



In Memory. Sheila Stacey, Andy Vickerstaff, William Easterbrook, Jocelyn Cassey and Rita Bull.
Look out for the wonderful cards on sale to raise funds for our churches. Thank you to Robin and Pam Thomas for organising this. Fantastic picture Robin!

Church Office cover for August. Please note for the period of August, Andrew and Caren will be working to a different pattern as well as having specific time off which will be advertised in this weekly notice sheet. They will only be covering essential work for this period. Non-essential work will be picked up again in September.

Lifting of lockdown rules Clear guidance will be given at all our services. In broad terms we are recommending the continuation of social distancing and wearing of masks in our buildings. Each community will be considering how to reintroduce singing and refreshments.

August and September Edition of the Beacon is now available for you to collect from our churches. We are always looking for new contributors. If you have an idea or article do contact the editor.

Could You Stand For General Synod? Elections for new members of the Church of England's governing body, the General Synod, are taking place this autumn. Anyone can stand for election, you just need to be over 18, be on your church Electoral Roll and be receiving Communion. It doesn't matter how long you have been a Christian, what your background is or how old or young you are! <https://exeter.anglican.org/who-we-are/synod> Please call (01392) 294931 if you have any questions.

Book onto a Grow Course and Begin Lay Learning Now:

- Sharing Our Faith: Thursdays: 2nd, 9th and 16th of September
- Stewardship Advocates: Tuesdays: 7th, 14th, 21st and 28th of September
- Pastoral Care: Mondays: 4th, 11th, 18th, 25th of October

The courses will be taking place in the evenings starting at 7:30pm, online using Zoom.

To sign up <https://exeter.anglican.org/ministry/lay-ministry/lay-learning/>

Readings	This week	Next week
Readings for this Sunday:		
1st Reading	Joshua 24:1-2a, 14-18	Deuteronomy 4:1-2, 6-9
Psalm	34:15-22	15
2nd Reading	Ephesians 6:10-20	James 1:17-End
Gospel	John 6:59-69	Mark 7:1-8, 14-15, 21-23
Readings for the week ahead:		
Mon	23 rd Matt 23:13-22	
Tue	24 th Luke 22:24-30	
Wed	25 th Matt 23:27-32	
Thurs	26 th Matt 24:42-End	
Fri	27 th Matt 25:1-13	
Sat	28 th Matt 25:14-30	

They can also be viewed/downloaded from <https://bible.oremus.org/>

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Today's Sunday Services

9.30 am	Holy Communion	- St Mary the Virgin, Denbury
11.00 am	Holy Communion	- Ss Peter and Paul, Broadhempston
11.00 am	Churches Together – Family Service and the Baptism of Amelia Perrett	- St Andrew's, Ipplepen
6.00 pm	Evensong (BCP)	- St John the Baptist, Woodland

Telephone support/chat following the church services: Sheila Sheldon is available to speak to following our church services. Sheila's phone number is (01803) 814227.

Morning Prayer

This week morning prayer will be said at the following times:

Monday	9.15 am	- St Andrew's, Ipplepen (changed from Tuesday for this week)
Wednesday	9.00 am	- For the Zoom password, email: rachelbelringer@gmail.com (Please contact Rachel by the Tuesday for the zoom password)
Thursday	9.15 am	- St Mary the Virgin, Denbury
Friday	9.15 am	- Ss Peter and Paul, Broadhempston (A time of silent prayer and meditation at Broadhempston)

Reflection

Our churches are open for private prayer and reflection throughout the week at the following times:

St Peter & St Paul's, Broadhempston	9am to 5pm	Daily
St Andrew's, Ipplepen	9am to 5pm	Daily
St Mary the Virgin, Denbury	10am to 5pm	Daily
St John the Baptist, Woodland	10am to 4pm	Daily

Mid-Week

Rev'd Andrew Down on Annual leave on Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays throughout August.

Tuesday	10.15 am	Holy Communion	- St Andrew's, Ipplepen
Wednesday	7.30 pm	Bellringing Practice	- St Andrew's, Ipplepen
Thursday	10.15 am	Holy Communion	- St Mary the Virgin, Denbury

Next Sunday – Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

9.30 am	Holy Communion	- St John the Baptist, Woodland
11.00 am	Holy Communion	- St Andrew's, Ipplepen

Evening Prayer online using 'Zoom': Please note, there will be no 6pm Evening Prayer (which is usually on the first and third Sunday of each month) throughout August.

