

Order of Service 9th January 2022

Food Bank Service

Welcome

Hello, and welcome to Hearsall at Home for Sunday 9th January 2022. Today we hear from Gavin Kibble MBE about the work of Coventry Food Bank, who will also comment on Jesus' manifesto for action in Luke chapter 4.

Call to Worship

6 'Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen:

to loose the chains of injustice

and untie the cords of the yoke,

to set the oppressed free

and break every yoke?

7 Is it not to share your food with the hungry

and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter –

when you see the naked, to clothe them,

and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood?

8 Then your light will break forth like the dawn,

and your healing will quickly appear;

then your righteousness will go before you,

and the glory of the Lord will be your rear guard.

Isaiah 58: 6 - 8

Isaiah's words promise righteousness, hope and glory for those who feed the hungry. Let's celebrate the joy that comes as **all** are included, in our opening song...

Song (WT 239) **Jesus put this Song into our Hearts**

Verse 1

Jesus put this song into our hearts,

Jesus put this song into our hearts.

It's a song of joy no one can take away.

Jesus put this song into our hearts.

Verse 2

Jesus taught us how to live in harmony,
Jesus taught us how to live in harmony.
Different faces, different races, He made us one.
Jesus taught us how to live in harmony.

Verse 3

Jesus taught us how to be a family,
Jesus taught us how to be a family;
Loving one another with love that He gives;
Jesus taught us how to be a family.

Verse 4

Jesus turned our sorrow into dancing,
Jesus turned our sorrow into dancing,
Changed our tears of sadness into rivers of joy;
Jesus turned our sorrow into a dance.

La la la

Opening Prayer

Loving Lord, you offer salvation to the whole world
and you draw us together to be your family.
You call us to care for one another as sisters and brothers,
to bear each other's burdens
and especially to remember the migrant, the poor, the sick and the excluded.
Praise you Lord for your heart of inclusive love.

Righteous Lord, you challenge us
when we wander from truth and justice,
tolerate evil and ignore the sufferings of others.
You call us to build a world like heaven,
a world of integrity and compassion.
Praise you Lord for your vision of a fairer world.

Holy Lord, we confess that we fail to share your gospel in our words and deeds as thoroughly as we should. For these and all our sins, forgive us, for the sake of Jesus Christ who died for our salvation.

We receive your mercy once more, rejoicing to belong to you, and eager to share that belonging in our world. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

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.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.

Hymn (BPW 47) **Give to our God Immortal Praise**

Give to our God immortal praise;
Mercy and truth are all His ways.
Wonders of grace to God belong,
Repeat His mercies in your song.

Give to the Lord of lords renown,
The King of kings with glory crown.
His mercies ever shall endure,
When lords and kings are known no more.

He built the earth, He spread the sky,
And fixed the starry lights on high.
Wonders of grace to God belong,
Repeat His mercies in your song.

He fills the sun with morning light;
He bids the moon direct the night.
His mercies ever shall endure,
When suns and moons shall shine no more.

He sent His Son with power to save
From guilt, and darkness, and the grave.
Wonders of grace to God belong,
Repeat His mercies in your song.

All-age talk on *Harriet Tubman*, drawn from Little Leaders, by Vashti Harrison

ABOLITIONIST, NURSE, SCOUT, SPY

One of nine children, Harriet was born in the United States in around 1822. Her and her family were slaves and she was given the name Araminta Harriet Ross. Both her parents were West Africans, probably from the Ashanti warrior people. While many of her siblings were sold and traded to distant plantations, one good fortune Harriet managed was to remain with her parents throughout her youth. When she was fifteen, Harriet was accidentally hit in the head with an iron weight - it was actually being lobbed at another slave - and fell into a coma for three days. Her brain injury resulted in narcolepsy – a permanent disorder that caused her to fall asleep at random times. Fearing her slave owner would eventually discover her injury, she decided to run away to avoid the risk of being sold or traded.

