



Ninth Sunday after Pentecost - B
July 25, 2021



Key Scripture - John 6:9

"There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?"

Theme - Why Was the Boy There?

Welcome and Announcements

- † Newcomers please sign our guestbook
- † Special requests may be made through Facebook
- † Trinity is Welcoming, Open, Inclusive and Accessible.
 - Trinity is an Affirming Congregation
- † We continue to pray for those who were impacted by the discovery of unmarked graves at Residential Schools.
- † Given the fact that the population may not be fully vaccinated until early Autumn; Trinity will not resume “In Person” Worship until September.
- † I will be on vacation during the month of August. Local Funeral Homes have been advised and support is in place, if required.
- † Services from our past will be posted to [Facebook](#). You will find a window to the Facebook Page on our [Website](#). You will also find a link to our [Bulletin Page](#).
- † **The Annual Congregational Meeting will be September 12, 2021.** At which time, we should be able to have more than 10 people in person.
- † **We are pausing the Grocery Gift Card program.**

† If you do not already track news and events in our larger Church Community, you may wish to [visit the United Church of Canada Website](#). [E-ssentials](#) is a helpful NewsLetter you may wish to consider.

Healing Pathway Ministry - Distance Healing Circle - Trinity United Church

While in-person sessions are inadvisable during the Pandemic, the Healing Pathway Ministry will be offering a group distance healing session for twenty minutes starting at 1:00 pm on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month.

Distance healing is a form of prayer which recognizes that we are all One in the Source of Life. We open to the Sacred Spirit and to allow the Healing energy of the Spirit to flow.

You are invited, if you wish, to join the virtual circle via [Zoom](#)

If you wish to have a conversation and / or book an individual healing session, email -

trinitysmithsfallshealingpathway@yahoo.com

Acknowledging Traditional Territory

Smiths Falls is located on the traditional territory of the Algonquin peoples dating back countless generations. We are grateful for our neighbours and recognize the opportunity to exercise the Ministry of Reconciliation

Introit MV 63 "Long Before My Journey's Start"

Long before my journey's start,

When in my youth I searched in my heart,
I would pray for her, wait for her,

Wisdom, my road, my goal, and my star.

Call to Worship

Great is the Lord who is worthy of praise.

No one can ever measure the greatness of our God.

Let us worship God who is faithful in all things.

We will sing of God's power and speak of God's loving kindness.

O God, we proclaim you our ruler in all things

and we will praise your holy name forever and ever.

Opening Prayer

Gracious and generous God,

We gather each week in wonder, marvelling at your mysterious presence

in the awesome beauty of the world, and
in surprising encounters in our lives.

We gather with grateful hearts, amazed by the abundance in your creation,

abundance we can share at our tables and in our communities,
abundance in food, in friendship and in faithfulness.

We gather with hopeful hearts,

seeking another taste of your love for us,
hoping that others will share in the wonders of that love.

Your love for us all is mysterious and miraculous

with the power to

transform times that overwhelm us and
lives that hunger for hope.

We gather, trusting that you will move once again in our worship,

and open before us the new possibilities you create for all your people

in Christ, the Bread of Life, bread for our journeys.

Hymn 608 "Dear God Who Loves All Humankind" vs. 1,2,5

Dear God, who loves all humankind,
forgive our foolish ways;
re clothe us in our rightful mind;
in purer lives thy service find,
in deeper reverence, praise.

In simple trust like theirs who heard,
beside the Syrian sea,
the gracious calling of the Lord,
let us, like them, without a word,
rise up, and follow thee.

Breathe through the heats of our desire
thy coolness and thy balm;
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
speak through the earthquake, wind and fire,
O still, small voice of calm!

Time With Children

Hello Young Folk,

Today I am going to tell a story that is not my own. I hear references to it from time to time but I have never actually heard the story or knew exactly how it went.

It is The Stone Soup

Some travelers come to a village, carrying nothing more than an empty cooking pot. Upon their arrival, the villagers are unwilling to share any of their food stores with the very hungry travelers. Then the travelers go to a stream and fill the pot with water, drop a large stone in it, and place it over a fire. One of the villagers becomes curious and asks what they are doing. The travelers answer that they are

making "stone soup", which tastes wonderful and which they would be delighted to share with the villager, although it still needs a little bit of garnish, which they are missing, to improve the flavor.

