

FAITH LUTHERAN CHURCH
524 South Street, New Providence, NJ, 07974 • 908-464-5177

OUR MISSION STATEMENT

The Family of Faith is a Christ-Centered servant community that strives to be loving, forgiving, healing and affirming, as it continues to seek new opportunities to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ to the world. Sustained by the Holy Spirit, we worship, serve, learn and grow together by sharing God's gifts and our time, talents and treasures.

TENTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

August 1, 2021



“We Are The Church”

***For we are God's servants, working together; you are God's field, God's building.
(1 Corinthians 3:9)***

“We Are The Church” is our yearlong worship theme. We continue to be reminded time and again that the church is not a place, but rather the people of God doing the work of Christ in God’s kingdom. Today’s liturgy reminds us of the gift Christ is as it seeks to share in a special way the grace of God. As we go about this year, let us go forth into the world finding new ways to be the church.

INTRODUCTION

Apparently not satisfied by Jesus’ feeding of thousands, some who were there press him for a sign of his power; perhaps it is daily manna they want. As always in John’s Gospel when people want a sign, Jesus offers himself. He is the bread come from heaven to give life to the world. He calls us to come to him and believe in him, and through that relationship to know the one who sent him.

Pastor Jane’s sermon, “*Meeting the Need*” reminds us of the gift of Christ that nourishes us and empowers us in our daily ministry.

Our thanks to John Everson who is serving as our Assisting Minister and thanks to Alex Bohnenberger and Gary McCready who are streaming our service for us this morning.

ALTAR FLOWERS

Our altar flowers are presented to the Glory of God and in celebration of their 60th wedding anniversary by Joyce and Bob Brandt.

LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE

At our annual Congregational Meeting last January, we approved six special fund appeals. This Sunday, August 1st, we will begin one of those appeals in support of Lutheran Disaster Response. Lutheran Disaster Response brings God’s hope, healing and renewal to people whose lives have been disrupted by disasters in the United States and around the world.

Volunteers are currently on hand in the midst of relief from extreme weather conditions resulting in wildfires, floods, and tornadoes that have affected our country in unprecedented numbers. Please prayerfully consider your generous response and make your check payable to “Faith Lutheran Church” and note your envelope number.

TYING IT ALL TOGETHER

The lessons for today provide us with a faith story. In the lesson from Exodus, the people wander, searching for food and for God in the wilderness, and God provides for them. Our Ephesians reading reminds us of the gifts that each of us is given, uniting us and making us the body of Christ. In John's Gospel God provides for those who believe with the bread of life, the gift of Jesus Christ. And we hear Jesus tell us plainly, "...whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

Welcome and Announcements

SERVICE OF THE WORD

Prelude

Fughetta on *A Mighty Fortress*

Johann Pachelbel

Meditation – Hungry for More

They were hungry, but they didn't know what they were hungry for. Their longing compelled them to cross the sea and comb through the villages in search of the one who could meet their deepest desires. They had seen the sign, after all – the baskets of leftover bread, the impossible abundance of fish. Surely, they must find the source to have their needs fulfilled once and for all.

Perhaps we too are hungry – for security, for certainty, for power, for recognition, for the simple assurance that we are good enough in a world that always seems to demand more. We too may find ourselves searching for the one who can calm our spirits or offer us those things on which our hearts are set. We cry out with the crowd, "Give us this bread always" (John 6:34). Care for us. Feed us. Help us. Reassure us. We have seen what you can do. Show us this sign again so that we may believe.

But God gives us more than bread; indeed, God gives us more than whatever we think we most desire. Jesus takes our questions and those things we think we need and redirects us to himself – the source of all life for the world. We ask for the things we most crave. Jesus offers us abundant life. We ask for what we can comprehend. Jesus gives us the promises of God that pass all understand.

John's Gospel invites us to dwell with Jesus in the mysteries of God. Not to understand exactly. Not to have our fill of the things we demand. But to abide with God. To be wrapped in the promises of the one who has been feeding the hungry and sustaining life since the very beginning, giving us life that cannot be earned but is simply received through Jesus.

Confession and Forgiveness

Trusting in the word of life given in baptism and hearing God's call, we gather to worship in the name of the Father, and of the + Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

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. **Amen.**

Let us confess our sins together in the presence of God and of one another. Most merciful God, **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.**

Absolution

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. **Amen.**

Sharing the Peace

The peace of the Lord be with you always. Let us offer one another a sign of God's peace.

Apostolic Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion 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 Savior and Lord.