After escaping from the Confederate South in 1849, Harriet could have stayed in the North (where slavery was outlawed). But knowing it was possible to escape, she wanted to return for her family and for anyone else she could rescue. Over eleven years she returned to the South thirteen times and led more than seventy men, women, and children to freedom and safety via the secret system called the Underground Railroad. Known as a 'conductor', she 'never lost a passenger' on her

journeys. Even though it was dangerous, she continually put her life at risk for others. Later, during the American Civil War, she served as an army nurse and went undercover as a spy for the North.

Harriet was always looking to help other people. What very little she had she gave away to others. She lived in poverty for most of her life and donated her time, money and property to those in need. She was a Christian lady, a member of the Methodist church and was sometimes called Moses.

In 2016 the US Treasury announced a historic proposal to change the \$20 bill: it would replace the face of President Andrew Jackson with Harriet, making her the first woman on the front of any American paper currency.

Harriet Tubman took action to stand up for the exploited. Our next song challenges us to do the same.

Song (WT 199) **I Will Speak Out**

I will speak out for those who have no voices;
I will stand up for the rights of all the oppressed
And I will speak truth and justice.
I'll defend the poor and the needy;
I will lift up the weak in Jesus' name.

I will speak out for those who have no choices,
I will cry out for those who live without love
And I will show God's compassion
To the crushed and broken in spirit.
I will lift up the weak in Jesus' name.

I will speak out for those who have no voices;
I will stand up for the rights of all the oppressed
And I will speak truth and justice.
I'll defend the poor and the needy;
I will lift up the weak in Jesus' name,
In Jesus' name, in Jesus' name, in Jesus' name.

Offering

Heavenly Father, we thank you for the gift of Jesus for the salvation of the world. May our simple gifts to church, charity and food banks be used to bring hope and liberation in our world. Amen.

Prayers of Intercession

Loving Lord, we pray for our world...

We pray for those who are sick.

For those on our prayer chain.

For those mentioned in our prayer book.

For those in our own hearts.

We hold them in your loving presence now.

May the gospel be shared in word and deed;

we offer ourselves in your service.

We pray today for all working in journalism...

in print media, on TV, radio and online.

May they speak truth to power

and be granted the liberty to work with integrity.

May readers, viewers and listeners of the news

be discerning and appropriately critical,

supporting the rights of free speech and challenging lies and hatred.

May the gospel be shared in word and deed;

we offer ourselves in your service.

We pray for all at work in the world of science...

For biologists, lab assistants, chemists, physicists, psychologists

and for all using rational experimentation and exploration and mathematics

to further the cause of truth.

Grant them integrity as they uncover the mysteries of the world you have made and grant us all wisdom as we consider how best to apply their discoveries in the world.

In particular, we pray for justice in the matter of the distributions of covid vaccines across the world.

May the gospel be shared in word and deed;
we offer ourselves in your service.

We pray for the charity sector in the UK,
thanking you for all who give skills, time and money
to benefit others and protect our environment.
Especially we pray for the work of food banks,
asking that the supplies may be met,
and for wisdom and grace
as they distribute food and other items.

May the gospel be shared in word and deed;
we offer ourselves in your service.

In conclusion, we pause and bring any other needs on our hearts this morning.

May the gospel be shared in word and deed;
we offer ourselves in your service.

And now we hear our Bible reading from Luke's gospel.

Bible Reading

Luke 4: 14 - 30

Jesus rejected at Nazareth

¹⁴ Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. ¹⁵ He was teaching in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

¹⁶ He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. He stood up to read, ¹⁷ and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

¹⁸ 'The Spirit of the Lord is on me,
because he has anointed me
to proclaim good news to the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners
and recovery of sight for the blind,
to set the oppressed free,
¹⁹ to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.'

²⁰ Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him. ²¹ He began by saying to them, 'Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.'

²² All spoke well of him and were amazed at the gracious words that came from his lips. 'Isn't this Joseph's son?' they asked.

²³ Jesus said to them, 'Surely you will quote this proverb to me: "Physician, heal yourself!" And you will tell me, "Do here in your home town what we have heard that you did in Capernaum."'

