

THE NINTH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

July 25th, 2021



CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH

140 Russell Avenue
St. Catharines, Ontario L2R 1W1
Church: 905-685-8294 Fax 905-685-7661
www.christlutheransc.ca

Office Hours: Tuesday to Friday—9 a.m. – 12 noon
Bulletin Announcements: Please send to secretary@christlutheransc.ca.
Deadline for submission is Thursday at 9 a.m.

Pastor: Pastor Todd Hoefts (289-362-0113) pastortoddhoefts@gmail.com
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Prayer: Grant us, Lord, the Spirit to think and do always such things as are pleasing in Your sight that we, who without You cannot do anything that is good, may by You be enabled to live according to Your will; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord who lives and reigns with You, and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Musician: Susanne Anderson
Reader: Nate Kuhl

DAILY SCRIPTURE MEDITATIONS:

Monday: Matt. 5: 13-16 Wed.: Jas. 2: 14-17 Friday: Phil. 1: 6-11
Tuesday: Gal. 6: 7-10 Thurs: 1 Cor. 12: 12-26 Saturday: Matt. 21: 18-22

Sunday School: “God is Stronger than my Fear” https://youtu.be/_YGZ8vR3CNQ
Children’s Message: “Leftovers” <https://youtu.be/Cz3HspBYReo>
Summer Session: “Bad Manners” <https://youtu.be/2JqwxHRIqzg>

WORSHIP NOTE:

In compliance with Ontario Provincial Step 3, we can now offer in-person worship with allowances for social distancing.

- **Sunday Service will be live-streamed at 10 AM on Facebook:** (<https://www.facebook.com/ChristLutheranChurchSC>).
- Following the service, a recording will be uploaded to YouTube – “Gathering the Scattered” at: (<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3a4p6prdJGEyP5S-q-cNSq>).
- A PDF version of the order of service for each Sunday will also be posted on our church website: christlutheransc.ca.
- Archived videos of Sunday’s service will be uploaded to christlutheransc.ca – “Worship” page.

Any questions or concerns, please check out our church website (<http://christlutheransc.ca/>), contact Judy Slingerland (chairman.worship@christlutheransc.ca) or Pastor Todd (pastortoddhoefts@gmail.com). or phone the church office. May the peace of the risen Lord be with you all.

OUR DEEPEST CONDOLENCES:

To Kathy Kuhl and family whose father **CARL WATHKE** died in Desboro, Ontario this past week after battling cancer. We pray for Kathy, Tom and their family as they mourn the loss and place all their sorrow into the Lord who carries all of our sorrows.

To Anne Schneikart, her nephew Peter and all the family who sadly shared the news that Anne’s sister, **KAY TIFFNEY** died last week after a lengthy struggle with Parkinson’s disease. A funeral was held at Christ Lutheran by Rev. Kurt Lantz, Kay’s pastor from Resurrection Lutheran Church. We pray for peace and hope for Ann and all of her family who mourn this loss.

To Steve Duga on the death of his son **MICHAEL DUGA** this past week after a number of difficult health issues. A memorial service will be held at Christ Lutheran next week. A date and time will be announced soon. We pray for peace and hope to Steve and his family.

To Pastor Todd and family at the death of his uncle **DAVID RHODES**, of East Aurora, NY, who died unexpectedly of a heart attack as the age of 79 last week. Please keep the Hoefts & Rhodes family in your prayers as we all look forward to the joyful reunion in Heaven.

Online VBS: "TREASURED: DISCOVERING *YOU'RE PRICELESS TO GOD*".

If you or someone you know think they missed out on this year's VBS ... start smiling! It's online, which means you can access it from our church website (www.christlutheransc.ca) until August 30. You can even watch one day each week until the end of August (which gives more time to memorize the bible verses!)

