

Elim Lutheran Church Service for Sunday, August 2, 2020

Since many of you are unable to view today's worship service, lessons, a short message, and prayers for this day are provided for your devotion.



ANNOUNCEMENT – On Wednesday, August 5th and Wednesday, August 19th, at 6:30 - 7:15, Elim will hold drive-through Communion in the driveway on the south side of the church. Please remain in your cars and Pastor Carol will distribute the Holy Meal as you **enter on the west side** and **exit on the east side** of the driveway.

Also, there will be phone-in Communion available. Please be sure to read your August Newsletter (The Visitor) for details on phone-in Communion, available on Wednesday, August 12, and Wednesday, August 26. Both of the phone-in days will have time slots of 2:00 – 3:00 and 6:30 – 7:30. Choose a time that works best for you.

Greeting

May the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

Confession and Forgiveness

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism.

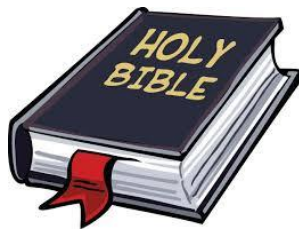
Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
whose steadfast love is everlasting,
whose faithfulness endures from generation to generation.
Amen.

Trusting in the mercy of God, let us confess our sin.

Silence is kept for reflection.

Reconciling God,
 we confess that we do not trust your abundance,
 and we deny your presence in our lives.
 We place our hope in ourselves
 and rely on our own efforts.
 We fail to believe that you provide enough for all.
 We abuse your good creation for our own benefit.
 We fear difference and do not welcome others
 as you have welcomed us.
 We sin in thought, word, and deed.
 By your grace, forgive us;
 through your love, renew us;
 and in your Spirit, lead us;
 so that we may live and serve you in newness of life. Amen.

Beloved of God,
 by the radical abundance of divine mercy
 we have peace with God through ✝ Christ Jesus,
 through whom we have obtained grace upon grace.
 Our sins are forgiven.
 Let us live now in hope.
 For hope does not disappoint,
 because God's love has been poured into our hearts
 through the Holy Spirit.
 Amen.



The Word

Today's first reading is from the 55th Chapter of Isaiah.

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. (Isaiah 55:1-5)

The Psalm for today is Psalm 145:16.

You open wide your hand and satisfy the desire of every living thing. (Ps. 145:16)

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)

Today's Gospel is from the. ***Glory to you, O Lord.***

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." ¹⁶Jesus 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. (Matthew 14:13-21)

The Word of the Lord. ***Praise to you, O Christ.***

The Message

Have you ever been starving? I mean really starving...when you feel so hungry that your belly groans, you feel light-headed, your stomach actually hurts? Not the kind of hungry where you say, “Wow! Let’s go get a burger!”

Have you ever seen pictures of people who were truly starving? Pictures of children whose bellies are distended and bloated because there’s nothing to eat for long periods of time? Or prisoners in the German Nazi concentration camps where the bones of the ribs and face are clearly visible because the people there have been starved and tortured? These are truly the look of really hungry. Really starving.



Every time I read today’s Gospel, I find something new that draws my attention. And this week, I noticed this: *Now 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.* ¹⁴*When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them...*

Jesus recently heard about the murder of his dear friend and cousin, John. He wanted to go away by himself for a while to mourn John’s death. But the crowds were clamoring for Jesus’ attention. They just wouldn’t leave him alone – even for a time. But Jesus heard about these crowds and had compassion.

When I experience something dreadful, I would like to spend some time alone. To process what has happened and to think about how to go on after the experience. But

Jesus ignored his own needs – his time to process. He had compassion for the crowd that followed him. His divine grace stands out.

But look at his disciples. They wanted to send the crowds away. It was likely the crowd had walked a day or more to hear Jesus preach. These people had probably packed some food for their journey, but it wasn't sufficient. They were hungry. Really hungry. So Jesus told the disciples to serve the five loaves of bread and the two fish. We know the story: the bread and fish multiplied exponentially, and there was enough for the entire crowd. In fact, there was more than enough.

