

Order of Worship for August 8, 2021

Prelude

P: The Lord be with you.

C: And also with you.

Opening Hymn: “Come Unto Me, Ye Weary” - Hymn #684

Order of Matins - p. 219

Psalmody-Antiphon and Venite (*O Come Let Us Sing*) - p. 220-1

Antiphon- p. 221

P: You open Your hand;

C: You satisfy the desire of every living thing.

P: Oh, taste and see that the LORD is good!

C: Blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!

P: Oh, fear the LORD, you His saints,

C: for those who fear Him have no lack!

P: The young lions suffer want and hunger;

C: but those who seek the LORD lack no good thing.

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: You open Your hand;

C: You satisfy the desire of every living thing.

The Lessons:

1 Kings 19:1–8

R: Ahab told Jezebel all that Elijah had done, and how he had killed all the prophets with the sword. Then Jezebel sent a messenger to Elijah, saying, “So may the gods do to me and more also, if I do not make your life as the life of one of them by this time tomorrow.” Then he was afraid, and he arose and ran for his life and came to Beersheba, which belongs to Judah, and left his servant there.

But Elijah himself went a day’s journey into the wilderness and came and sat down under a broom tree. And he asked that he might die, saying, “It is enough; now, O LORD, take away my life, for I am no better than my fathers.” And he lay down and slept under a broom tree. And behold, an angel touched him and said to him, “Arise and eat.” And he looked, and behold, there was at his head a cake baked on hot stones and a jar of water. And he ate and drank and lay down again. And the angel of the LORD came again a second time and touched him and said, “Arise and eat, for the journey is too great for you.” And he arose and ate and drank, and went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights to Horeb, the mount of God.

R: O Lord, have mercy on us.

C: Thanks be to God.

Ephesians 4:17—5:2

R: This I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. But that is not the way you learned Christ!— assuming that you have heard about Him and were taught in Him, as the truth is in Jesus, to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, and give no opportunity to the devil. Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

R: O Lord, have mercy on us.

C: Thanks be to God.

John 6:35–51

P: Jesus said to them, “I am the bread of life; whoever comes to Me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in Me shall never thirst. But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe. All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and whoever comes to Me I will never cast out. For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will but the will of him who sent Me. And this is the will of him who sent Me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given Me, but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of My Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in Him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”

So the Jews grumbled about Him, because He said, “I am the bread that came down from heaven.” They said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How does He now say, ‘I have come down from heaven’?” Jesus answered them, “Do not grumble among yourselves. No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. It is written in the Prophets, ‘And they will all be taught by God.’ Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me— not that anyone has seen the Father except He who is from God; He has seen the Father. Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes has eternal life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and

they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. And the bread that I will give for the life of the world is my flesh.”

P: O Lord, have mercy on us.

C: **Thanks be to God.**

Children’s Message

Sermon Hymn: “*Thine the Amen, Thine the Praise*” - **Hymn #908**

Sermon: “*Bread of Life* –” **John 6:35-51**

The saying goes, “You are what you eat.” What we eat affects us in many ways. If we eat too much sugar, we may develop diabetes. If we eat too much fat, it may affect our hearts. If we eat too much junk food, we may become unhealthy in any number of ways. And if we eat right, we may be able to stay healthy. An apple a day keeps the doctor away, after all.

Eating is important for health for normal people. For elite athletes, it can be even more important. Years ago, my wife and I went on vacation to Colorado Springs. While there, we toured the US Olympic Training Complex. We saw the training facilities that many of the Olympic hopefuls use to train for the Olympics. But it’s not just the athletes who are there. There’s a large support staff. Our tour guide, who was there training for the skelton in Colorado Springs because he didn’t want to be stuck in small Lake Placid for the summer, talked about all the people who help him train. There are strength coaches who help them focus their exercises on the actions and parts of their bodies that are most important for their sport. There are athletic trainers and physical therapists that help them cool down and stretch after their workouts. There are dieticians who make sure that they get enough of the right kinds of foods to fuel them through their training. By the time that they get to the point of being selected to go to one of the Olympic training complexes, they need even more help than they had before to get over those final training hurdles, to prepare to compete against the best in the world.

We see that even here at Iowa State University. The new Sports Performance Center attached to the Bergstrom Football Complex at the north end of Jack Trice Stadium, has a football nutrition center and a student athlete dining hall as parts of it. Athletes and those who work with them know that what they eat matters.

