

Sunday 2nd August 2020

Readings - Psalm 145.8-9,14-21; Matthew 14.13-21

Call to Worship: Friends, we gather this day to celebrate life – the life we have been given by God, the life we share with one another in community, the life that Jesus gives in abundance. Let us be grateful for the joy of life. Let us worship God. Amen.

MP929

1 Sing to the Lord a joyful song,
lift up your hearts, your voices raise;
to us his gracious gifts belong
to him our songs of love and praise.

2 For life and love, for rest and food,
for daily help and nightly care,
sing to the Lord, for he is good,
and praise his name, for it is fair.

3 For strength to those who on him wait
his truth to prove, his will to do,
sing to our God, for he is great,
trust in his name, for it is true.

4 For joys untold, that from above
cheer those who love his sweet employ,
sing to our God, for he is love;
exalt his name, for it is joy.

5 Sing to the Lord of heaven and earth,
whom angels serve and saints adore,
the Father, Son, and Spirit blest,
to whom be praise for evermore. Amen.

Prayer and Lord's Prayer.

Gracious God and Father, we gather to worship you, to celebrate your faithfulness and the richness of your promise to us. We come as your people, in response to your call. You have invited us to be here, to share your blessing and the abundance of your grace. We bring all that we are, all that the past has made us and all that the future promises us. In this time together, help us to be present to you as you are present to us. Give us time and space to remember and to reflect, to rejoice and to be renewed in the service of Jesus Christ our Lord, Extravagant God, you offer us so much, and yet often we treat your gifts selfishly or lightly. Forgive us when we chase after worthless trivia or do not value the riches of your gospel. Forgive us when we cling tightly to what we have and do not share it with others. Forgive us when we are anxious and afraid, and do not trust you to meet our needs. Faithful God, forgive us. Help us to value what you offer, to share it freely with others, and to live in joyful risk for your kingdom. Lord God of compassion and boundless blessings, we are full of amazement that you care so greatly for the needs of your people. We worship and adore you for your generosity, your love, and your power. Lord's Prayer.

MP201 Guide Me O Thou Great Jehovah

1 Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah,
 Pilgrim thro' this barren land;
 I am weak, but Thou art mighty,
 Hold me with Thy powerful hand
 Bread of heaven,
 Feed me till I want no more;
 Bread of heaven,
 Feed me till I want no more.

2 Open thou the crystal fountain,
 Whence the healing waters flow;
 Let the fiery, cloudy pillar,
 Lead me all my journey thro';
 Strong Deliv'rer,
 Be Thou still my Strength and Shield,
 Strong Deliv'rer,
 Be Thou still my Strength and Shield

3 When I tread the verge of Jordan,
 Bid my anxious fears subside;
 death of death, and Hell's destruction,
 Land me safe on Canaan's side:
 Songs of praises
 I will ever give to Thee,
 Songs of praises
 I will ever give to Thee.

All Age

Did you know Jesus can, if we ask him through faith, help us to grow in many ways? The parable today tells us just one of the ways he showed the disciples and the people who had gathered how he could do just that.

Today I have a loaf of bread. It is already cut into slices for me at the bakery. but when it is first made it is a whole loaf and if you want, it can just be broken into smaller pieces to be handed out just like we do at communion.

Today's message from the Gospel of Matthew tells us of the time when Jesus fed over five thousand people with only five loaves of bread and two fishes. Jesus was sad his friends had told him that King Herod had killed his friend John the Baptist. He was pretty upset when his friends came to tell him that John the Baptist had been killed by King Herod. Jesus wanted to just go away to a quiet place and grieve for his loss, but the crowds had come to hear and be healed by him. It was hard for him to get some time to himself.

It was getting dark, so his disciples came to him and asked him to send the people back home because they wouldn't have enough food to feed them if they spent the night there. Then Jesus gave the disciples a challenge. He said, "**They do not need to go away; you give them something to eat.**". The disciples must have been wondering how they were going to do that with five loaves of bread and two fishes.

