



## Harvest

### John 6:5-13 - feeding the 5000

Welcome to 'Together Apart', free intergenerational resources to help us be church together while we are apart. It's a little different this week as we look at some resources for Harvest celebrations. Some sections are different, and there's a drama!

All the sections explore the same Bible passage in a range of creative ways. Choose whichever parts work best for you, and remember that 'All Age' does not mean 'only for the kiddies'!

You can find lots more free resources like this at [www.reflectionary.org](http://www.reflectionary.org)

Here is what you will (usually) find in each resource pack:



#### A Word in Your Ear

A Bible passage that we can all learn from together, whatever our age.



#### Food for Thought

Aimed at adults and teens, some thoughts and questions on the passage. Occasionally there might even be some Greek or Hebrew!



#### Inner Space

A blank space for you to record what's in your head, whether that is worries, dreams or a shopping list.



#### Looking Closer

A creative and interactive look at the Bible passage. Great for older children and anyone who likes a creative approach.



#### I Wonder...

An imaginative style of Bible study, perfect for younger children and those who like to immerse themselves in the Bible world. Based on Lectio Divina and Godly Play wondering.



#### Take a Break

A chill-out zone, with meditative colouring for adults and children, and links to audio recordings of the passage so that you can listen while resting your eyes.



#### Creation Station

A craft for children (or young-at-heart adults!) to help us think about the passage. Glue sticks at the ready!



#### High 5

Some creative prayer ideas for helping us to spend time with God. Five minutes, or as long as you want.



## A Word in Your Ear

Take your time reading this extract from our Bible passage. Ask God to help you hear. You can decorate the space around the words if you like.

### John 6:5-13

When Jesus looked out and saw that a large crowd had arrived, he said to Philip, "Where can we buy bread to feed these people?" He said this to stretch Philip's faith.

He already knew what he was going to do.

Philip answered, "Two hundred silver pieces wouldn't be enough to buy bread for each person to get a piece."

One of the disciples—it was Andrew, brother to Simon Peter—said, "There's a little boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But that's a drop in the bucket for a crowd like this."

Jesus said, "Make the people sit down." There was a nice carpet of green grass in this place. They sat down, about five thousand of them. Then Jesus took the bread and, having given thanks, gave it to those who were seated. He did the same with the fish. All ate as much as they wanted.

When the people had eaten their fill, he said to his disciples, "Gather the leftovers so nothing is wasted." They went to work and filled twelve large baskets with



## Food for Thought

Jesus' teaching is quite inconvenient in many ways. It would have been really helpful if he had been explicit on the exact meaning of that meal with bread and wine, for example. Some clear instruction on how to organise churches would have quelled a lot of argument over the centuries. And I'm not even going to mention the role of women, spiritual gifts or who is in charge of the flower rota – many a braver soul than me has perished in the flame wars that surround such topics!

There are a lot of matters upon which Jesus was unhelpfully silent, but social justice is not one of them. Jesus lived in a world where the Old Testament formed their social code and their law book, and the Old Testament is pretty hot on looking after those who are going through hard times. 'Look after the widows and orphans' is one of its oft-repeated phrases, all the way from Exodus ("Do not take advantage of the widow or the fatherless." Ex 22:22) through to Malachi (God is against those "who oppress the widows and the fatherless" Mal 3:5).

**Q: Why do you think God is so concerned with the plight of widows and orphans? Who would be the equivalent today?**

I've only quoted a section of Malachi 3:5. Check out the rest of that verse, and the whole chapter. God spells out quite clearly how he expects his people to behave, and most of it is to do with social justice.

Social justice is at the heart of not only how God's people should be, but who God is himself. In Deuteronomy 10:18 we hear God describes as one who "defends the cause of the fatherless and the widow, and loves the foreigner residing among you, giving them food and clothing." God *himself* is giving food and clothing to the foreigners, and standing up for the rights of the oppressed.

**Q: How exactly could God do that? Does it remind you of some of Jesus's teaching in the New Testament? Why do you think this is so important?**

This Harvest, we can thank God for all that he gives us – food, clothing, freedom, education, clean water, and so on. But we must also make sure that we are being good stewards of all that God has placed in our care. The good things of God's world are not being shared out equally. Not everyone gets an equal slice of the pizza.

