

Today's Gospel brings home the fact that we have a choice; to follow Jesus or not to do so. It's one place where we are definitely told of many people who turn back and no longer went about with Jesus. He is preaching about them eating his flesh and drinking his blood; a complete anathema to the Jews. It sounds like cannibalism. But of course he is talking of himself as the bread of life. This is John's gospel where there is no actual last supper narrative, the concept of the Eucharist is initiated in Jesus teaching in this section. "Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood abide in me, and I in them." He goes on to say that those who eat this bread will live for ever. We are told about those who fall by the wayside. Jesus teaching is hard for many to hear and many of them question it and fall away. Dwindling congregations even existed for Jesus!

But when Jesus asks the Twelve, who have stayed with him, if they also want to leave him and go away, Peter gets it really right for once. "Lord to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life." Is Jesus the one to whom we go? Is he the Bread of Life for us? We do need to ask ourselves as Christians, whether we are getting the good news over to other people, that Jesus is the bread of life that really sustains us for ever.

*Phil Baker*



**NEXT SUNDAY 01.09.2024 Trinity 14**

10.30am in the Church

**READINGS:** OT Deuteronomy 4: 1-2, 6-9



NT James 1: 17-27

GOSPEL Mark 7: 1-8, 14, 15, 21-23

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## St Thomas, Exeter

25th August 2024

### Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

10.30am in Church

#### Today

**10.30am Sung Eucharist**

*Hymn Numbers.*

174 God of grace and God of glory

56 Be thou my vision

449 Soldiers of Christ arise

#### Tuesday 27th August

**2pm** Funeral Service for Stephen Carroll

#### Wednesday 28th August

**10am** Holy Communion (BCP)

**2pm** Young at Hearts

#### Thursday 29th August

**9.30-11am** St Thomas Tots

**10.30-12 noon** Knit & Natter. 19 Maple Rd.

Details from Jenny on 01392 498725

**2.30pm** Safeguarding meeting by Zoom

#### Friday 30th August

**9.30am** Morning Prayer

**10am** Staff Meeting



## Collect

Almighty God, who called your Church to bear witness that you were in Christ reconciling the world to yourself: help us to proclaim the good news of your love, that all who hear it may be drawn to you; through him who was lifted up on the cross, and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

## Joshua 24: 1-2a, 14-18

Then Joshua gathered all the tribes of Israel to Shechem, and summoned the elders, the heads, the judges, and the officers of Israel; and they presented themselves before God. And Joshua said to all the people, 'Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel: Long ago your ancestors—Terah and his sons Abraham and Nahor—lived beyond the Euphrates and served other gods. 'Now therefore revere the LORD, and serve him in sincerity and in faithfulness; put away the gods that your ancestors served beyond the River and in Egypt, and serve the LORD. Now if you are unwilling to serve the LORD, choose this day whom you will serve, whether the gods your ancestors served in the region beyond the River or the gods of the Amorites in whose land you are living; but as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD.' Then the people answered, 'Far be it from us that we should forsake the LORD to serve other gods; for it is the LORD our God who brought us and our ancestors up from the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery, and who did those great signs in our sight. He protected us along all the way that we went, and among all the peoples through whom we passed; and the Lord drove out before us all the peoples, the Amorites who lived in the land. Therefore we also will serve the LORD, for he is our God.'

## Ephesians 6: 10-20

Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his power. Put on the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our struggle is not against enemies of blood and flesh, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers of this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. Therefore take up the whole armour of God, so that you may be able to withstand on that evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. Stand therefore, and fasten the belt of truth around your waist, and put on the breast-

plate of righteousness. As shoes for your feet put on whatever will make you ready to proclaim the gospel of peace. With all of these, take the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints. Pray also for me, so that when I speak, a message may be given to me to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it boldly, as I must speak.

## John 6: 56-69

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 for ever.' He said these things while he was teaching in the synagogue at Capernaum. When many of his disciples heard it, they said, 'This teaching is difficult; who can accept it?' But Jesus, being aware that his disciples were complaining about it, said to them, 'Does this offend you? Then what if you were to see the Son of Man ascending to where he was before? It is the spirit that gives life; the flesh is useless. The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life. But among you there are some who do not believe.' For Jesus knew from the first who were the ones that did not believe, and who was the one that would betray him. And he said, 'For this reason I have told you that no one can come to me unless it is granted by the Father.' Because of this many of his disciples turned back and no longer went about with him. So Jesus asked the twelve, 'Do you also wish to go away?' Simon Peter answered him, 'Lord, to whom can we go? You have the words of eternal life. We have come to believe and know that you are the Holy One of God.'

## Intercessions

Sing praises to the Lord  
**Whose love endures for ever.**

## Post Communion

God our creator, you feed your children with the true

manna, the living bread from heaven: let this holy food sustain us through our earthly pilgrimage until we come to that place where hunger and thirst are no more; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

## NOTICES

**Community Larder** has closed (existing clients are being transferred to the main Exeter Foodbank, which now operates from Cowick Street). Collection bins for the Foodbank are available in many local supermarkets and in a few weeks time we will be starting a collection in Church at the Sunday service.

**Plans are in place for our next set of prayer walks** based on our experiences from the first two walks and your feedback. Meet outside the church hall. Wet weather plan in place!

*Thursday 29th August: 2pm - 3pm*

**Marianne Westcott** there will be an event to celebrate her life of at 12noon on 31st August in St Thomas Pleasure Ground. All are welcome to her funeral at 12noon on Thursday 29th August at the Mint Methodist Church.

**TALKWORKS can help!** If you are feeling stressed, anxious, are experiencing ongoing low mood, or are having difficulty sleeping,

NHS TALKWORKS is a free, confidential, talking therapies service helping you to feel better and giving you the tools and techniques to improve your mental well-being.  
0300 555 3344 Give us a call and see how we can support you. [www.talkworks.dpt.nhs.uk](http://www.talkworks.dpt.nhs.uk)

**Northcott Theatre** Friday 18th October to Wednesday 23rd October (local discount on Friday) *The Commotion*. More on the Prayer Book Rebellion of 1549 following our successful talk by Prof Mark Stoye. Box office phone no 01392 726363