To receive the "special pack" which includes all 5 Bible Verse Memory Buddies, materials for all 5 crafts, ideas and extra supplies for the games, simply register your child by emailing secretary@christlutheransc.ca or by calling the church office at 905-685-8294 or Louise at 905-329-8579 and we will help you make arrangements to come and pick it up from the church.

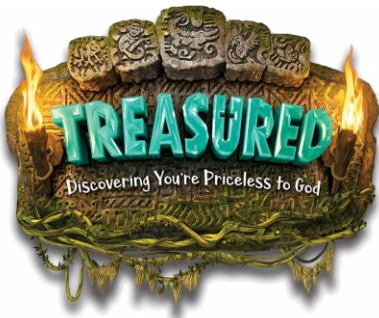
You are invited to our "online VBS"

"TREASURED:

Discovering You're Priceless to God"

You'll discover Gods greatest treasure isn't gems, silver or gold - IT'S YOU!!

Join us online for Bible learning activities, catchy songs, games and crafts. Collect Bible Memory Buddies that help remind us of God's love.



LINKS TO ALL 5 DAYS:

Day 1

<https://youtu.be/BVx246ZB7HM>

"VBS TREASURED: Discovering you're priceless to God"

Day 2

<https://youtu.be/BVx246ZB7HM>

"VBS TREASURED: Discovering you're priceless to God"

DAY 3

<https://youtu.be/ym1ri7bAG6k>

"VBS TREASURED: Discovering you are priceless to God."

DAY 4

<https://youtu.be/JIOnlfeEK1g>

"VBS TREASURED: Discovering You are Priceless to God."

DAY 5

<https://youtu.be/YJrxAwwo5Gk>

"VBS TREASURED: Discovering You're Priceless God."

Dear Lutheran Young Adults of Niagara: We have a great opportunity to connect with other Lutheran Young Adults around the world and learn from one of the most renowned and tender-hearted Lutheran theologians today. This year's Corpus Christi Conference for European Lutheran Young Adults is being held online, July 30-31, and it is free. Dr. John Kleinig, of the Lutheran Church of Australia, will be speaking on "Sharing in God's Holiness." You can register on line at www.corpuschristi.eu and find more information. If conditions under the current pandemic allow, we could gather together at Concordia Lutheran Theological Seminary on the campus of Brock University to participate together. Contact Pastor Kurt Lantz pastorlantz@cogeco.ca if you would be interested in getting together. "What happens when people no longer have a sense for God's holiness, when they live as if nothing was sacred any longer? They are unable to enjoy Him and His goodness in the church and in the world. In these two sessions I intend to examine the surprising teaching of holiness in the Bible and show how the triune God purifies us from spiritual pollution and shares His holiness with us through His most holy Word by the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the sacraments in the divine service, so that as His saints we can have access to His holy presence together with His holy angels and serve Him as His holy priests already now here on earth." Pastor Lantz

Last Sunday Attendance: July 18th, 2021 10 a.m. – 25

	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Weekly Need</u>	<u>Last Sunday</u>	<u>Year To Date</u>	<u>+ or - (-)</u>
Current:	271,175.00	5,214.90	2,901.00	107,716.04	(43,516.17)
Missions	20,000.00	384.62	305.00	9,802.50	(1,351.35)
Property Improvement:			224.00	3,384.50	

FLOWERS have been placed on the altar this morning to the Glory of God in loving memory of Steve Gall by his wife, Twila Gall.

FLOWERS FOR ALTAR: If you would like to place flowers on the altar, please sign your name at the back of the church or email: secretary@christlutheransc.ca. Cost is \$25/bouquet

THE CANADIAN LUTHERAN: The Canadian Lutheran is available to read online at: WWW.CANADIANLUTHERAN.CA

SUPPORTING YOUR CHURCH DURING THE PANDEMIC: It's important for members to keep in mind that expenses for payroll, utilities, maintenance, etc. continue to accumulate even when you are not comfortable attending service.

