

Shared Worship Sunday

The pastors of:
St. Peter's Brodhagen,
St. Peter's Zurich
Trinity London,
Trinity Windsor

invite you to join us in worship

on this, the tenth Sunday after
Pentecost, 1 August 2021



Welcome

Welcome friends. Thanks for tuning in. I'm Pastor Nadine Schroeder-Kranz. You are in the right place! We are united in Christ in this congregational shared worship. St. Peter's Zurich, St. Peter's Brodhagen, Trinity London, and Trinity Windsor each have a part in the preparation and delivery of this service. Today the sermon is provided by **Bishop Jason Zinko, Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario Synod.**

Today I am the visible leader, St. Peter's Brodhagen, reads scripture, Trinity London provides the music for today's hymns, and Windsor provides Pastor Mike's creative editing skills.

Greeting

We worship as we live on this the tenth Sunday after Pentecost. Blessed be the holy Trinity, +one God, who forgives all our sin, whose mercy endures forever. Amen.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all! **And also with you!**

Prayer of the day:

O God, eternal goodness, immeasurable love, you place your gifts before us; we eat and are satisfied. Fill us and this world in all its need with the life that comes only from you, through Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord. **Amen**

Gospel Reading: John 6:24-35

So when the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus. When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" Jesus answered them, "Very truly, I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw signs, but because you ate your fill of the loaves. Do not work for the food that perishes, but for the food that endures for eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For it is on him that God the Father has set his

seal.”

Then they said to him, “What must we do to perform the works of God?” Jesus answered them, “This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent.” So they said to him, “What sign are you going to give us then, so that we may see it and believe you? What work are you performing? Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” Then Jesus said to them, “Very truly, I tell you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.” They said to him, “Sir, give us this bread always.” Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.

Homily

Bishop Jason Zinko

Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario Synod

Grace, Mercy, and Peace to you in the name of Christ our Saviour. Amen.

Thank you for inviting me into your congregations and into your homes today to reflect on today’s gospel reading. I do this from Treaty 1 land, the traditional territory of the Anishinaabeg, Cree, and Dakota Peoples and the homeland of the Metis Nation.

I don’t know about you, but I am exhausted.

I am exhausted from the heat; from a long stretch since I had time off; from the ongoing restrictions due to COVID (even though those are finally lifting). I am exhausted from the horrendous news almost weekly about Indigenous children’s unmarked graves; ongoing racism; leaders who just don’t seem to get it; watching our forests burn; and civil unrest across the globe. I am exhausted from waiting and wondering when I will feel full again.

Can you relate? Do you hunger for these things that often seem just out of reach?

I don’t think that we are alone. I think that many people – Christian or not – struggle with the challenge that some are full while some are hungry. And while we are challenged by that, we also operate as though there is nothing that can be done about it. We work, almost by default, with the belief that there is only so much to go around, so we better get what we can before it runs out.

So, we are left with a particular challenge today when we hear Jesus say, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.” It’s a challenge because we know of faithful people who hunger and thirst. We see faithful people being kicked down because who they are doesn’t fit with a standard that our dominant culture defines. On the flip side, we know decidedly *unfaithful* people who seem to have all they could ever want and more.

So, what does it mean? What does it mean for us to say that Jesus is the bread from heaven that gives life to the world?

For starters, we need to expand our view of what is possible with God. We need to understand that God is at work in ways that we often miss. That certainly happened to the crowd in the gospel reading for today. Jesus took two fish and five loaves of bread, fed 5,000 people with leftovers, walked across the lake, and then the crowd asked when he was going to show them a sign?

When was he going to show them a sign?!? What did they think he was doing?

The writer of John referred to anything miraculous that Jesus did as a sign. So rather than extraordinary miracles, Jesus gave signs that were meant to point to something important about God and show us a way that God is present and active for God's people.

Jesus' work of feeding the people wasn't just about filling stomachs or providing dinner on a shoestring budget. Through that sign, Jesus was trying to show the people then, and us today, that he is the one who provides life and nourishment for his followers. Yes, he provides eternal life in the sense that Jesus will raise up people on the last day. But it's more than just that. Jesus gives life now. Jesus shows us and helps us to live abundant lives now. Jesus works to take away real hunger and thirst now.

But we also need to realize that Jesus is not just a dispenser of things we need. Jesus calls us to take an active part in this work through our baptism.

