

Worship
The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost
August 2, 2020

Introduction

In today's first reading God invites all who are hungry or thirsty to receive food and drink without cost. Jesus feeds the hungry multitude and reveals the abundance of God. At the eucharistic table we remember all who are hungry or poor in our world today. As we share the bread of life, we are sent forth to give ourselves away as bread for the hungry.

Gathering/Announcements

P. = Pastor

W. = Worship Assistant

A. = All in attendance

Prelude: "Prelude in C Major" [BWV 553]

Johann Sebastian Bach

Brief Order for Confession and Forgiveness

P. In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

A. Amen.

Confession and Forgiveness

P. Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A. Amen.

P. Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

P. Most merciful God,

A. we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

P. In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

A. Amen.

Opening Hymn: # 858 "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" *Lobe Den Herren*

1. Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul praise him, for he is your health and salvation!
Let all who hear now to his temple draw near,
Joining in glad adoration!
4. Praise to the Lord! Oh, let all that is in me adore him!
All that has life and breath, come now with praises before him!
Let the amen sound from his people again.
Gladly for ever adore him!

Kyrie (said)

W. In peace, let us pray to the Lord.

A. Lord, have mercy.

W. For the peace from above, and for our salvation, let us pray to the Lord.

A. Lord, have mercy.

W. For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the Church of God, and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.

A. Lord, have mercy.

W. For this holy house, and for all who offer here their worship and praise, let us pray to the Lord.

A. Lord, have mercy.

W. Help, save, comfort, and defend us, gracious Lord.

A. Amen.

Canticle of Praise (said)

W. Glory be to God in heaven; peace, goodwill to all the earth.

A. Mighty God of all creation, Father of surpassing worth:
we exalt you, we adore you, we lift high our thanks and praise.

Saints and angels bow before you; here on earth our songs we raise.
Glory be to Christ forever, Lamb of God and Lord of love.

Son of God and gracious Savior, you have come from heav'n above;
on the cross you died to save us; now you reign at God's right hand.
Hear our prayer; restore, forgive us; in your promise firm we stand.

Holy One we now acclaim you; Lord alone, to you we call;
Holy One in faith we name you, God most high, yet near to all:
Jesus Christ, with God the Spirit, in the Father's splendor bright.
For the peace that we inherit, glory be to God on high!

Prayer of the Day

- P.** Glorious God, your generosity waters the world with goodness, and you cover creation with abundance. Awaken in us a hunger for the food that satisfies both body and spirit, and with this food fill all the starving world; through your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.
- A. Amen.**

First Reading: Isaiah 55:1-5

God invites Israel to a great feast at which both food and drink are free. God also promises to make an everlasting covenant with all peoples, with promises that previously had been limited to Israel. As David was a witness to the nations, these nations shall now acknowledge the ways in which God has glorified Israel.

- W.** ¹Ho, everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and you that have no money,
come, buy and eat!
Come, buy wine and milk
without money and without price.
- ²Why do you spend your money for that which is not bread,
and your labor for that which does not satisfy?
Listen carefully to me, and eat what is good,
and delight yourselves in rich food.
- ³Incline your ear, and come to me;
listen, so that you may live.
I will make with you an everlasting covenant,
my steadfast, sure love for David.
- ⁴See, I made him a witness to the peoples,
a leader and commander for the peoples.
- ⁵See, you shall call nations that you do not know,
and nations that do not know you shall run to you,
because of the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel,
for he has glorified you.

- W.** The Word of the Lord:
A. Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21

- W.** ⁸The LORD is gracious and full | of compassion,
slow to anger and abounding in | steadfast love.
- A.** ⁹**LORD, you are | good to all,
and your compassion is over | all your works.**
- W.** ¹⁴The Lord upholds all | those who fall
and lifts up those who | are bowed down.
- A.** ¹⁵**The eyes of all wait upon | you, O LORD,
and you give them their food | in due season.**
- W.** ¹⁶You open | wide your hand
and satisfy the desire of every | living thing.
- A.** ¹⁷**You are righteous in | all your ways
and loving in | all your works.**
- W.** ¹⁸You are near to all who | call upon you,
to all who call up- | on you faithfully.
- A.** ¹⁹**You fulfill the desire of | those who fear you;
you hear their | cry and save them.**
- W.** ²⁰You watch over all | those who love you,
but all the wicked you | shall destroy.
- A.** ²¹**My mouth shall speak the praise | of the LORD;
let all flesh bless God's holy name forev- | er and ever.**

Second Reading: Romans 9:1-5

This begins a new section in Paul's letter in which he will deal with the place of Israel in God's saving plan. He opens by highlighting how Israel's heritage and legacy include being God's children, having God's covenants, being given God's law, participating in worship of God, and receiving divine promises.

