



**FIFTH AVE. UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH**

323 South 5th Avenue
West Bend WI 53095

Fourteenth Sunday After Pentecost
September 3, 2023

Richard Sussman, Liturgist
Deanna Gibeau, Organist
Rev. Clarissa Martinelli, Senior Pastor

JOIN US IN PERSON OR ONLINE
Sundays, 9:30 A.M.

WELCOME TO FIFTH AVE. UMC
Whether you're just beginning to explore
your faith or have been following Christ for
years, you and your whole family can belong
at Fifth Ave. UMC

***Note: L - denotes worship "Leader"**
P - denotes "People"

~GATHERING GOD'S PEOPLE~

PRELUDE: "Solemn Prayer" **D. Guilmant**

~WELCOME & CENTERING~

GREETING:

Pastor Clarissa: 847-721-1826; Ms. Ellen Johnson: 262-339-7673;
Email -rev.cmartinelli6@gmail.com

CENTERING MUSIC: "Lord, I Lift Your Name on High" **Rick Founds**
Dave Bertelsen, Polly Bertelsen, Sherry Gerhartz, Deanna Gibeau

***INVOCATION:**

Pastor: Feed us now, Child of God, as you fed your first disciples. Feed us with that soul-food which nurtures enough love within us to exceed the fears and hostility that ties the world up in knots. Feed us with that spiritual bread which strengthens our hands for serving those broken and lost people whom this world deems a waste of space. Feed us, so that we may be fulfilled with some of that joy which the universe cannot contain.

***CALL TO WORSHIP: (Responsively)**

L: Why have you come to this place?

P: We have come to find Jesus.

L: Why have you come today?

P: We are tired in body and spirit.

L: Jesus bids you sit and be at ease.

P: We are hungry with nothing to eat.

L: Come and eat your fill.

P: But there are only five barley loaves and two fish.

L: There is plenty for all.

P: Will we find wholeness here?

L: Jesus gathers the fragments of our lives, that nothing may be lost.

***GATHERING PRAYER:**

L: God of surprises, we come here from the weariness of the week, from various triumphs, from fears and doubts. Open our hearts to receive your surprising message of hope for all people, for we ask this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

***OPENING PRAYER: (Unison)**

All: God of our hopes and dreams, we are empty, and long to be filled; we are hungry, and long to be fed; we are lost, and long to be found. Gather us into your love, and pick up the pieces of our lives, just as Jesus gathered up the fragments of the five loaves and two fish that remained after feeding the five thousand. Call us anew to eat our fill and to find our true nourishment in Jesus, the Bread of Heaven. Amen.

*** CONFESSION & COMMITMENT:**

L: God, we confess that we do not always understand Your ways. We are easily discouraged when life takes unexpected turns and our carefully laid plans and dreams come to nothing. We confess that we are quick to give up when things get difficult, and quick to question Your presence and Your power.

Forgive us. Grant us patience to wait for Your good timing. Open our eyes to recognize Your leading in our lives—to listen for Your gentle whisper when we least expect it. And then give us courage to step out in faith and obedience, trusting in Your leading even when we cannot yet see the outcome. We praise You for Your faithful love and pray that You would make us worthy to bear Your name. **Amen.**

***OPENING HYMN:**

“What Wondrous Love is This”

UMH 292

~WE PROCLAIM~

*** Matthew 14:13–21~Good News Translation (GNT)**

All: Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a desolate 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 on them and healed their sick. Now when it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, “This is a desolate place, and the day is now over; send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves.” But Jesus said, “They need not go away; you give them something to eat.” They said to him, “We have only five loaves here and two fish.” And he said, “Bring them here to me.” Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass, and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds. And they all ate and were satisfied. And they took up twelve baskets full of the broken pieces left over. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

L: The Word of God for the People of God.

P: Thanks be to God.

***SPECIAL MUSIC:**

“How Majestic Is Your Name”

Michael Smith

Dave Bertelsen, Polly Bertelsen, Sherry Gerhartz, Deanna Gibeau

SERMON:

“Save the Scraps”

Pastor Clarissa

HOLY COMMUNION HYMN: “Surely the Presence of the Lord” x2 UMH 328

HOLY COMMUNION:

Pastor: The stories of Jesus feeding the hungry crowds can deepen our appreciation of how Jesus feeds us with communion. When Jesus got off the boat and saw the big crowd “his heart was moved with pity for them, for they were like sheep without a shepherd” (Mark 6:34).

Mark’s words describe the tenderness and love that motivate Jesus’ to do this miracle.

It is with the same pity and the same purpose that Jesus feeds his people when we come to Holy Communion. Communion is a gift of merciful love. Every time we receive the bread and wine

(grape juice) and remember the Lord in this special meal, Jesus acts as the Good Shepherd, gathering each of one of up into His sheepfold.