Today’s Gospel lesson continues where last week’s left off. Jesus had fed a crowd of over 5000 with only five loaves and two fish, and the crowd had followed him across the Sea of Galilee, looking for another meal. In the section we hear today, though, Jesus tells them they are what they eat, and they should eat him.

Jesus tells his hearers that he is the Bread of Life. Just as God had provided bread in the wilderness for the Israelites on the Exodus, so God was providing what His people needed through Jesus. He gave them all the same food to bring them together.

The crowd, however, has trouble understanding what Jesus means. They came expecting a free lunch, and now Jesus is talking about eating his flesh. They don't understand what Jesus means. They don't understand what Jesus is telling them.

Eating the bread means believing in Jesus, and believing in Jesus means having eternal life. But just as Nicodemus didn't understand when Jesus told him he had to be born again, just as the woman at the well didn't understand when Jesus said he would give her living water, the crowd did not understand. They didn't understand that in Jesus all spiritual hunger and thirst is satisfied.

When God gave the people of Israel manna to eat in the wilderness, they were only given enough for each day. They had to keep depending on God's provision, because the manna would spoil after a day or two. They would still get hungry. They had to keep eating so they had strength for their journey. But the manna didn't keep them safe. They still complained about the food God gave them. They talked about the food they had while they were slaves in Egypt, and longed to go back to slavery. Jesus, the bread of life, is better nourishment and strength than the manna because he lasts. His ability to nourish us lasts forever.

Like the Israelites in the wilderness, though, we hunger for the wrong things. Instead of seeing how God has blessed us, we look with envy at those around us. We see perfect lives shared on social media, and see how our lives could never compare, forgetting those carefully curated collections are not real. We want more and more, instead of being satisfied with what we have. We crave quick snacks instead of that which truly satisfies. Much of the time, our hunger is turned inward, about what we think will make us happy.

But Jesus came to give us a life full of contentment and satisfaction, no matter our circumstances. When he gave his life for the life of the world on the cross, he did so in order that we might be full. Full of true, everlasting life. Full of true contentment.

Eating the bread of life doesn't fix all of our problems, but it's a start. In our Old Testament Lesson, the bread the angel gives Elijah doesn't fix all of his problems. He's still on the run from a king and queen who want to kill him. He's still in the wilderness. But after a nap and some food, he can at least look around and start to see things differently. He can start to see things the way God does. He can see how God is in control, and how God is with him, no matter what else happens.

Food is a big part of what happens here. I remember a Lutheran campus ministry had a sign in their kitchen that read, "If an army moves on its stomach, the Lutheran Church will go far." Most of the social events we have at church also involve food in some way. The soup suppers during Advent and Lent, the biannual potlucks, the monthly FISH dinners, senior breakfasts, even coffee and donuts after early service on Sundays are times where eating together gives us a chance to talk with one another, to listen to each other. Vacation Bible School had snacks in the morning session, and a full meal for families for the evening session. Food brings us together.

When Jesus fed the 5000 and called himself the Bread of Life, he filled the hungry with good things, and he continues to do so. Just as God had provided bread in the wilderness for the Israelites on the Exodus, so God provided what His people needed through Jesus, and he continues to do so today. It may not always be what we want, but it is what we need.

Just like athletes, you have to eat the right things. Now I'm not telling you to follow the Jesus diet or do a Daniel fast, to go Paleo or follow a Mediterranean diet. No, you have to eat Jesus. You are what you eat, after all.

And so we eat of the bread of life, of what God provides for us. We eat of the bread of life in Holy Communion, when we receive the body and blood of Jesus given and shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. But not just then. We are given what we need to be sustained through our earthly journey through the gifts we receive here. God's Word read and proclaimed. Sins confessed and forgiven. All given by God to strengthen our faith and our bonds with God and each other.

Catechism Lesson: Third and Fourth Petitions of the Lord's Prayer

Hymn of Praise: *"We Praise You and Acknowledge You, O Lord"* - **Hymn #941**

Kyrie ("O Lord") - p.227

Lord's Prayer

Prayer of the Day:

P: Gracious Father, Your blessed Son came down from heaven to be the true bread that gives life to the world. Grant that Christ, the bread of life, may live in us and we in Him, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

Prayers:

Prayer for Grace: pg. 228

Benedicamus ("Let us bless") **and Benediction** (Blessing) - p. 228

Closing Hymn: *"Lord, Whose Love through Humble Service"* - **Hymn #848**

Postlude