- W.** ¹I am speaking the truth in Christ—I am not lying; my conscience confirms it by the Holy Spirit—²I have great sorrow and unceasing anguish in my heart. ³For I could wish that I myself were accursed and cut off from Christ for the sake of my own people, my kindred according to the flesh. ⁴They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises; ⁵to them belong the patriarchs, and from them, according to the flesh, comes the Messiah, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen.

- W.** The Word of the Lord:
A. Thanks be to God.

Gospel Acclamation

Alleluia. One does not live by | bread alone,* but by every word that comes from the | mouth of God. *Alleluia.* (Matt. 4:4)

The Gospel

P. The holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 14th chapter.

A. Glory to you, O Lord.

Gospel: Matthew 14:13-21

After John the Baptist is murdered, Jesus desires a time of solitude. Still, his compassion for others will not allow him to dismiss those who need him, and he is moved to perform one of his greatest miracles.

P. ¹³Now when Jesus heard [about the beheading 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. ¹⁴When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. ¹⁵When 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." ¹

⁶Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." ¹⁷They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." ¹⁸And he said, "Bring them here to me." ¹⁹Then 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. ²⁰And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. ²¹And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

P. The Gospel of the Lord:

A. Praise to you, O Christ.

The Sermon:

"Compassion"

Pastor Walter Harms says that in his early years at the seminary, he worked for an upscale catering company. He says this company once served 3,000 people at an evening dinner. The meal included shrimp, sliced turkey, filet, rich meat spaghetti, salad, bread, and brownies.

He noted that it was a monumental task as you can imagine. It took a full week to prepare 1,000 pounds of shrimp, 70 turkeys, 35 electric roasters of spaghetti, 700 pounds of fillet, dozens of 3 by 5 feet sheets of brownies, and many large baby-bathtubs of salad!

Can you imagine such an operation - serving a meal to three thousand people? Now imagine feeding more than five thousand people. Quite an undertaking, and it had to be done right away! They didn't have a week to prepare. It is not often easy to satisfy the needs of oneself or those of others.

Yes, it is the feeding of the 5000 that we have in our Gospel lesson for today. We are here told that a large crowd of about 5,000 people followed Christ out into the wilderness where He proceeded to heal them and to teach them about the kingdom of God.

Time seemed to stand still when these folks were in the presence of Christ . . . So that all of a sudden it was late afternoon, every person in the crowd was probably hungry, and the nearest inns were miles away.

To meet this need, we are told that the disciples of Christ were able to come up with only five small loaves of bread and two small fish, by no means enough to satisfy the hunger of a crowd so large.

But Christ took the little that he was given, blessed it, ordered it distributed to the crowd, and the Bible says, "They all ate and were satisfied. . ."

I am reminded of the story of the young minister who once stood up to preach his very first sermon on our gospel lesson for today. As he stood in the pulpit of this small rural church, he was o-o-o so nervous.

With his voice quivering and unsteady, he said, "And the Master fed the multitude with 5000 loaves and 2000 fish. An old timer sitting in the front row chuckled and challenged, "Shoot, I could do that!"

The next Sunday, the rookie pastor tried again. "Last Sunday," he said, "I meant to say that the Master fed 5000 people with five loaves and two fish."

With that, he returned the challenge from the front row and asked the elderly gentleman, "Now tell me . . . could you do that?" The man grinned and said, "I could do it if you let me use all the leftovers we had from last week!"

You know: the miracle of the Feeding of the 5000 is Christ's only miracle that is recorded in all four Gospel narratives. That miracle stood out in the hearts and the minds of all four Gospel writers! Yes, it is truly a great and wonderful miracle - and I don't have the slightest idea how Christ did it.

But I know why he did it: because he cared about the hunger and needs of the people and wanted to meet those needs. And I know what the miracle says and means for us today.

It says that Christ still cares about his creation and that he can satisfy the hungers and cravings and longings in all of us. Jesus Christ is the only true source of genuine, long-lasting satisfaction. You cannot find ultimate satisfaction in your living outside of a relationship with Jesus Christ, the Son of God and the Savior of the world.

Oprah Winfrey once said, "God did not create me to own a couple of BMWs and a television studio! Indeed that was not the reason that God created us.

Abraham Lincoln used to like telling the story about a blacksmith who heated a piece of iron in a forge and made a horseshoe out of it. Thinking of something else to make out of it, he started hammering it that way. Changing his mind again, he began to hammer another form out of it.

When at last he had hammered it in so many different ways that it was no longer good for anything, the blacksmith held it up in his tongs, looked at it in disgust and hurled it hissing into a tub of water.

As he did so, he grunted and said, "At least I can make a fizzle out of it." And that is what so many people are doing with life . . . making a fizzle out of it . . . That is, following one dead-end path after another in their search for satisfaction in their lives.

Listen to these words of Christ from the Gospel of John: "I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry, and he who believes in me will never be thirsty." Yes, Jesus Christ is the one and only true source for ultimate satisfaction in this life.