The villager, who anticipates enjoying a share of the soup, does not mind parting with a few carrots, so these are added to the soup. Another villager walks by, inquiring about the pot, and the travelers again mention their stone soup which has not yet reached its full potential. The villager hands them a little bit of seasoning. More and more villagers walk by, each adding another ingredient. Finally, the stone (being inedible) is removed from the pot, and a delicious and nourishing pot of soup is enjoyed by travelers and villagers alike. Although the travelers have thus tricked the villagers into sharing their food with them, they have successfully transformed it into a tasty meal which they share with the donors.

The story exists as a moral regarding the value of sharing. In different traditions, the stone is replaced with other things, so the fable is also known as axe soup, button soup, nail soup, and wood soup.

In today's Bible story, Jesus is followed by 5000 people into a wilderness place and his disciples are concerned because they have no food. A boy comes to Jesus with more food than he needs to eat and the next thing you know, everybody has enough.

Lots of people say this is a miracle but are not sure what kind of miracle it was. Some people say it was a miracle of getting 5000 people to share. I like that idea. That means that we can find ways to inspire a little miracle every day.

Children's Prayer

Dear God,

We do not know exactly how you work but we are grateful that you work with and through your faithful people. Help us to see how

we can do your work in acts of love and hope and sharing. Maybe too, you can use us to be a part of a little miracle from time to time.
Amen.

Prayer of Confession

Gracious and Generous God,

We gather each week to be fed by your love,
trusting that you embrace each of our lives.

We confess we are not nearly so generous with our love.

We hold back what we have,
fearful we lack enough for our own purposes and desires.

We take advantage of opportunities for ourselves,
and forget to see if someone else is in need.

Forgive us, O God, when our fear makes us stingy
with your gift of abundant love.

Words of Assurance

The Letter to the Ephesians declares that Christ dwells in our hearts through faith, for we are being rooted and grounded in his love.

The forgiveness he offers is a gift of this love

Scripture 2 Kings 4:42-44;
 Psalm 145 (VU866);
 John 6:1-21

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.

Psalm 145 (VU866)

Refrain -

We praise you O God: we bless your holy name.

Every day we will bless you
and praise your name forever.

**O God, you are great and highly to be praised;
your greatness is beyond all measure.**

One generation shall praise your works to another,
and declare your marvelous deeds.

**I will speak of your splendor and glory,
and all your wonderful works.**

Refrain -

We praise you O God: we bless your holy name.

You, God, are righteous in all your ways,
and loving in all your deeds.

**You are near to all who call to you,
to all who call on you in truth.**

You fulfill the desire of those who revere you;
you hear their cry and you save them.

**You watch over all who love you,
but the wicked you will destroy.**

My mouth will speak your praise, O God.

I let every creature bless your holy name forever.

Refrain -

We praise you O God: we bless your holy name.

John 6:1-21

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 toward 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."

When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were terrified. But he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land toward which they were going.

Meditation "Amazing Grace" (arr. Young)

Reflection Why Was the Boy There?

Whenever I read a story in Scripture that describes an event, I imagine what it would look like in real time. Stories that take ten seconds to read, might represent hours, days or weeks, a lifetime or generations to set up. In all of life and in all of our stories, there are a lot of moving parts.

Jesus has become, it seems, well known in the region and extraordinarily popular. The festival of the Passover was near, so there would certainly be a growing, even surging of celebratory activity and heightened religious interest. Of course, in the context of Judea, there is little separation between religion and nationalism. While these may be a little muted in Canada, it may have been like approaching Canada Day. Perhaps, if we were American, the Fourth of July Weekend might better suit the bill. The calendar event itself induces a heightened disposition toward collective demonstrations of hopeful emotion, embracing themes of Freedom and Solidarity. The coming Passover was the main event, but this Carpenter turned preacher and healer, was a worthy opening act.

According to John, about 5000 people follow Jesus up a mountain, ***“because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick.”*** So this was a spontaneous or near spontaneous event that was part of a larger season of expectation, of celebrating a story of liberation from the yoke of the Egyptians even while Judea suffered under the yoke of the Roman Empire.

While folk may have been prepared or preparing for the Passover, it seems that they were not completely prepared for this spontaneous or near spontaneous event. Did nobody think of food? 5000 people for a day long festival. Surely, somebody would have realized that folk would get hungry.

