

LISBON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

August 2, 2020 Kingdomtide

“At Home Worship”

Call to Worship

Come, and worship the Lord our God.

We come to seek God’s grace.

Christ hears our every word, our every prayer.

We need God’s healing touch.

Take heart; have faith, for Christ has called us here.

We come to worship the Lord our God.

Opening Prayer God of ages past and days to come, hear us as we come into your presence. Show us your steadfast love and guide us in your mysterious ways. Invite us to walk with you in humility and hope that our lives may be filled with your radiant love. Empower us, we pray, that may we shine forth your wisdom and truth. In the power of your Holy Spirit, we pray. Amen.

Scripture Reading *“I call upon you, for you will answer me, O God.”* Read Psalm 17

A Prayer of Confession Jesus, child of God, hear our cries and have mercy upon us, we pray. Grant us your grace for all the broken places of our lives. Jesus, child of God, hear our cries and grant us your peace, that we may know your healing touch and be restored to the fullness of life in your holy name. Be our refuge and our strength, that we may be a people of hope, born anew in your merciful grace. All this we ask as we worship and praise your name. Amen.

Time of Silent Confession *Our loving God invites us to share the confessions of our hearts that we may know the comfort and peace of forgiveness.*

Words of Assurance Come and see that the Lord is good for in the name of the Lord Jesus, we are forgiven; we are made whole. In Christ Jesus, God is able to save us, to heal us, and to reconcile us with one another. Thanks be to God.

Scripture Reading *“I am speaking the truth in Christ.”*
Read Romans 9.1-5

Remembering our Joys and Concerns in Prayer *We come to worship with many concerns upon our hearts but also joys in our lives. You are invited to share them with God in this time of sharing the prayers of the people.....*

Prayers of the People (insert) **The Lord’s Prayer**

Scripture Reading *“You give them something to eat.”*
Read Matthew 14.13-21

Meditation From the moment we are born until that time when we take our last earthly breath, we all share at least one thing in common: no matter where we live, how old we are, the color of our eyes or the color of our hair, we all need nourishment in order to live. For that reason, food plays an enormous part in our lives. Early on in these Covid days, as we sheltered in place, it seemed as if our constant pattern was to prepare food, eat it, clean up from it and then repeat!

While Jesus often talked about being spiritually fed, he also knew how vital to our well being food actually is. Therefore, after he and his disciples reached the shore and saw the crowds that had followed them on land in this morning’s gospel story, the disciples wanted to send the people into the nearest town to find something to eat. Jesus had a different solution: “They need not go away,” he told his friends, “you give them something to eat.” His friends protested that they only had five loaves of bread and

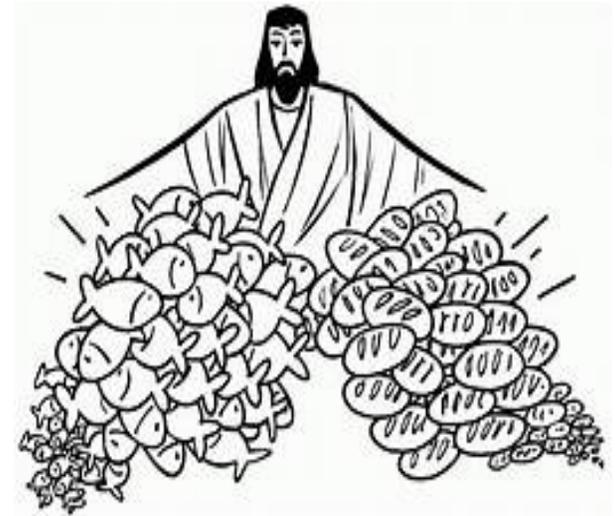
two fish in the face of a great crowd. But without hesitation, Jesus took these items, looked up to God in heaven, blessed the food, and broke the bread. After the disciples had shared this food with the crowd, an amazing 5,000 men and even more women and children were fed and there were twelve baskets full of food left over! A miracle? You bet!

Like other miracles in the Bible, I can't offer you a hard and fast explanation for this one. But here's what my faith tells me: this is a story about generosity. There was a need, namely for people to be fed, and it was met which, in turn, allowed the people gathered there to stay and hear Jesus preach. Their physical needs were met and, quite likely, something that Jesus shared in his preaching fulfilled their spiritual hunger as well. Win, win! All because Jesus modeled generosity. All because, in his radical hospitality for those in the crowd, there was room for everyone – and then some! No one went without.

This is a story of God's generosity, of God's hospitality but it is also a story that, like the parables of Jesus which we've been hearing, invites us to find ourselves in its verses. Do you live with an attitude of abundance or an attitude of scarcity? Do you truly stop to consider how richly blessed your life is or are you constantly wishing you had more? Those are important questions for us to ask ourselves – especially as we live with so many needs and concerns in our communities and in the world around us which need our attention and our generosity.

Just as Jesus was bold to believe that 5,000 plus could be fed with five loaves and two fish, so, too, do we need to be bold to believe that, as Psalm 17 reminds us, we are the apple of God's eye. God is blessing us so that, in turn, we may be a blessing to others. That miracle happens only by the power of God!

Closing Benediction May the Lord of our lives – Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit – bless you and keep you in the week ahead. We go forth as the faithful people of God, as strong disciples for Christ. May God go with us!



Lisbon United Methodist Church
welcomes, nurtures, and serves
all people
with the love of Christ.