In the promises of identity, faithfulness, community, and the gift of Spirit, Jesus also sends us out into the world to work in all ways for justice and peace. God claims us in those waters so that we can be part of this global and timeless family following Jesus' example and command.

This means that we are called to stand up against racism – including our own. We are called to help lift up the voices of those who are often silenced or ignored. The way of Jesus is to help those who cannot help themselves and to welcome those who are often unwelcome. As we follow Jesus' call and work together as the Body of Christ, we have the opportunity to witness the life that Jesus is bringing into the world.

Of course, these actions do not mean that we are the bread of the world, or that we are the ones who satisfy the needs of everyone. They are simply signs of us living out the gift of faith that we were given in baptism and that Jesus continues to grow in us. And they are only part of what it means to be a follower of Jesus.

Focusing only on what we do is the wrong approach. We do have a role to play in God's work in the world, and there are many things for us to do, but that isn't the primary thing that Jesus tells us to work toward. In John's gospel lesson, Jesus says that the work of God we are instructed to do is to believe in the one that God sent. In other words – our primary job is to be attentive to our faith lives.

Faith itself is a gift, but we have a responsibility to nurture that faith, to grow in our spiritual practice and to let our faith impact everything about us. A strong faith helps to open our eyes to see all that God is doing around us. A well-practiced faith allows us to follow Christ who brought us to faith in the first place. Faith helps us to realize the many ways in which Jesus feeds us, restores us, and gives us new life.

That is why building up faith is such a central focus for the ELCIC. Bishop Susan has asked us to focus on living our faith through Praying, Reading, Worshipping, and Loving. The more that these practices become a part of our daily lives, the more that we connect with how Jesus walks beside us, and the more we are able to rely on God's promises for us.

So, if you haven't yet looked into those opportunities to grow in your discipleship, I strongly encourage you to. They can be the start of growing a deeper relationship with Christ, and help us to rely on Christ to be the bread of life for us.

I know that I started off by saying I'm exhausted. And I am. But it is only through Jesus' abundant gifts that we can be fed enough to carry on. It is Jesus' nourishment that sees us through the times when we feel empty. It is Christ alone who will continue to sustain us in all that lies ahead.

I pray that you experience the nourishment and life that you receive from Jesus today and each day. And I pray that the peace of God, which passing all of our human understanding, will keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus into eternal life. Amen.

PEACE The peace of the Lord be with you always.

THE PRAYERS, 20210801

Rooted in Christ and sustained by the Spirit, we offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all of creation.

You call your church to be the body of Christ. Awaken all the baptized to the gifts you provide for carrying out the work of ministry. We give thanks for our Thames Ministry Area cooperation, especially for our congregations - Trinity London, Trinity Windsor, St. Peter's Brodhagen, and St. Peter's Zurich. Where the church is divided, knit us together and restore the unity of the faith.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You command the clouds above and cause the wind to blow the heavens. Watch over deserts and wilderness places. Regenerate rain forests, defend species at risk of extinction, and strengthen the work of conservation organizations. We pray especially for all those most deeply affected by wildfires in the provinces of Western Canada and Northern Ontario as well as those touched by flash flooding in Europe and China.

Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You summon leaders to respond to the needs of your people. Instill those who govern with patience when confronted with grievances and perseverance in seeking what promotes the well-being of the community and justice for all. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You draw near to those who cry out for help. Feed those who are hungry, reassure those who are despairing, and accompany those who are imprisoned. Bring healing and solace to those

who suffer in mind, body, and spirit. Rain down the true bread from heaven that gives life to the world. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You receive all who come seeking a sign of grace. Make our congregations places of hospitality for those accustomed to rejection. To those who have felt excluded here or elsewhere, prepare us to welcome them in the name of Christ. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

You provide food that endures for eternal life. Sustain us each day with the bread of life until we are gathered with all the saints and feast together at your heavenly banquet. Hear us, O God. **Your mercy is great.**

We lift these and all our prayers to you, O God, confident in the promise of your saving love; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit we pray as Jesus taught us:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. **Amen**

Benediction

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

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

The Lord look upon you with favour and give you peace. **Amen.**

Dismissal

*WORSHIP is over,
now service begins.*

*Go on your way **REJOICING**,
enabled by the **HOLY SPIRIT**
to love and serve the **RISEN LORD.***

Thanks be to God!