FIRST READING: Exodus 16:2-4, 9-15

A food crisis becomes a faith crisis for the Israelites in the wilderness. The hungry people forget God's saving work in the exodus, and they wish for the food they had in Egypt. Nevertheless, God miraculously meets their needs, with manna for bread and quail for meat.

²The whole congregation of the Israelites complained against Moses and Aaron in the wilderness. ³The Israelites said to them, "If only we had died by the hand of the LORD in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the fleshpots and ate our fill of bread; for you have brought us out into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

⁴Then the LORD said to Moses, "I am going to rain bread from heaven for you, and each day the people shall go out and gather enough for that day. In that way I will test them, whether they will follow my instruction or not. ⁵Then Moses said to Aaron, "Say to the whole congregation of the Israelites, 'Draw near to the LORD, for he has heard your complaining.'" ⁶And as Aaron spoke to the whole congregation of the Israelites, they looked toward the wilderness, and the glory of the LORD appeared in the cloud. ⁷The LORD spoke to Moses and said, ⁸"I have heard the complaining of the Israelites; say to them, 'At twilight you shall eat meat, and in the morning you shall have your fill of bread; then you shall know that I am the LORD your God.'"

⁹In the evening quails came up and covered the camp; and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. ¹⁰When the layer of dew lifted, there on the surface of the wilderness was a fine flaky substance, as fine as frost on the ground. ¹¹When the Israelites saw it, they said to one another, "What is it?" For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, "It is the bread that the LORD has given you to eat."

SECOND READING: Ephesians 4:1-16

Christians share fundamental unity and diversity. Our unity consists in the one body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God. Our diversity is expressed in various forms of ministry, whose goal is equipping the saints and building up Christ's one body.

¹I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

⁷But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. ⁸Therefore it is said,
"When he ascended on high he made captivity itself a captive;
he gave gifts to his people."

⁹(When it says, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰He who descended is the same one who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things.) ¹¹The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, ¹²to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, ¹³until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. ¹⁴We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. ¹⁵But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, ¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.

GOSPEL: John 6:24-35

Many of the five thousand people Jesus fed in the wilderness continued to follow him throughout the countryside. Jesus challenges them to consider the real nature of their quest.

²⁴When the crowd saw that neither Jesus nor his disciples were [beside the sea,] they themselves got into the boats and went to Capernaum looking for Jesus. ²⁵When they found him on the other side of the sea, they said to him, "Rabbi, when did you come here?" ²⁶Jesus 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. ²⁷Do 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." ²⁸Then they said to him, "What must we do to perform the works of God?" ²⁹Jesus answered them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in him whom he has sent." ³⁰So 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?" ³¹Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.'" ³²Then 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. ³³For the bread of God is that which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world." ³⁴They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always."

³⁵Jesus 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."

Sermon

"Meeting the Need"

Pastor Jane

Offertory Music

Softly & Tenderly

Will Thompson

JOHN EVERSON: SOLOIST

Apostles' Creed

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 to the dead.
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.

Prayers of the People

Lord in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is indeed right, ... and join their unending hymn.

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray together as Jesus taught us:

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.**

Post Communion Prayer and Blessing

Benediction

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. **Amen.**

Sending

Go in peace. Serve the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

Postlude:

Praise Ye the Lord, the Almighty

J. Gottfried Walther

Meditation – Hungry to Do

Barley bread on the ground and fish in hand, like manna that came down from heaven in the wilderness for their ancestors, left the crowd addled and eager to know how to keep this food coming. But had they not noticed? Pay attention. Receive, take and eat on the grassy green hillside by the sea just as your ancestors did on the sandy brown desert floor.

Apparently when Jesus answered the crowd's question, "What must we do to perform the works of God?" by telling them that God's work is God's work, they were not satisfied. They wanted to know what to do. Jesus continued, "Believe" (John 6:28-29).

Oscar was desperate to have what his wife had, unrattled faith. Relentlessly, just as day after day he stalked rummage sales, scoured flea markets, and searched secondhand shops to find treasures, he hunted for the land of faith where breath would be easy, sight would be sharp, trust would be simple, and steps would be certain on ground that would not shift. He wanted to have what his wife had, unrattled faith. The day he pled and shrugged, "What can I do to have it?" she said this: "Oscar, just give up."

What must we do to end the hunger to *do*? We must be ready to lose enough to gain, be brave enough to be weak, be empty enough to be full, be vulnerable enough to be safe, be done enough to be done.

The crowd pressed Jesus. "Sir, give us this bread always" (John 6:34). Jesus said, in effect, "Why sure, that's what I do."

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