1. THROUGH EFT DONATIONS: Lutheran Church - Canada, East District Corporation continues to facilitate this service for us. To assist you in continuing your financial support to your church, we encourage you to fill out the form that is available for printing at:

http://christlutheransc.ca/?page_id=96 and then mail the form along with a voided cheque to:

Lutheran Church-Canada, East District Corporation
275 Lawrence Ave., Kitchener, ON N2M 1Y3
Attn: Darryll Holland

2. BY MAIL: cheques can still be mailed to:

Christ Lutheran Church
140 Russell Ave. St. Catharines, ON L2R 1W1
or dropped in the Church mailbox at the East entrance.

3. ONLINE VIA LUTHERAN CHURCH-CANADA: Lutheran Church-Canada has opened a web portal that allows parishioners to donate directly to their home church:

<https://lutheranchurch-canada.tng-secure.com/?pageId=donation-edit&categoryId=10972>

select "St. Catharines-Christ Lutheran-30950" from the drop down menu, enter the amount of your donations and LCC will transfer your donation to Christ. Donation is via VISA or Mastercard. Tax receipts will be issued by LCC (not Christ).

This opportunity will be in effect until the COVID-19 emergency is over.

THE 9TH SUNDAY AFTER PENTECOST

CREATIVE COMMUNION

July 25, 2021 + 10 AM

GATHERING SONG:

"Amazing Grace"

LSB tune # 744

**Amazing grace! How sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found; Was blind, but now I see.**

**Through many dangers, toils and snares, I have already come;
'Tis grace hath brought me safe thus far, and grace will lead me home.**

**The Lord has promised good to me, His Word my hope secures;
He will my Shield and Portion be, as long as life endures.**

Words: [John Newton](#), pub.1779, public domain; Tune: New Britain, 1829, public domain.

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised;

His greatness is unsearchable.

One generation shall laud your works to another,

and shall declare your mighty acts.

On the glorious splendor of your majesty,

and on your wondrous works, I will meditate.

The might of your awesome deeds shall be proclaimed,

and I will declare your greatness.

The eyes of all look to you,

and you give them their food at the proper time.

You open your hand,

satisfying the desire of every living thing.

Ps. 145

Father and Lord, we come, humbly before you, as sinners seeking mercy, forgiveness and newness of life!

O Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God,

Hear us when we name our sins and seek Your help. We are rebellious. Whatever good we try to do ends up in spiritual pride or spiritual despair. We are troubled, arrogant and wayward people, in all of the things we do, and in all of the things we fail to do. Even our most valiant attempts at pleasing You are soiled with our sins. Have mercy on us, renew us and guide our feet into the way of peace.

There is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

(Romans 8:1)

He has called you by name. You are His.

(Isaiah 43:1b)

When the Son of God sets you free, you are really free!

(John 8:36)

So in the stead and by the Holy Command of my Lord, I, as a called and ordained servant of Christ, forgive you all of your sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen!

LORD HAVE MERCY

Lord, have mercy; Christ, have mercy; Lord, have mercy.

PRAISE HYMN:

"Give To Our God"

"I Know My Redeemer Lives" tune

**Give to our God immortal praise,
mercy and truth are all his ways;
wonders of grace to God belong:
repeat his mercies in your song.**

**He sent his Son with power to save
from guilt and darkness and the grave;
wonders of grace to God belong:
repeat his mercies in your song.**

**All through this world he guides our feet
and leads us to his heavenly feast;
his mercies ever shall endure
when this our world shall be no more.**

Jubilate Hymns version of 'Give to our God immortal praise', Isaac Watts (1674 - 1748)

GREETING & PRAYER OF THE DAY:

The Lord be with you:

And also with you.

Let us pray: Gracious God, You have placed within the hearts of all of Your children a longing for Your Word and a hunger for the truth by Baptism and the gift of faith. Give unto us Your dear Son, the True Bread Who gives life, that we may share His saving news and daily bread with our world; we ask this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever.

