true food and my blood is true drink. Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them. Just as the living Father sent me, and I live because of the Father, so whoever eats me will live because of me. This is the bread that came down from heaven, not like that which your ancestors ate, and they died. But the one who eats this bread will live forever."

**The Collect**

Almighty God, you have given your only Son to be for us a sacrifice for sin, and also an example of godly life: Give us grace to receive thankfully the fruits of his redeeming work, and to follow daily in the blessed steps of his most holy life; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Amen.*