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.”

Why was the boy there? Why did he have *“five barley loaves and two fish.”*

At the very least, six month’s wages at that time would be about \$15,000.00 worth of sandwiches in our day... For 5000 people, that’s a \$3.00 sandwich each. Realistically and for scale, portable food vendors are looking at a market value of one noon meal to be more than \$30,000.00 ... Add beverages, you are looking at a potential for more than \$50,000.00 dollars worth of available demand.

Why was the boy there? Why did he have *“five barley loaves and two fish.”* Likely an easy guess.

Why Was the Boy There? Is likely easy.

Why did the boy stay? And Why did the boy give his bread and fish away?” Is wonderful.

I was curious as to what would happen in real life in such a situation. So I looked up “How did they feed people at Woodstock?” Two main articles popped up -

“Woodstock - How to Feed 400,000 Hungry Hippies” By Lisa Bramen
and

“Peace, Love And Granola: The Untold Story Of The Food Shortage At Woodstock” By Alison Spiegel

In August 1969, more than 400,000 people attended the three-day festival. Surpassing everyone's expectations, the crowd ... was so massive that it became the third-largest city in the state of New York for that weekend. ... Concert promoters were ill prepared ... when more than twice the expected number of people showed up. Relying on quick reinforcement from places like New York City, 90 miles away, was unthinkable.

[The primary caterer] declined to participate when the location was moved. None of the major food suppliers for ballparks and arenas wanted to work with Woodstock. Food trucks assembled at the top of the natural amphitheater on the grounds, but they quickly ran out of provisions.

The local community heard about the food shortages, and instead of resenting the hoard of people invading their small town, they came to the rescue. They flew in an Army helicopter with food, blankets and medical supplies.

Listening to people tell their experiences at Woodstock, one common thread is that everyone remembers very little about the food except for two things: The food ran out fast and everyone shared what they had. "There was a sharing mentality and the people who had come prepared were generous with what they had"

The conclusion of the article stated, "It's pretty crazy to reflect back after all these years. We were so open and trusting," The fond memories that make Woodstock a highlight of the decade and of many people's lives [were] about community, compassion and being in the moment.

Food is not what made Woodstock important. Woodstock was important for [its] sheer size and the quality of the bands.

It is said that the main reason Woodstock is important is that half a million young people were there, they lived in peace for three days without any visible form of security, they cooperated to share food and shelter. It made the hippie movement feel strong and capable and gave them the sense that they could accomplish anything.

What hope!

It is also said "Unfortunately, it also provoked the fears of the Establishment who worked to diffuse that power and to put the youth back in line. So Woodstock can be seen as the peak of a youth movement that felt like it was about to change the world..."

It is almost hard to tell which event it is talking about.

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."

When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself."

Today's Gospel speaks to something wonderful and it carries a warning.

Just like Woodstock in our age; this day with Jesus was filled with hope in an uncertain age. It was empowering and transformative, it inspired awe and mutual care. Hope unites the Hopeful in miraculous or near miraculous ways. The youth of 1969 were ready to change the world. The 5000 near the Sea of Tiberias found their Prophet and King. This is wonderful.

However, people who hold on to great hope aggravate and inflame those who have lost theirs. Hope is frightening to those who hold power without it. As you continue reading the book of John, it is clear that as the crowds became more hopeful and united; the authorities who held on to power by yielding to injustice and oppression became increasingly determined to crush it.

Hope works miracles. Hope intimidates those who hold power without it. Never lose yours, it makes you powerful; especially as you combine that hope with others. And remember, at the end ... Hope wins.

Hymn 612 "There Is A Balm In Gilead"

Refrain -

*There is a balm in Gilead
to make the wounded whole.*

*There is a balm in Gilead
to heal the sin-sick soul.*

Sometimes I feel discouraged,
and think my work's in vain,
but then the Holy Spirit
revives my soul again.

Refrain -

*There is a balm in Gilead
to make the wounded whole.*

*There is a balm in Gilead
to heal the sin-sick soul.*

If you cannot preach like Peter,
if you cannot pray like Paul,
you can tell the love of Jesus,
and say "He died for all."