Christ said that any person who would come to Him, any person who would surrender his life to Him would be satisfied forever. Christ said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to God except through me."

Genuine, long-lasting satisfaction in life comes only to those who choose to serve God and others in the name of Jesus Christ.

Remember the story of the day? Christ and his disciples discover that the crowd is hungry and without food. A little boy comes forward and offers his five small loaves of bread and two fish to Jesus. It is such a small offering to meet the needs of so large a crowd. But look at what happens next.

Christ takes the little the lad offered, blesses it, and feeds the multitudes. When turned over to Christ, the boy's little becomes plenty and 5,000 people are fed.

Reflecting on the events of that day, don't you think that Christ was trying to teach his disciples and us something significant. Christ was calling for his followers - including you and me - to serve and to give. Christ was teaching them - and us - that a life of satisfaction will always include service to God and to others.

Do you feel satisfied in your life? Does your life overflow in service to God and to others? It does seem that the two go together. Amen.

The peace of God that passes all human understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Hymn of the Day # 676

"Lord, Speak to Us"

Canonbury

1. Lord, speak to us, that we may speak
In living echoes of your tone;
As you have sought, so let us seek
Your straying children, lost and lone.

4. Oh, fill us with your fullness, Lord,
Until our very hearts o'erflow
In kindling thought and glowing word,
Your love to tell, your praise to show.

The Apostles' Creed

P. Let us now confess our faith with the words of the Apostles' Creed.

**A. I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended into hell,**

**On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church, the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

Installation of Members of the Congregation Council

The following persons have been elected as member of the Congregation Council:

Jane Dollhopf
James Kiefer

Jean King

Linda Ryan
Betty Weller

Prayers of Intercession

W. Confident of your care and helped by the Holy Spirit, we pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.

A brief silence.

W. You take resources that appear to be meager, bless them, and there is enough. May your church trust that what you bless and ask us to share with the world is abundantly sufficient. Lord, in your mercy,

A. hear our prayer.

W. Your bountiful creation offers sustenance and life for all creatures. Protect this abundance for the well-being of all. Reverse the damage we have caused your creation. Replenish ground water supplies, provide needed rains in places of drought, and protect forests from wildfires. Lord, in your mercy,

A. hear our prayer.

W. You offer yourself to all the nations and peoples of the earth, inviting everyone to abundant life. Bring the prophetic vision to fullness, that all nations will run to you and that nations who do not know you will find their joy in you. Lord, in your mercy,

A. hear our prayer.

W. We especially pray this day for all members of our Congregation Council. We are grateful for their willingness to serve You and this congregation in this special way. We ask that you guide and direct their hearts and their minds as they give leadership to the ministry and service of this congregation. Grant them joy and a spirit of bold trust in You as they fulfill the responsibilities that they have accepted. Lord, in your mercy,

A. hear our prayer.

W. You open your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. Hear the anguish of tender hearts who cry to you in suffering and satisfy their deepest needs. Bring wholeness and healing to those who suffer in body, heart, soul, and mind *especially the family of Pastor and Mrs. James Dollhopf, Pastor Cyril Hurnyak, Pat Brick, Merlinda Bisese, Denise and Pat Wylie, Kenneth Shoemaker, and Carol Miller, those suffering from the coronavirus, and those whom we now name in our hearts before You*. Lord, in your mercy,

A. hear our prayer.

W. You offer freely the fullness of salvation. Give our congregation, Nativity Lutheran Church, such a welcoming heart, that our words and actions may extend your free and abundant hospitality to all whom we encounter. Lord, in your mercy,

A. hear our prayer.

W. Gracious God, it is good for us to gather as your beloved in community. We treasure your presence with us in word and meal, song and prayer. Be with us in these days when gathering together is not possible. While we must be apart for reasons of safety, we trust that you surround us with your sheltering wings. Encourage us in connecting as we are able, reaching out to our neighbors in need and being persistent in prayer. Grant the necessary wisdom and success to our scientists and doctors who strive to find the cures and vaccines so that this pandemic may be overcome and that we may return to a more normal life. Lord, in your mercy,

A. hear our prayer.

W. You gather your saints as one, united in the body of Jesus. Bring us with all your saints to the heavenly banquet. We remember with love and thanksgiving the saints we have known. Lord, in your mercy,

A. hear our prayer.

P. In the certain hope that nothing can separate us from your love, we offer these prayers to you; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

A. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

P. Lord, remember us in your kingdom and continue to teach us to pray:

**A. Our Father, who art in heaven,
hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,
forever and ever. Amen.**

Blessing

P. The Lord bless you and keep you.

The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.

The Lord look upon you with favor and ☩ give you peace.

In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

A. Amen.

Dismissal

W. Go in peace. Serve the Lord.

A. Thanks be to God.

Postlude: Fugue in C Major" [BWV 553] Johann Sebastian Bach

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