²⁴ 'Truly I tell you,' he continued, 'no prophet is accepted in his home town. ²⁵ I assure you that there were many widows in Israel in Elijah's time, when the sky was shut for three and a half years and there was a severe famine throughout the land. ²⁶ Yet Elijah was not sent to any of them, but to a widow in Zarephath in the region of Sidon. ²⁷ And there were many in Israel with leprosy in the time of Elisha the prophet, yet not one of them was cleansed – only Naaman the Syrian.'

²⁸ All the people in the synagogue were furious when they heard this. ²⁹ They got up, drove him out of the town, and took him to the brow of the hill on which the town was built, in order to throw him off the cliff. ³⁰ But he walked right through the crowd and went on his way.

Our next song commits us to bring Christ's peace into our world.

Hymn (BPW 634) **Make me a Channel of your Peace**

Make me a channel of your peace;
Where there is hatred, let me bring your love,
Where there is injury, your pardon, Lord,
And where there's doubt, true faith in you.

Chorus

*Oh Master, grant that I may never seek
So much to be consoled as to console,
To be understood, as to understand,
To be loved, as to love with all my soul.*

Make me a channel of your peace;
Where there's despair in life let me bring hope,
Where there is darkness, only light,
And where there's sadness, ever joy.

Chorus

Make me a channel of your peace.
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,
In giving to all men that we receive,
And in dying that we're born to eternal life.

I am delighted to introduce our speaker today: Gavin Kibble MBE, founder of Coventry Foodbank and Regional Operational Director of Feed the Hungry.

Foodbank Talk

Good morning. Many thanks for your generous invitation to come and share with you about the work of COVENTRY FOODBANK. I also want to thank you for supporting the work of Coventry Foodbank over the years. Honestly, we couldn't have done it without the amazing support of so many churches, businesses and individuals across the city.

My name is Gavin Kibble, I'm the founder of Coventry foodbank, and also one of the directors of Feed the Hungry but we'll come back to that relationship later on. It's great to be here and I share your heart for the lost, the least and the last.

I know we all want to transform our communities with God's love, and change people's lives by showing them His love in such a way that they are drawn to accept Him as their personal Saviour. I noticed from your website that you have been involved in a Hope for all Nations Village in Malawi. Malawi is one of the 28 or so

countries supported by the work of Feed the Hungry where nearly 38,000 children are supported on a daily basis by our feeding programmes.

COVENTRY FOODBANK is God's miracle for the city of Coventry. I founded the foodbank after I set up a Christians Against Poverty centre in Coventry. As I visited people in their homes and helped them resolve their financial issues I often found they had insufficient food in the cupboard. So in searching for a way to solve that problem, I connected with the Trussell Trust, and Coventry opened one of the first foodbanks in the West Midlands. In recognition of that and the huge mobilisation of food support during the pandemic, I was awarded an MBE in the 2021 Queen's Birthday honours list. Today Coventry Foodbank is one of the largest in the country, engaging the support of many churches and businesses and hundreds of volunteers.

I want to do three things today:

Firstly, let you know about COVENTRY FOODBANK and its impact over the last 10 years.

Secondly, I'd like to share a little of our plans and how that will impact communities like yours in the future.

And finally, I'd love to give you the opportunity today to personally get involved with this amazing charity. So let's ground the foodbank project in some scripture.

God's heart for the poor, Luke 4.

To place this scripture in context we're right at the start of Jesus' ministry. He's been baptised by John, spent 40 days in the wilderness, been tempted by the devil and now returned back to his hometown of Nazareth which was in the area of Galilee. He was building up quite a reputation as a teacher and so it's not hugely surprising that he was invited to read from Isaiah in his home synagogue. But, I imagine the transformation in someone known locally only as the son of a carpenter and who was attending a synagogue he had always attended whilst growing up. As people who knew him, they would already have an idea of his character, his background and education.

Luke 4 v 16 to 21: I'm just going to read this section of scripture from the NIV. This is the vision statement from Jesus at the start of his ministry - this is where we are going and what we are doing - if it's a vision statement from him, then it's an instruction and a massive mandate to us. It's also clear from the whole of this section that Jesus uses his invitation to speak in the synagogue in a hugely incendiary way – indeed, the result of his conversation made the people in the synagogue so angry that they drove him out of town - they were so furious they wanted to kill him by throwing him off a cliff.