Amen.

SCRIPTURE

The Old Testament *2 Kings 4: 42-44*

A man came from Baal-shalishah, bringing food from the first fruits to the man of God: twenty loaves of barley and fresh ears of grain in his sack. Elisha said, 'Give it to the people and let them eat.' But his servant said, 'How can I set this before a hundred people?' So he repeated, 'Give it to the people and let them eat, for thus says the Lord, "They shall eat and have some left."' He set it before them, they ate, and had some left, according to the word of the Lord. This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

The Epistle: *Ephesians 3: 14-24*

[St. Paul writes:] For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, from whom every family in heaven and on earth takes its name. I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love. I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God. Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, for ever and ever. Amen.

This is the Word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

GOSPEL SONG VERSE:

**Break now the bread of life, dear Lord, to me,
as once you broke the loaves beside the sea;
Within Your sacred page I seek you, Lord;
My spirit waits for you, O living Word.**

The Holy Gospel *St. John 6: 1-21*

The Holy Gospel, according to St. John, the 6th chapter:

Glory to You, O Lord.

After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming towards him, Jesus said to Philip, 'Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?' He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. Philip answered him, 'Six months' wages would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little.' One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, 'There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?' Jesus said, 'Make the people sit down.' Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they sat down, about five thousand in all. Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, 'Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost.' So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, 'This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world.' This is the Gospel of the Lord:

Praise to You, O Christ.

THE NICENE CREED:

I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of Heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible. And in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, begotten of the Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of Very God, begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father; by Whom all things were made. Who for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the Virgin Mary and was made man. And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried. And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures and ascended into Heaven and sits at the right hand of the Father. And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead, Whose kingdom will have no end. And I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and Giver of life, Who proceeds from the Father and the Son, Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified, Who spoke by the prophets. And I believe in one holy Christian and apostolic church. I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins, and I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life + of the world to come. Amen.

SERMON SONG:

"All Who Hunger"

[Sylvia Dunston Holy Mann tune]

- 1. All who hunger gather gladly;
holy manna is our bread.
Come from wilderness and wand'ring.
Here in truth we will be fed.
You that yearn for days of fullness,
all around us is our food.
Taste and see the grace eternal.
Taste and see that God is good.**

**2. All who hunger, never strangers;
seeker, be a welcome guest.
Come from restlessness and roaming.
Here in joy we keep the feast.
We that once were lost and scattered
in communion's love have stood.
Taste and see the grace eternal.
Taste and see that God is good.**

**3. All who hunger, sing together,
Jesus Christ is living bread.
Come from loneliness and longing.
Here in peace we have been fed.
Blest are those who from this table
live their days in gratitude.
Taste and see the grace eternal.
Taste and see that God is good.**

MESSAGE

PRAYER OF THE CHURCH:

Lord God of all power and might, the Author and Giver of all good things: Graft in our hearts the love of Your name, and increase our devotion; nourish us with all goodness, and by your mercy preserve in us what you have given; Hear us, O God;

Your mercy is great.

Bless your church and the work you have called her to do. Make us a resting place for the weary and the heavy laden. Teach us to bring our burdens to you every day and place them confidently in your hands knowing that in Christ alone we have been given a new start, and through Christ alone we can have the true peace and the true comfort of forgiveness. Hear us, O God;

Your mercy is great.

We ask you to bless our nation, especially agriculture, industry, building, education, tourism and all other primary vocations. When times are difficult, we place our trust in you and ask you to hear our prayers and answer our need. We thank you for seasonable weather and spare life and property for those suffering through dangerous weather conditions. Hear us, O God;

Your mercy is great.

Protect all those who are starving, malnourished and in poverty, both overseas and in this country. Be with all suffering from violence, war, terrorism and persecution. Watch over all who struggle, those unable to put their trust in you. Help them to let go of their burdens and find the true rest only you can give them. Give us hearts to share compassionately from our abundance to help provide for our brothers and sisters in need. Hear us, O God;

Your mercy is great.