This is nothing new. It happened all the way through the Bible, and Jesus remarked upon it. "You will always have the poor with you", he said (Matt 26:11), but he challenged the common assumption that poverty was a sign of God's disfavour (Mark 12:42-43). He specifically instructed that his followers should be generous in giving to those in need, and not discriminate against them.

**Q: There will always be unequal distribution of resources, but does this mean we should accept it or do something to fight against it? What practical steps can you, your household, your church, your community take?**



## Inner Space

What's going round your head? Here is a space for you to put your thoughts on paper. You can write, draw ... whatever you like. What will you put here?



# Script! How Feeding the 5000 *Really* Happened

A Covid-safe drama based (very loosely) on John 6:1-13

You can either get everyone together in a real zoom meeting (try to have Jesus in the middle of the screen) and record the session, or people can pre-record their parts individually and you can edit the clips together. You can have the clips one after another, or (if you are clever like that), use a screen mosaic app to make it look like a zoom screen.

If you are meeting in person, you can have the cast suitably distanced around the room.

## Cast

- |          |                       |           |                        |
|----------|-----------------------|-----------|------------------------|
| • Jesus  | centre stage / screen | • Matthew | snacks and calculator  |
| • Andrew | 'ding dong' sound     | • Peter   | large armful of snacks |
| • Luke   | snacks                | • Philip  |                        |
| • James  | snacks                | • Thomas  |                        |
| • John   | phone                 |           |                        |

## Script

Jesus [enters] Any one here yet? Andrew?

Andr [enters] Here boss.

Jesus Where's your brother?

Andr Peter? Oh, he'll be along soon. He's just getting some snacks.

James [enters] Did someone say snacks? That's a great idea. Back in a minute. [exits and re-enters shortly]

John [enters] Get some for me while you're there.

Jesus James and John – honestly do you two ever stop eating? What about Matthew and Luke?

Matt [enters] Yup. Got my snacks right here!

Luke [enters] Me too. Hi JC. Hi everyone.

Phil [enters] Oh, were we supposed to bring snacks?

Jesus Hi Phillip, good to see you.

Thom [enters very close to camera] Ummm, hello? Hello?

Jesus Hi Thomas.

Thom I'm not sure I'm doing this right. Can you see me OK?

Jesus Yes, you're fine. Maybe back just a little. Great.

Who's still missing? Oh yes, Peter. Are you there, Peter? We can't see you.

Peter [enters with large armful of snacks, mouthing silently] Sorry I'm late. I was just getting some snacks

Luke Peter, you're on mute.

## Together, Apart – Harvest – page 2

Peter [mouthing emphatically] Sorry I'm late. I was just getting some snacks

James Turn your mic on, Peter.

Peter [mouthing and miming wildly] Sorry I'm late. I was just getting some snacks

Matt Peter, we can't hear you. Click the button at the bottom of the screen.

Peter Can you hear me now? Sorry I'm late. I was just getting some ...

All ... snacks! We know!

[all settle down, adjust lighting, screens etc]

Jesus OK. Is everyone settled?

Phil Er, Jesus?

Jesus Yes Philip, what can I do for you?

Phil Well, snacks are nice and all, but it's getting late. Shouldn't we be having a proper meal?

Jesus That's a great idea Philip. What do you think we should have?

Phil How about pizza?

All Oh yes! / Great idea! / I'm in. / Sure, why not?

Matt Pizza! Good suggestion. [uses calculator] We can easily divide that between us, with equivalent fractions for each. I can calculate the right angle and find the area and circumference, then divide by pi to get ...

Luke Pie? I thought we were having pizza?

Matt Not that sort of pie. Pi, like with circles. Three and a bit, you know?

Luke Oh yeah. [under breath] Huh, mathematicians.

Matt I calculate that five large pizzas will feed us all amply. Who's going to order?

John Hold on! We haven't decided on the toppings yet. I like Hawaiian.

James Hawaiian? No chance. You're not getting me in a grass skirt!

Andr Eeew! I don't need that picture in my head!

John OK, OK. Not Hawaiian. How about pepperoni?

All Oh yes / I like pepperoni / sounds good to me / that's fine

Thom Umm, I'm not sure about pepperoni.

John What's the problem, Thomas?

Thom Well, it's ... er ... just that we're Jewish, right?

John Yes, and?

Thom And pepperoni is made with pork.

John Ah, right. Good point. Not pepperoni then. We could have that one with olives and anchovies – very Biblical!

