

## Order of Worship for 7-18-21 (8:30)

### Prelude

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

### Opening Hymn – “*Son of God, Eternal Savior*” – Hymn #842

### Confession and Absolution – pg. 184-5

### Service of the Word

#### Entrance Psalm:

P: Your Word is a lamp to my feet

**C: and a light for my path.**

P: Teach me Your way, O LORD,

**C: and I will walk in Your truth;**

P: give me an undivided heart,

**C: that I may fear Your name.**

P: I will praise You, O LORD my God, with all my heart,

**C: I will glorify Your name forever.**

P: For great is Your love toward me;

**C: You have delivered my soul from the depths of the grave.**

**ALL: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

P: Your Word is a lamp to my feet

**C: and a light for my path.**

#### Hymn of Praise: “*Glory to God, We Give You Thanks and Praise*”- Hymn #946

P: The Lord be with you.

**C: And also with you.**

#### Prayer of the Day:

P: Gracious Father, Your blessed Son came down from heaven to be the true bread which gives life to the world. Give us this bread, that He may live in us and we in Him, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**C: Amen.**

#### Old Testament Lesson: Jeremiah 23:1-6

R: Woe to the shepherds who are destroying and scattering the sheep of My pasture!” declares the LORD. Therefore this is what the LORD, the God of Israel, says to the shepherds who tend My people: “Because you have scattered My flock and driven them away and have not bestowed care on them, I will bestow punishment on you for the evil you have done,”

declares the LORD. “I Myself will gather the remnant of My flock out of all the countries where I have driven them and will bring them back to their pasture, where they will be fruitful and increase in number. I will place shepherds over them who will tend them, and they will no longer be afraid or terrified, nor will any be missing,” declares the LORD. “The days are coming,” declares the LORD, “when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, a King who will reign wisely and do what is just and right in the land. In His days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. This is the name by which He will be called: The LORD Our Righteous Savior.

R: This is the Word of the Lord

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### **Epistle Lesson: Ephesians 2:11-22**

R: Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (which is done in the body by human hands)— remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ. For He Himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by setting aside in His flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in Himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which He put to death their hostility. He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. For through Him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of His household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus Himself as the chief cornerstone. In Him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in Him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by His Spirit.

R: This is the Word of the Lord.

**C: Thanks be to God.**

### **Hymn: “Lamb of God”- page 198**

### **Holy Gospel: Mark 6:30-44**

P: The Holy Gospel according to St. Mark, the sixth chapter

**C: Glory to You, O Lord.**

P: The apostles gathered around Jesus and reported to Him all they had done and taught. Then, because so many people were coming and going that they did not even have a chance to eat, Jesus said to them, “Come with Me by yourselves to a quiet place and get some rest.” So they went away by themselves in a boat to a solitary place. But many who saw them leaving recognized them and ran on foot from all the towns and got there ahead of them. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, He had compassion on them, because they were like sheep without a shepherd. So He began teaching them many things. By this time it was late in the day, so His disciples came to Him. “This is a remote place,” they said, “and it’s already very late.

Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.” But Jesus answered, “You give them something to eat.” They said to Him, “That would take more than half a year’s wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?” “How many loaves do you have?” He asked. “Go and see.” When they found out, they said, “Five—and two fish.” Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups on the green grass. So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, Jesus gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then He gave them to His disciples to distribute to the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish. The number of the men who had eaten was five thousand.

P: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C: **Praise to You, O Christ.**

**Nicene Creed** – inside back cover of hymnal

**Sermon Hymn:** *“Lord Help Us Walk the Servant’s Way”* - **Hymn #857**

**Sermon:** *“You Give Them Something to Eat”* - **Mark 6:37**

You notice your husband is very tired, not his normal self. Then he begins to slur his words. You insist on him going to the hospital with you. As you rush to get him in the car, he begins to slump over. You get him to wake up again, and then half carry him into the emergency room. They ask you questions, put him on a gurney, and roll him into a room. You wait until the doctor comes in. He examines your husband. You ask the doctor, “What’s wrong?” He replies, “You take care of him.”

Yes, there is a health care crisis in our country, but even that sounds shocking. Yet, that is what Jesus might have sounded like to His disciples. Jesus and the disciples had gone in a boat to get to a quiet place to get away from the crowds. But the crowds ran ahead of them and got first to that quiet place. So Jesus began to teach the people. The disciples warned Jesus, “This is a remote place, and it’s already very late. Send the people away so they can go to the countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.” But Jesus, who was the one that attracted all these people in the first place, said to them, “You give them something to eat.”

“You give them something to eat.” Jesus has given similar commands to us—“Love one another.” “Let your light so shine before men.” “Love your enemies.” “Go into all the world and spread the good news to all creation.” “Who, us?” “Who, me?”