Online Sermon this Sunday: <https://vimeo.com/cofedevon>

Points for Prayer. For those whose lives have been devastated by circumstances out of their control whether through violence or natural disaster. Especially thinking of the people of Afghanistan, Haiti, Northern Europe and our near neighbours in Plymouth.



Reflection by Steve Sheldon

Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

John 6:59-69

Sunday 15th August 2021

We read in the Bible that many disciples left Jesus because of very simple words he used, easy, everyday words, like BREAD & WATER; EAT & DRINK; HUNGRY & THIRSTY; DEAD & LIVING; HEAR & COME; FLESH & BLOOD; WORD; or the basic verb I AM. which are infused with some very complex ideas.

Basically these quitters were of two types. First, we read in John's gospel about the original Fundamentalists. John's gospel makes sport of those who insist on taking everything literally. Jesus said he would destroy the Temple and build it up in 3 days. The fundamentalists just laughed because they knew better; they knew it had taken 46 years to build that temple, how was Jesus going to do it in 3 days?

And then Jesus said that if you wanted to enjoy eternal life you had to eat his flesh and blood. Well, this was truly disgusting if not sacrilegious; cannibalism aside, everyone knew that they were forbidden by the Law to eat meat with blood in it. Flesh & blood don't go together!

So those who looked to the Scriptures for eternal life, those who read their Bibles diligently and thought this was enough, they had to drop out and stick to their narrow way.

The second type of dropouts were those who understood the deeper meanings, but found them too difficult. Mark says they failed to understand about the Bread not because it was too complicated, but because their hearts were hardened; we today would say because their minds were closed.

The idea is simple enough: "He who believes has eternal life." Not by works, not by deeds, not by reading the Bible, not by performing certain rituals, but by faith in him who calls.

Sounds easy, but this belief can be a harder work than any physical work imaginable. Jesus said "*The WORK God requires is to believe in the one he has sent.*" This belief is not just a matter of opinion; that would be a belief ABOUT Jesus; belief IN Jesus is a total commitment to being a disciple, a follower, a servant of Jesus.

This isn't a belief you can flip on like a spiritual light switch, but requires persistence, searching, questioning, doubting, risking, daring. It requires study, prayer and action. No wonder some of the first disciples said "*This is a hard teaching; who can accept it?*"

The thing is, once you do accept it, you must be prepared for the results, the eternal life: LIFE is not static, it's not sitting around doing nothing: just as all *living* things are continually growing and changing, so are we in our eternal *life* with God, forever growing and changing. And then think of the alternative: spiritual death. Eternal sameness. Eternal dark.

So what happened in today's gospel reading? Thousands of people had gathered around Jesus, travelling about, and they became hungry, had nothing to eat, and so he gave them enough bread and fish to satisfy that hunger. But now Jesus had to explain to the crowds what this miraculous event was really about. He concludes with the words *I am the Bread of Life*.

This is what confused so many of the disciples. This is what confuses so many of us today. What does it mean?

It has been said you are what you eat. But it's the same with our minds as our bodies: feed your mind doctor stuff and you become a doctor, feed it farmer stuff and you become a farmer, feed it teacher stuff, you become a teacher, feed it nothing and you go into politics. I read that somewhere.

But it works with the spirit too. Just as Jesus gave the 5000 people worldly bread to feed their worldly hunger, we have scriptures to feed our minds, and God gives to us Jesus to feed our spiritual hunger. This means entering into union with Jesus, a special personal relationship, coming to him in faith, being converted, turned around.

Every time we come to God's table for Communion, we remind ourselves of this union, we feed on Christ in our hearts by faith with thanksgiving. We refresh, we renew our commitment, and in so doing we make that *work* of belief a little bit easier. But it's not just the Eucharist, but all the Sacraments and church activities that allow us to eat and drink the flesh and blood of Jesus. The Eucharist is just more obvious because of the symbols we use, the bread and the wine. But, for example, in the ministry of healing, the prayers and laying of hands, we eat the love of God; healing ministry is a seeking after a wholeness that draws upon our special relationship with God. We take a bite from the *bread of life* and come away fed, i.e. loved by the one who gives life.

The one who GIVES life. We can't earn it or buy it, and we sure don't deserve it, but there it is anyway, freely given. We're like the 5000 who pursued Jesus in search of another cheap meal they didn't have to work for. The only work God asks is that we believe.