Refrain -

*There is a balm in Gilead
to make the wounded whole.*

*There is a balm in Gilead
to heal the sin-sick soul.*

Invitation to the Offering

The story of Jesus feeding the crowd with a few loaves and fishes is a parable of God's power to multiply our gifts offered in Jesus' name. So make your offering to God as you are able, and trust that God will create abundance from what we have to give.

Offering Prayer

God of abundant love, we offer our gifts to you willingly, yet sometimes we wonder what they can achieve in a world of great need. Bless our gifts and multiply them in your love. Surprise us with your power, working in us and through us, to accomplish worthy things in the name of Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life. Amen.

Hymn 639 "One More Step Along The World I Go" vs. 1,3,4,5

One more step along the world I go,
one more step along the world I go,
from the old things to the new
keep me travelling along with you:

Refrain -

*And it's from the old I travel to the new.
keep me travelling along with you.*

As I travel through the bad and good
keep me travelling the way I should;
where I see no way to go
you'll be telling me the way, I know:

Refrain -

*And it's from the old I travel to the new.
keep me travelling along with you.*

Give me courage when the world is rough,
keep me loving though the world is tough;
leap and sing in all I do,
keep me travelling along with you:

Refrain -

*And it's from the old I travel to the new.
keep me travelling along with you.*

You are older than the world can be,
you are younger than the life in me.
ever old and ever new,
keep me travelling along with you:

Refrain -

*And it's from the old I travel to the new.
keep me travelling along with you.*

Prayers of the People

Our Prayer today has a response -

Into the unrest around us, call out to us.

Come near to us and overcome our fear.

God of mystery and miracle,

You are calm in our storms and challenge in our satisfaction.

We give you thanks for all the ways we have tasted your abundance,
in friendship and fellowship,
in food on our tables and safety on our doorsteps.

Amid these everyday satisfactions,

keep us mindful of those who lack the necessities of life
and who find each day unpredictable and anxious.

Like Jesus' disciples caught on the rocky sea, we fear the storms of
life.

Too many people know turmoil in war and displacement.

Into the unrest around us, call out to us.

Come near to us and overcome our fear.

Throughout the world and in our own communities,
we witness increased divisiveness
and hatred toward those considered a threat.

Into the unrest around us, call out to us.

Come near to us and overcome our fear.

In too many countries and in our own neighbourhoods,
we witness great inequity and deep need for even the staples of
life.

Into the unrest around us, call out to us.

Come near to us and overcome our fear.

In our communities, congregations and families,
we witness uncertainty about the future
and the cost of months of pandemic isolation and lockdown.

Into the unrest around us, call out to us.

Come near to us and overcome our fear.

In our own lives and the lives of too many friends and neighbours,
we witness depression, anger, anxiety and despair,
as we cope with the uncertainty of these months of
restrictions
and the grief they have caused.

Into the unrest around us, call out to us.

Come near to us and overcome our fear.

We hold before you in these moments of silence
the people and places in need of your healing presence.

Into the unrest around us, call out to us.

Come near to us and overcome our fear.

And now, trusting in your steadfast love and faithful presence,
we pray as Jesus taught us:

Prayers conclude with:

We experience God in a relationship from which we draw strength, courage and encouragement.

The ways of knowing God - as Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer; Father, Mother, Friend; may be expressed in the prayer Jesus taught us -

The Lord's Prayer

We Depart to Serve with Joy

Hymn MV 10 "Come And Seek The Words Of Wisdom"

Come and seek the ways of Wisdom,
she who danced when earth was new.
Follow closely what she teaches,
for her words are right and true.
Wisdom clears the path to justice,
showing us what love must do.

Listen to the voice of Wisdom,
crying in the marketplace.
Hear the Word made flesh among us,
full of glory, truth, and grace.
When the word takes root and ripens,
peace and righteousness embrace.

Sister Wisdom, come, assist us;
nurture all who seek rebirth.
Spirit-guide and close companion,
bring to light our sacred worth.
Free us to become your people,
holy friends of God and earth.

Benediction MV 214 "May God's Sheltering Wings"

May God's sheltering wings,
her* gathering wings protect you.
May God's nurturing arms,
her* cradling arms sustain you,
and hold you in her love,*
and hold you in her love.*

Choral Amen

Postlude "But The Lord Is Mindful Of His Own" (Mendelssohn)