In the context of this being his hometown, his people, people who knew him and he had been raised with, this seems a strange route to take. But I think there are clues here, I think Jesus is saying you thought you knew me, but you don't really and if you stick to your preconceptions of who you think I am then you'll never journey with me into who I am, and who you are to become. The moment we pigeon hole or limit God by our expectations or understanding of him or by our unwillingness to let him have control of our life and do with it what he wants, then we limit his ability to use us in the way that he wants to use us.

I've kind of been learning that over the last ten or eleven years and reflecting back - that seems to be the strong lesson that where I have tried to control or dictate where things are going God reminds me (sometimes quite sharply but still lovingly) who is in control but I think 210,000 people fed in 11 years and many people's lives changed is testament to what happens when you allow God to use you.

So....back to Luke and the quotation from Isaiah:

Jesus mandates us to help our brothers and sisters, and, in so doing to reflect the love of Christ to them. This is exactly what we do through our foodbank centres around the city.

“To proclaim good news to the poor”

Not only do we meet the clients' practical needs through our work, we also demonstrate that they have value and a hope for their future in Jesus Christ. Our foodbank centres are mainly based in churches around the city and it's that

partnership with local churches that is so important. You are uniquely positioned to reach your community and provide long term friendship, support and discipleship.

Story of the Nigerian Couple

Over the years the foodbank has provided the platform for churches to connect many people with Jesus Christ. Interestingly some of these people now work and volunteer for the foodbank! Tony, our logistics coordinator is a wonderful example of someone we connected with in the early days through foodbank; he decided he wanted to volunteer and came along to my church where he became a Christian, got baptised and then met and married a wonderful woman of faith. The Tony I know and work with today is not the same man I knew 10 years ago. That's the life-changing ability of the God I serve.

“He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners”

Most of our clients are trapped in a cycle of low income, debt and other issues. Their relationship with most statutory agencies is arms-length and very transactional. Our ethos has always been relational - an arm round the shoulder, a listening ear, a prayer offered if wanted. This is often the biggest need for people who are isolated and feel crushed by problems and this is made possible by the local church and people like you volunteering.

And “recovery of sight for the blind”

Research work carried out for the Trussell Trust by Heriot Watt University showed that 94% of people at foodbanks are destitute and almost three-quarters of people at foodbanks live in households affected by ill-health or disability. Mental health is a particular issue for foodbank users, made worse by the stress and anxiety of debt and financial issues. Over the years, not only through the foodbank but also through programmes established to deal with debt and welfare issues, Coventry Foodbank has successfully assisted people at their time of crisis.

I don't know about you but when I see a need and I can do something about it then I don't want to ignore that and pass by on the other side of the street; I would prefer to engage and do something.

COVENTRY FOODBANK Overview - The three areas

As I said earlier, I would like to tell you about COVENTRY FOODBANK's impact over the last 11 years, share a little of our plans for the future and how that will impact a community like yours, and finally, I'd love to give you the opportunity today to personally get involved with this amazing charity.

OUR HISTORY

Coventry foodbank's impact over the last 11 years has been profound - reshaping the landscape of emergency food provision in this city. And the church has been right at the centre of that. It would be tempting to give you some more statistics at this point but to be honest I'd rather tell you about a young single mum called Vicky who contacted the foodbank last year. She was in desperate need of help. Her events business had been forced to close due to the pandemic and overnight her livelihood had simply disappeared. Her business was based in the National Exhibition Centre which had closed to become one of the Nightingale Hospitals. Having exhausted all her avenues for support through her family and friends, she contacted us at the foodbank. We were able to provide her and her young family with the food and support she so needed. We signposted her to an advice service and they were able to help her with advice on her benefit entitlement and helped her deal with her outstanding debt. Once she had the support she needed she opened a cleaning business and now has got back on her feet.