When Jesus provided food enough for all, the crowds were physically satisfied. The hunger was gone, and their bellies soothed. The crowds were hungry and now satisfied, but this isn't the entirety of this story. This satisfaction was only temporary. Remember these people had followed Jesus to hear his words. Yes, they were hungry for more than food. They had a spiritual hunger that no earthly food could satisfy. The crowd wanted more. They wanted AND NEEDED the Word of Life. That is exactly what Jesus provided in his preaching and teaching...the Word of Life.



Where does that leave us? How often do we give into advertisers thinking we're in need of something that really isn't necessary? Or what if we hear the word free? There are times when the "free trap" really isn't free at all. It may push us to purchase something more costly than what we really need.

But God gives to us abundantly. As we heard in today's Old Testament reading, God gives food and drink freely to all who hunger and thirst. Jesus feeds the multitude which reveals God in the presence of the ordinary, the abundance in the bread and fish. Each of us, at the table of Holy Communion, are reminded as we share the bread of life, that we are sent out into a world to give ourselves away, to share the abundance we've been given, as bread for the hungry.

There are so many places in this world, even in our very own country, that are labeled as "food deserts." The residents of these places have little or no access to adequate and nutritious food. And our response is to be there to help, to love, to share. We cannot ignore those who are hungry, hungry for literal food and spiritual food. It is up to us, absolutely up to us, because we have been given so much, that we are to be the hands and feet of Jesus. We are called to have his compassion for others, no matter

who they are. Let us be the ones to recreate the miracle of feeding the thousands with five loaves and two fishes.

Let us be the ones who share our abundance with the multitudes who are hungry for much. Let us be the ones who share the Bread of Life and Word of Life with those who have not heard or have a need to reacquaint themselves with the One who saves. Create in us, Lord, the hearts to serve and share the abundance we have. There is no way to get around this call, and we are to trust that God will lead us to those whose resources are little to none. May we aid in this endeavor to provide as we have been provided for. Amen.



Sermon Hymn

We Come to the Hungry Feast

*We come to the hungry feast
Hungry for a word of peace.
To hungry hearts unsatisfied
The love of God is not denied.
We come, we come to the hungry feast.*

*We come to the hungry feast
Hungry for a world released.
From hungry folk of every kind,
The poor in body, poor in mind.
We come, we come to the hungry feast.*

*We come to the hungry feast
Hungry that the hunger cease,
And knowing, though we eat are fill,
The hunger will stay with us; still
We come, we come to the hungry feast.*

Used with permission by
Augsburg Fortress during the Global Pandemic
Music and text: Ray MaKeever

Prayers of the People

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.

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, **hear our prayer.**

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, **hear our prayer.**

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, **hear our prayer.**

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 Marilyn Dolezal, Daniel Strand – nephew of Scott and Pastor Carol Strand, Sarah VanRaden, Bonnie Duggan, Jeanne Roen, Edna Mae Lewis, Judy - Curt Meyer's sister, Doug Nordland – family friend of Derek Miller, Rose – Lenora Scheer's niece, Greg Turner, Fern Softing, Brandon - Victoria Savanh's cousin, and all others we name in our hearts before you. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

You offer freely the fullness of salvation. Give our congregation, Elim 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, **hear our prayer.**

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, especially those dear in our hearts. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

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

The Lord's Prayer

As the Holy Spirit gathers us into one, let us pray together the prayer that Jesus teaches us.

Our Father, who art in heaven hallowed by 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.
 Lead us not into temptation and deliver us from evil.
 For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory. Forever and ever. Amen.

Blessing and Sending

"May God give you grace never to sell yourself short, to risk something big for something good, and grace to remember that the world is too dangerous for anything but truth, and too small for anything but love." (Blessing by William Sloan Coffin)

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.