As a child I remember playing baseball with friends. We didn’t have a whole team of nine, so when we’d get up to bat, we’d make believe we were major league players. And we weren’t just any players. We wanted to be the best—Willie Mays, Mickey Mantle, Hank Aaron, Brooks Robinson, Roberto Clemente. It was our version of the “dream team.”

“American Idol” still is a popular TV show. Why? Because it involves amateurs. The show displays ordinary people who are energized by a dream. The more ordinary the winners,

the more fun it is to see them win.

In 1976 the baseball world and many of those not really into baseball were talking about Mark Fidrych. Everybody loved this pitcher for the Detroit Tigers, not just because his ERA was under 2.5, but because of his mannerisms. Instead of a smooth athlete who looked the part of a major leaguer, Fidrych was awkward and in interviews was humble and pleasant. He was seen as an everyman, not a superstar, someone anyone of us could be.

That seems to be who Jesus called to follow Him—ordinary people like Peter, James, John, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Nathaniel, Thaddeus, Matthew, James, Simon, and Judas. They were all amateurs. In fact on the stage called “salvation” the remarkable thing is that there is so little remarkable about the amateurs God called to play their parts. David was the runt of the litter. Mary was a young teen from an obscure village called Nazareth. Moses couldn’t speak clearly. Jacob was running away from trouble. Paul even persecuted the church. But you see when it comes to the Christian life, all of us are amateurs.

But those people were not just “amateurs,” they were also sinners. They’re people who annoy others, say hurtful things, and fail to help those in need. God doesn’t choose the “professionals” or the lovable ones.

Why choose sinful amateurs? When it comes to following Jesus, there is no professional training we can take, no credentials we have other than Jesus’ claim on us. What authorizes us is Jesus’ call to “Follow Me.” Our personal talents or how “good” we are is not what makes us disciples. Only Jesus’ call does that. None of us has the skills, the knowledge, or the inclination to make us anything other than amateurs when following Jesus, just as impossible as it was for the disciples to feed all those people. We consistently get it wrong. We mess up. That’s why we begin our worship each week with confession. We never get it right!

Yet it is this amateurism which is at the heart of the Gospel. This is how God works. Jesus offers salvation through a group of amateurs. The more we learn about Jesus, the more we realize how we mess up, fall short, and disappoint Jesus. The closer we get to Him, the farther we realize we are from Him. The more we learn about Jesus, the greater our amateur status.

We amateurs stumble behind Jesus. And He doesn’t want it any other way. It would be the height of stupidity to think of ourselves as religious professionals. None of us could say that we have the whole truth and are spectacularly adept at practicing our faith. Traditionally pastors receive communion first, not because we are better or more privileged, but we are chief among sinners!

Why does Jesus want amateurs? Because that way it is a matter of God’s grace, not our goodness. If we leave it up to us even a little bit, then all is hopeless. But if it is all up to Jesus, then there is total certainty for us.

All the disciples had were 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish. “You give them something to eat? Go figure, Jesus.” Look at what amateurs have. But what did Jesus do with the 5 loaves and 2 fish? He fed the 5,000.

“Expect miracles,” is something Christians share with their friends. Did the disciples expect that when Jesus fed the 5,000? Do we expect that? The problem is not that miracles don’t happen, but that we look for the wrong one. The disciples had missed the greater miracle—that people had followed Jesus to that desolate place. Today miracles are around us. Kebede, our missionary in Ethiopia, shares with us how people in a land of starvation and poverty are coming to faith in Jesus. A child is baptized and receives the gift of eternal life. We receive Jesus’ true body and blood in Holy Communion. The very fact that you and I believe, that we are here as the people were by the Sea of Galilee to hear Jesus talk to us, is a miracle!

Jesus works through amateurs so it can be seen not as what to expect, but as a miracle, as coming only from God. The world reads Christians, not the Bible. What they can see in us is not a group of capable professionals, but bumbling amateurs who are blessed and led by Christ Jesus.

**Prayer of the Church:**

P: Lord in our mercy . . .

**C: Hear our prayer.**

**Hymn:** *“Wide Open Stand the Gates”* **Hymn #639**

**The Lord's Prayer**

**The Words of Our Lord**

P: The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**C: Amen**

**Distribution of Holy Communion**

**Hymns** – *“Lord of Glory, You Have Bought Us ”*- **Hymn #851**

*“Draw Near and Take the Body of the Lord ”*– **Hymn #637**

**Hymn After Communion:** *“Sent Forth by God’s Blessing”* – **Hymn #643**

**Prayer After Communion** –

P: God, You see how busy we are with many things. Turn us to listen to Your teachings and lead us to choose the one thing that cannot be taken away from us—Christ Jesus.

**C: Amen.**

**Blessing:** (pastor)

**C: Amen**

**Closing Hymn** – *“O Jesus, Blessed Lord, to Thee”* - **Hymn #632**

**Postlude:**