Jesus sometimes tells us to do impossible things so that we will rely on Him to help us. What happened next? He told them to bring what they had to Him so he could ask God to bless it. Jesus

always said the blessing before he ate. Do you say a blessing or grace as we know it before you eat? When we thank God before a meal, we are remembering how he is our provider for life itself.

The disciples would never have been able to do it on their own but they turned to Jesus and asked him to help, Jesus took what they gave in faith and multiplied it many times. It was an amazing miracle. He, through faith, fed five thousand men besides women and children. In fact, they had twelve baskets full of leftovers! Just think how God could help us when we turn to him in faith and prayer. Amen.

MP825 Faithful One So Unchanging.

Faithful one, so unchanging,

ageless one, your my rock of peace

Lord of all I depend on you

I call out to you, again and again

I call out to you, again and again

You are my rock in times of trouble

You lift me up when I fall down

All through the storm Your love is, the anchor

My hope is in You alone

Psalm 145 8 - 9 14-21

LORD is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and rich in love. ⁹The LORD is good to all; he has compassion on all he has made. The LORD upholds all who fall and lifts up all who are bowed down. The eyes of all look to you, and you give them their food at the proper time. You open your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing. The LORD is righteous in all his ways and faithful in all he does. The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth. He fulfils the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry and saves them. The LORD watches over all who love him, but all the wicked he will destroy. My mouth will speak in praise of the LORD. Let every creature praise his holy name for ever and ever.

Prayers of Intercession:

Lord, today, we pray for people who have little or nothing: for those who feel trapped in their situation, and can't see the bigger picture or even any tiny glimmer of light. We pray for people who are hungry: for parents who struggle to feed their children, and themselves. We thank you for the work of food banks and pray that they would have the resources to continue to meet so many needs. We pray that you would give us an appreciation of our food: the work that goes into producing and distributing it. Teach us not to be wasteful, but to preserve and pass on the goodness of your earth. Father God, help us be reliable and honest in what we do and friendly to all we meet in our daily lives. Help us

always to give our best, to work to our fullest and never be ashamed to confess your name. In our leisure time, help us to play hard, but to play fair. Help us to win without boasting and to lose graciously without making excuses. Gracious God, we pray for the ill, the lonely and distressed, especially those tormented by mental illness. We pray for healing and wholeness in their lives and we pray for ourselves. Help us to bring life and love, joy and hope to those who live in despair. **Amen.**

MP485 Dear Lord and Father of Mankind

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
 forgive our foolish ways!
 Re-clothe us in our rightful mind,
 in purer lives thy service find,
 in deeper reverence, praise;
 in deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard,
 beside the Syrian sea,
 the gracious calling of the Lord,
 let us, like them, without a word,
 rise up and follow thee;
 rise up and follow thee.

O Sabbath rest by Galilee.
 O calm of hills above,
 where Jesus knelt to share with thee
 the silence of eternity
 interpreted by love!
 interpreted by love!

Drop thy still dews of quietness,
 till all our strivings cease;
 take from our souls the strain and stress,
 and let our ordered lives
 confess the beauty of thy peace;
 the beauty of thy peace.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
 thy coolness and thy balm;
 let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
 speak through the earthquake,
 wind, and fire,
 O still, small voice of calm;
 O still, small voice of calm.

Mathew 14 - 13-21: Now when Jesus heard of the death of John the Baptist, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a deserted place and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves." Jesus said to them, "They need not go away. You give them something to eat." They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." And he said, "Bring them here to me." Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the

disciples gave them to the crowds. And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

Sermon analogy for the word Generous

Generous

Giver of

Everlasting love,

Near to us, though

Eternity cannot hold you;

Receive us by your grace

Our heavenly Father –

Under the protection of your love is where we long to

Stay.