Leader: When Jesus saw that the crowd was hungry, He took five loaves of bread and two fish, He gave thanks to His Father, and then He fed the people.

Pastor: Before He was given up to death, a death He freely accepted, Jesus **took** a loaf of bread, and after **blessing** it He **broke** it, **gave** it to them, and said, 'Take; this is MY BODY.' which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

Leader: Holy Father, you are the God who feeds us, yet we forget to give you thanks. Instead, we take pride in our work, we celebrate our independence, we lie to ourselves that we are the ones who have done it all.

People of God: Lord, have mercy on us.

Leader: When Jesus fed the people, everyone was satisfied, and there were even twelve baskets of leftovers!

Pastor: Then He **took** a cup, and after **giving thanks and praise**, Jesus **gave** it to them, and said: "Take this, all of you, and drink from it: This is the cup of my blood, the blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and for all, so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in memory of me."

Leader: Holy Father, you are the God who feeds us in abundance, yet we often live as if resources are scarce. We cling to our food, our things, and our money instead of sharing with our neighbors near and far.

People of God: Lord, have mercy on us.

Leader 3: Let us pray: Gracious Father, teach us to give thanks. Fill our hearts with gratitude for all that you have given us, and from that gratitude, enable us to share what you have given us with others. May we reflect your gracious abundance with everyone we encounter. **Amen.**

Pastor: While we were still sinners, Jesus invited us to the table to feast. In His compassion, He gave his body and his blood for us. God grants us forgiveness and feeds us grace today!

Let's eat the bread now, that reminds us of Jesus' body and the tenderness and love of our good shepherd who gave his life for us his sheep.

Let's drink the fruit of the vine, that reminds us of Jesus life poured out for everyone. Let's be strengthened for the work of caring for people.

Jesus wants to involve us in feeding His people and bringing them to the Holy Communion Table.

John 6:53-54 reads: Jesus told them, “I can guarantee this truth: If you don’t eat the flesh of the Son of Man and drink his blood, you don’t have the source of life in you.”⁵⁴ Those who eat my flesh and drink my blood have eternal life, and I will bring them back to life on the last day. Amen.

THANKSGIVING PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION:

All: God of hope, in bread and wine, you have restored us to relationship with you. Show us how to be a people that live your reconciling love in the world, so that we may recognize your presence in those we meet, and our hearts like those first disciples may burn within us upon the road of our new beginning. Amen.

~PRAYERS & CONCERNS OF THE PEOPLE~

Pastor: God of all goodness:

People: hear our prayer.

Pastor: We come believing in our emptiness, believing that we will never have enough, believing that what we have is unworthy. We come fearful of sharing, fearful of losing our tenuous grip on security, fearful of touching and knowing the pain of others. We come overwhelmed by the hunger, overwhelmed by the suffering of children near and far, overwhelmed by the endless tales of senseless violence, greed, and death. We come aching from the weight of the responsibility, aching from the chilling challenge of knowing our abundance, aching from the gnawing awareness that we have much to share. We come clinging to our meager lunches; bless them, and us. break them, and us. share them, and us.

[Silent Prayer]

LORD’S PRAYER (words on Screen)

~2023 WEST BEND FARMERS MARKET~

~INVITATION TO SHARING OUR GIFTS, TITHES, & OFFERINGS~

***DOXOLOGY:** “Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow” **UMH 94**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

OFFERTORY PRAYER:

All: God of power and might: We, like Peter, struggle with the image of a savior sent to suffer and die. We may seem to be doing great in following Christ, but we too stumble at this point. Perhaps we stumble because we know that what follows is Christ’s call to us to deny ourselves and pick up a cross of our own in order to follow. As we bring gifts for

the work of building your Kingdom, help us to learn to deny, carry, and follow. In Christ's holy name, we pray. **Amen.** (Matt 16:21-28)

***CLOSING HYMN:**

“Gather Us In”

TFWS 2236

~SENDING FORTH/BENEDICTION~

L: Go simply, lightly, gently. Go with obedience. Go with love. And the blessing of God – Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, be with you now and forever. **Amen.**

Pastor: Now all of us must go out into the world and live God's love there. Look for Jesus in the oppressed and burdened. Look for Jesus in those who have lost hope. Look for him among the poor in heart. Among the merciful. Among the peacemakers. Among the persecuted for the sake of right. Look for Jesus on the edge; for Lord Jesus Christ, You are the Word for us to speak; You are the Truth for us to tell; You are the Light for us to light in the darkness. You are the Bread of Life for us to share.

***POSTLUDE:**

“Adagio”

F. Corelli

**Please join us for continued Fellowship
during our Coffee Hour.**