Bless our government and all in authority. Use our elected leaders to promote goodness, justice and truth. As you have appointed us to be stewards of the earth, help our nation to wisely manage the environment and prevent the degradation of land and water ways. Hear us, O God;

Your mercy is great.

Give courage to those who suffer long term illness or discomfort. Especially we remember today...[names added...] Release those caught up in habitual sin, and comfort those who are lonely, distressed or broken hearted; hear us, O God;

Your mercy is great.

Merciful Father, you are the great healer and you provide all that we need for healing, and have given your own Son. Hear our prayer, and help all Christians to work together in your name to bring healing to their neighbours. We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

THE SACRAMENT [SPOKEN]

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts!

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give Him thanks and praise.

It is truly good, right and joyful that we should at all times and in all places give thanks to You, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty and everlasting God, through Jesus Christ, our Lord: Who on this day overcame death and the grave, and by His glorious resurrection, opened to us the way of everlasting life. And so, with the Church on earth and all the company of Heaven, we praise Your name and join their un-ending hymn:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY

[Tune: "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God"]



Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho -- ly, Lord God Al - migh - ty,



Heav'n and earth with full ac-claim shout glo-ries of Your name.



Ho - ly, Ho - ly, Ho -- ly, sing -- ing Ho - san -- na!



Bles -- sed is He Who comes in our Lord's name.

THE LORD'S PRAYER: *"Our Father, Who art in Heaven...."*

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION:

Our Lord, Jesus Christ, on the night in which He was betrayed, took bread and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying: "Take, eat; This is My + Body which is given for you, this do, in remembrance of Me. In the same way also He took the cup after supper, and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying "Drink of it all of you, this cup is the New Testament in My + Blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

The peace of the Lord be with you always:

And also with you.

LAMB OF GOD:

O Jes-us Chri-st, True Lamb of God; the sins of the world, You

Take a -- way. Have mer - cy on us, Lord, we pray;

And bless us with Your peace; A -- men

COMMUNION HYMN: *"Let Us Break Bread" [African American Spiritual]*

1. Let us break bread together on our knees;
let us break bread together on our knees;
when I fall on my knees
with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.
2. Let us drink wine together on our knees;
let us drink wine together on our knees;
when I fall on my knees
with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.
3. Let us praise God together on our knees;
let us praise God together on our knees;
when I fall on my knees
with my face to the rising sun,
O Lord, have mercy on me.

**Let your servant depart now in peace,
For Your Word from of old is fulfilled,
Your salvation my eyes now have seen,
Long-prepared as it always has been.**

**In Your light, you reveal, the world's promise and Israel's great joy!
Father, Son and Holy Spirit, now and always may You be adored.**

POST-COMMUNION PRAYER:

Let us pray: Almighty God, Who has given Your Son, Jesus Christ, as a Sacrifice for sin and the True Example of a godly life, give us grace that as we have received Him in the Holy Communion Feast we may daily abide in Him, hearing and believing His Holy Word and living out our days in peace and joy; through Jesus Christ, our Lord, Who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Let us praise the Lord!

Thanks be to God!

BENEDICTION:

The Lord bless you and keep you; the Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord upon you with favour, + and give you peace. **Amen.**

SENDING SONG:

"Great God, In Christ"

[Faith of our Fathers tune]

- 1. Great God, in Christ you call our name
and then receive us as your own,
not through some merit, right, or claim,
but by your gracious love alone.
We strain to glimpse your mercy seat
and find you kneeling at our feet.**
- 2. Then take the towel, and break the bread,
and humble us, and call us friends.
Suffer and serve till all are fed,
and show how grandly love intends
to work till all creation sings,
to fill all worlds, to crown all things.**
- 3. Great God, in Christ you set us free
your life to live, your joy to share.
Give us your Spirit's liberty
to turn from guilt and dull despair,
and offer all that faith can do
while love is making all things new.**

REV. TODD HOEFFS
PENTECOST 9
Scripture: John 6:1-21
Title:
July 25, 2021

In the name of the Father and of the Son + and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

I like left-overs.