OUR FUTURE

God has given us an amazing set of resources both in terms of people and facilities. In February 2021 we renamed our 25,000 square foot warehouse in Binley the "Halo Centre". We have redeveloped this to be a resource for the city as well as a distribution centre for sending shipping containers around the world to feed hundreds of thousands of children living in poverty. That work is carried out by our parent charity, Feed The Hungry UK.

Feed the Hungry is a Christian International Humanitarian Aid Charity that has programmes around the world in 28 countries feeding over 385,000 children on a daily basis. Now from Coventry we're sending shipping containers to Burkina Faso, Lebanon, and just before Christmas sent half a pallet of Lego out to an orphanage in

the Carpathian Mountains in Romania. Many churches and businesses around the country get involved with our Hand to Hand pick and pack programmes where you have the opportunity to pack thousands of basic rice and soya based meals that go directly to children in schools and orphanages around the world.

In this country it is pretty obvious to most of us that giving someone a parcel of food is just putting a sticking plaster on the problem - it might buy a family some time but the underlying issues around debt, loneliness, health, unemployment do not go away.

Coventry Foodbank has embarked upon a series of programmes designed to deal with the root causes of poverty. In its fantastic new training kitchen and training rooms it will upskill people for the job market. It is looking at partnership with local debt and welfare advice services to provide financial support and solutions. And it aims to do all of this whilst promoting and engaging the support of the local church, who often have their own outreach programmes.

In the next 3 months we'll start a community supermarket in Lillington and a rural mobile supermarket in North Warwickshire using a converted St John's mobile clinic.

THE ASK

As I said at the beginning, I want to give you all the opportunity to make a tangible difference to the lives of those in crisis in Coventry by supporting us. I am sure you would agree that everything we have is a gift from God - we are stewards of the time, the talent and the treasure that He has given to us.

Our vision over the next few years is:

to try and eliminate the need for a local foodbank by dealing with the issues that give rise to food poverty. This is not easily said because the implications for us as a charity in terms of the level of work needed is huge - that's why we need your support.

So our ask is:

Your time - come and volunteer at our warehouse or on one of our new projects.

Give regularly to support our work - can I ask you to consider giving regularly to the work of COVENTRY FOODBANK by becoming a "Life Giver" and join hundreds of others who support our work already. On average our "Life Givers" give around £20 per month. Every £10 that you give could enable Coventry Foodbank to provide £30 worth of food to a family in need. All you need to do is tick the box below your details on your "Life Giver" leaflet saying you want to make a monthly donation (forms are available at church). If you'd like to connect with our work or indeed donate then you can also do so through our websites:

- coventry.foodbank.org.uk for the work of Coventry foodbank
- feedthehungry.org.uk for the work of Feed the Hungry

On behalf of the thousands of people living in crisis in our own city that we will help through your generosity, thank you so much for what you're doing today, and allowing me to speak to you; it's been a privilege. And above all please remember us in your prayers.

Our closing hymn echoes the famous challenging words of Martin Luther King.

Hymn (BPW 625) **I Have A Dream**

"I have a dream", a man once said,
"where all is perfect peace;
where men and women, black and white,
stand hand in hand, and all unite
in freedom and in love."

But in this world of bitter strife
the dream can often fade;
reality seems dark as night,
we catch but glimpses of the light
Christ sheds on humankind.

Fierce persecution, war, and hate
are raging everywhere;
through struggles and through sacrifice
God's people pay the costly price
of standing for the right.

So dream your dreams and sing your songs,
but never be content:
for thoughts and words don't ease the pain:
unless there's action, all is vain;
faith proves itself in deeds.

Lord, give us vision, make us strong,
and help us to do your will;
nor let us rest until we see
your love throughout humanity
uniting us in peace.

The Grace

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ;
And the love of God;
And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit
Be with us all, evermore.
Amen

Sung Blessing

May the peace of the Lord Christ go with you
Wherever he may send you;
May he guide you through the wilderness;
Protect you through the storm;
May he bring you home rejoicing
At the wonders he has shown you;
May he bring you home rejoicing
Once again into our doors.