Jesus Sorry. I know my dad said all creation was good, but I don't think he meant to include anchovies in that.

Peter What about meat feast? We can ask them to hold the pepperoni.

Matt I'm vegetarian.

Peter OK, no meat. Roasted Mediterranean vegetables?

Phil I'm meatitarian.

Peter What? Is that even a thing? OK, so no meat topping, no veggie topping. Plain Margarita then. Just cheese and tomato. Everyone OK with that?

Andr I can't have cheese. It's the lactose. Brings me out in a rash all over my ...

Peter We don't need to know thank you, Andrew.

OK, OK. Not Hawaiian, no pork, no anchovies, no meat, no veg, no cheese. That leaves us with ... bread and tomato.

John Would this be a bad time to remind you that I'm gluten-intolerant?

Peter *[losing it slightly]* We'll get the special crust. With just tomatoes on it. Everyone happy?

Luke Ahem.

Peter *[glaring]* What?

Luke I hate to point it out, but ...

Peter But you're going to anyway.

Luke Tomatoes don't grow round here. Not yet. They come from South America, and won't cross the Atlantic until the mid 1500s. And our pizza will definitely be cold by then.

James Soooooo, no tomatoes either?

Luke Sorry.

Andr *[bing bong]* Ooh, that'll be my home delivery, back in a minute. *[exits]*

James So all we can agree on is plain bread? Sometimes you lot really stretch the 'love your neighbour' thing. John, order five bread. And some cola.

All I like cherry cola / can we have sugar free / what brand is it? / I'd rather have tango

James Don't start!

*[awkward silence while John places order on phone]*

Andr *[enters]* Sorry about that. Just having some fish delivered for tonight's supper. Couple of nice haddock. Would go nicely with some bread, don't you think?

*[everyone looks at Andrew, nodding and licking lips]*

Andr What?

Thom Umm, Jesus?

Jesus Yes, Thomas?

Thom I don't know if you've noticed, but there's quite a lot of people in the waiting room wanting to join our meeting. About 5000 of them. I think they heard about the pizza.

Phil What? How would we feed so many with only five bread and two fish? There's nowhere near enough for all those people! What are we going to do?

Jesus Leave it with me, lads. Leave it with me.



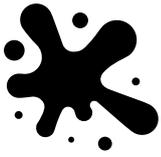
## I Wonder...

Read or listen to the passage a few times and let it sit in your mind.

Which words, phrases or ideas do you notice? Does anything stand out for you? Hold that in your heart and listen to what God might be saying.

**I wonder what you like and don't like in the story.**

**I wonder what happened after the story finished.**



## Creation Station – Magical Pizza Plate!

Make this fabulous disappearing-reappearing pizza plat, and watch as your pizza magically grows and shrinks! Brilliant for thinking about fractions and fair shares, this is fun maths as well as a great craft!

### You will need:

- Two paper plates
- Scissors
- Black permanent marker
- Paints or colouring pens

### What to Do

1. Use the black permanent marker to draw a wavy line around the edge of one plate. This is for the edge of the tomato sauce.
2. Then draw some big circles, small circles and squares in the middle, for pepperoni and ham (or whatever other toppings you prefer).
3. Use paints or pens to fill in the shapes and colour the space between with red tomato sauce and yellow cheese. Remember to do the crust as well!
4. Find the centre of the plate (you can do this by measuring sideways and upwards) and mark it with a dot. Cut a straight line from the edge to the centre. Do this on the plain plate as well.
5. Put the plates on top of each other with the cuts aligned. Push the bottom plate up a little at the join so that it overlaps the top plate.
6. Now when you swivel the plates around, the pizza slice will get bigger and smaller on the plate! Amazing!





## High 5

Spend five minutes talking and listening with God. Here is one way:

### Pizza Prayers

We can use the toppings on a pizza to think about who to pray for. You could:

- Use your pizza craft from the previous page. Write the names of people or situations on the toppings you have drawn, then as you gradually reveal the pizza, pray for whoever appears.
- Make a giant pizza from card and use coloured paper to make the different toppings. Add the name of a person or situation on the front and put a little blue tack on the back, then stick the toppings on the pizza as you pray for them. This works really well in church or children's / youth group.
- Fill in the pizza below with your favourite toppings, adding the names of people or situations you want to pray for as you go. Colour one in every time you pray for them.