A little less than 1/2 of the remaining dinner, re-packaged in a rubber maid container,
Kept in the fridge for next day's lunch.

Some meals re-heat great and might even taste better than when 1st served.

Other foods make terrible leftovers. It's a testament to our abundance

We have enough food to make too much. Sometimes on purpose, sometimes accidental,

It's also a testament to our human nature. Some cultures will make way too much food

Because if you DO eat it all, it means they didn't; cook you enough.

A member in my Edmonton church shared a saying her mother used on the farm—

When preparing meals, "it's better to look AT it that to look FOR it."

There's wisdom in planning there.

Not much planning with the people following Jesus and His disciples in John's Gospel.

They followed Jesus all over the wilderness because He healed the sick, and they wanted to hear His teaching. God required forty years of wandering when ancient Israel followed the prophets. God wished humble them and to test their faithfulness toward Him.

In the wilderness, there was no way to find food for that large amount of people. The people had to rely on God to give them what they needed. Six days a week, He provided a type of bread for them called "manna." When the morning dew lifted, the people would see the ground covered with "a fine, flake-like thing, fine as frost" (Exo. 16:14).

They stooped down and collected it, and they took it home to prepare it and eat it. God provided this food until they entered the Promised Land of Canaan (Jos. 5:12).

Here in John's Gospel we find another group of Israelites in the wilderness.

It's evening and nothing to eat. Jesus asked His disciples to give them something.

"Impossible!" they said. "The crowd is too large! Our resources are too limited!"

Andrew told Him: "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish, but what are they for so many?" Is this why the people followed? Free healing how, free life lessons, now free food? They followed Him because they saw the signs. Not because of what Jesus was preaching. Not because of what He was teaching. Not because of what He had come to bring them and us. But because of His signs that.

Think for a while about this word 'sign.' John deliberately uses this one, while other authors of the New Testament may use the word 'miracles' instead. A sign is not an end in itself.

It is something that points to a reality beyond it. A sign is here to help you to see, to grasp what it is pointing to. Jesus was doing many signs. They were not intended to be the high point of the show. They revealed something greater was coming. Something much more important – Some ONE more important. The man in front of them. Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life, the Saviour. Of course tangible benefits outweigh heavenly lofty ideals.

Timing here is also important. Its before the Passover. The bread of the Passover reminds the crowds and us of liberation from bondage to sin and slavery.