A young boy travelling by aeroplane to visit his grandparents sat beside a man who was a professor of theology. The boy was reading a Sunday school booklet he had been given and the professor thought he would have some fun with the lad. "Young man," said the professor, "if you can tell me something God can do, I will give you a big, shiny apple." The boy thought for a moment and then replied, "Mister, if you can tell me something God can't do, I'll give you a whole barrel of apples!"

We are bombarded on a daily basis by the events happening in the world - images which tear at our hearts, so many people starving either through war or drought. The news sometimes is so depressing, but it also makes us very aware of the need that is out there, not just abroad but here at home also. We must help where and when we can, if not financially, then it is important for us to pray and ask God for support for us so we may have the necessary words for prayer to help all who are in need.

For us, it is worth remembering the parable of the Jesus feeding the 5000 in the passage we have just read, especially in the cynical world around us. The disciples, like ourselves, could see the needs of the people around them and naturally turned to Jesus and told him that the people who had gathered were getting hungry and that they were worried and concerned about them. They suggested to Jesus that he should send them away to the surrounding villages to buy food for themselves. It was just a useful and sensible way to go about the problem of the hungry people just as we should turn to Jesus with our worries and cares. Jesus did not tell them off for suggesting what he should do. Instead he told the disciples that they should cater for the crowd. Can you just imagine the chaos that was running through their heads at what Jesus told them to do?

Just like the church, sometimes we are so inundated with the cares of the world that we also find it difficult to discern the ways and means to help out others who are hungry and in need of our help. The chaos that ensues is when we have to seriously pray for guidance, but, like the disciples, we cannot sit back and do nothing. We have a responsibility as Christians to use what we have responsibly for all around us. When we trust in Jesus and ask for the blessings, we will find the resources that are needed. As in the song 'Love is something if you give it away it ends being more'

as did the disciples find. When they broke the bread after it had been blessed there was more than was needed - enough for everyone and themselves with 12 baskets left over. By trusting in Jesus and having faith we will receive enough and more with some left over. The disciples, by acting in faith, found that they not only had enough but they had an abundance for themselves. "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly" (John 10:10).

There is no doubt that the needs of the world are overwhelming. It is very normal for one congregation to feel at a loss and feel that they will not be able to make a big difference. Yet, in faith, a congregation can answer to the need in trust that when they are joined by Christians all across the world, there will be ample with baskets left over. When the disciples gave what they had to Jesus, and Jesus blessed it and returned it to the disciples they had to decide what to do with it. When they did give what they had in response to the hunger of the crowd (or the world), not only did they have enough but there was extra left over.

By doing all this, it not only blesses the needy but Christ feeds the church is also blessed. We have the Good News of God's blessings. Can we encourage others to come and be blessed with the same Good News? Perhaps the world will then fully know God's love and compassion.

It was mealtime during a trip on a small airline. The flight attendant came to one passenger and asked, "Would you like dinner?" The passenger responded, "What are my choices?" The flight attendant responded, "Yes or no." Decisions are part of everyday life but they are not always so cut and dried or simple; there is a need to wrestle with them. In each case, however, the choice boils down to a basic question, "Do you choose God or the world?" Amen.

MP1008 The Lord's My Shepherd.

The Lord's my shepherd, I'll not want;
He makes me lie in pastures green.
He leads me by the still, still waters,
His goodness restores my soul.

Chorus: And I will trust in You alone
And I will trust in You alone,
For Your endless mercy follows me,
Your goodness will lead me home.

He guides my ways in righteousness,
And He anoints my head with oil,
And my cup, it overflows with joy,
I feast on His pure delights.

Chorus

And though I walk the darkest path,
I will not fear the evil one,
For You are with me,
and Your rod and staff
Are the comfort I need to know.

Chorus

Benediction:

Go out into the world rejoicing in God's generous love; and may you be fed by the living God who makes, feeds and sustains the world. And the Blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost be among you and remain with you now and evermore. Amen