This food, fed to the 5,000 (not counting women and children) eases their liberation from scarcity. 5 loaves of barley bread and 2 fish are laughable sustenance of this crowd. But Jesus is the host of this banquet, offering bread to those who are hungry. He becomes the spiritual host to all who are lost. Lifting this food and his eyes up to Heaven Like the Passover suddenly has enough for everyone and more. If this reminds you of the lifting up of the bread for Communion, It should Jesus is using the timing of the Passover, the wilderness hunger and creating a sign pointing to the Great Meal yet to come when He lays down His own life, Body and Blood, for the life of the world. The people that day won't get this truth we treasure today. All these crowds who seemingly followed Jesus, they, in fact, didn't follow real Jesus Christ. They didn't even like the real Jesus. They followed an imaginary Jesus. A miraculous healer, the guy who could magically feed thousands, could give them what they wanted. They saw these signs, but they didn't want to see beyond the signs. They were not interested in what Jesus had brought them. They were not even interested to hear much of what Jesus was about to proclaim them. Their attitude towards Jesus was – just give us what we want! We have needs and wants, too. How do you and I fill the empty void within? God really cares about your answers to these questions. God cares about your hunger and He is calling you to Jesus' table where you can feast on this bread called Jesus, a food that is very unique. You see, when we consume this bread, Jesus consumes us. When we consume the bread at this table, the broken body of Jesus makes us a part of himself. And, when we consume this bread, we become food for a broken world – we become broken, living loaves of bread as we live, loving and serving all others in this world. Notice after the eating, Jesus tells the disciples after they distribute To "Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost." Imagine the crowd, the mess, the chewing, the contentment? Like a parking lot after a football game or an outdoor concert! Here twelve people roam through the mess, picking up every last scrap and placing it carefully in a basket? What kind of food would merit such careful attention? What kind of host would be so meticulous about even the fragments left over from the feast? 12 basketfuls of broken pieces. Jesus' care and attention for these leftovers speaks good news to those of us who're feeling fragmented, and those of us who are feeling like leftovers, cast aside and forgotten. While we are hungry, needy, searching for what we expect out of life, we are also fragmented, torn apart, broken. Perhaps you feel fragmented by too many commitments, or too many demands on your time and energy. Perhaps you feel fragmented by disagreements or estrangement in your family. Perhaps you feel fragmented by the distance between your expectations, hopes, and dreams and reality. Perhaps you feel fragmented by illness, pain, depression, addiction, or anxiety. Maybe you feel like a leftover cast aside, broken, fragmented, alone...Jesus gathers the fragments and binds us together. In the cross, Jesus' arms are open as he draws all people to himself. In the Body of Christ, we are made one. No longer fragmented or cut off, we are gathered in by love, for love. No one is too broken, too fragmented, too far from God's embrace. All are gathered in. Jesus gathers that which has been cast aside and forgotten. Jesus never forgets, never abandons us, never sends us away. Jesus sees you even when no one else does. He always seeks after the ones who feel lost, forgotten, and cast aside, and lovingly draws us into relationship. This work that Jesus does to gather us in is also the work of the Church. Like Jesus instructed the disciples to gather up the fragments so that nothing may be lost, we too do the work of gathering up. As Jesus' hands and feet in the world, we are the voices that call to the scattered, the eyes that seek out the lost, the hands that tenderly gather up the fragmented and cast aside.

This is our call, as the church.

We are the ones who look past our own secure little worlds

And look to the need and brokenness and fragmented life that is on our street, behind our back yard, on the street corner, in line behind you at the grocery store. Need is all around

We fail to see it So Jesus shows us where and how to look. His Gospel fills our needs so full

We have more than enough to share. Our cup truly runneth over. For we can't forget that we too are the fragmented ones who gather other fragments. We are the ones the world has cast aside and forgotten, doing Jesus' work of remembering and gathering others who have also been tossed away as worthless scraps.

Not only does Jesus come to feed the world, but he is the bread come down from heaven.

The banquet of the kingdom is beginning, and the abundance of God's presence will soon be evident. Jesus provides food, and expects that the disciples, in turn, will be equipped to meet the social and spiritual hunger of the crowd.

Nothing shall be lost.

Jesus is more than a left-over, He is the Only Son of God,

Whose very life is given over so that we could live abundantly.

His life is emptied on the cross which fills up our lives. From our own places of brokenness, from our own position as the ones cast aside, we are united with Christ, filled with the Holy Spirit, and sent to share this powerful good news.

In our throwaway society, twelve baskets of leftovers may seem insignificant –

But Jesus is concerned that nothing – not even a half-eaten loaf of bread – is to be lost.

The goods of the earth are not disposable and that those who are strengthened by the Bread of Life

are now moved to alleviate the hunger of those still waiting to be fed.

While we may enjoy being fed and nourished, it's not just about us, It's about everyone.

All people need to eat, drink and be satisfied. No one is a left over.

No more fragmented living. No more hungry hearts But Joined to Jesus Invited to receive the best of bread and the best of wines, Holy Communion.

The joyful end result of feeding 5000

And saving the leftovers.

Amen.