



First Lutheran Church

Gospel of Matthew

Summer 2026 Reading Challenge



Devotion Time: Week 6: Matthew chapters 11 and 12
prayer Time

God of abundance, may we never be scared of our scarcity, because with you there is always more than enough. Bless what little we have, that it may become the loaves that feed the world. In Jesus' holy name, we pray. Amen

We live in a world built on a scarcity model of survival. We do not have enough resources to go around, we have told ourselves, so we hoard what we have. We pass the panhandlers, we scoff at those receiving handouts from food pantries or government aid. We celebrate the rich and wealthy, and aspire to be like them, all while monitoring our own savings with an eye of protection against anything or anyone who might want a piece of it. This scarcity model of survival is no accident. It was created by wealthy who wanted those with less to blame others with less for their not having enough. The wealthy who created this system use it to their advantage and they are very choosy against who they let become wealthy. The lottery with its big sums of money as prizes was even created to help foster this sense of -- see anyone can make it big. But it is all a lie.

This is why God's Kingdom is different. Read the story of the feeding of the 5000 again here in Matthew's Gospel (14:13-21). Jesus is grieving the death of fellow prophet John the Baptist. He wants to retreat and be alone, but thousands come to Jesus, they know he alone now represents God's Kingdom. So, Jesus has compassion. He heals them -- himself, all alone, heals thousands who have descended upon him. And then as it gets late, the disciples, thinking out of their scarcity model, want these folks to head out to find their own food. And so Jesus says, "you feed them." But with what? These 5 loaves and 2 fish, its barely enough for the 12 disciples plus Jesus.

But in God's Kingdom, no small amount is never enough. These loaves go on to feed, according to the story, 12 or 13 thousand people when we add in the women and children. This is the abundance model the Kingdom of God comes to represent, and it is what Jesus wants us to use as we approach the world around us. We don't have too little, we have more than enough. We have what we need to share. The world doesn't have to be divided between the "haves" and the "have-nots". The world has everything it needs so that all would have more than enough.

And this plenty to share, this more than enough, is still provided even after the rejection of John the Baptist and the rejection of Jesus. God truly is good, all the time.

1 Love Bread

There is this humorous song/video on YouTube called "1 Love Bread" by a group named Party Gripp. This is a song that is very simple, it celebrates the love of bread.

It names baguettes, buns, bread sticks, french toast, and more. It sings about eating bread every day and even has a goofy moment when an alien comes to our planet to taste our yummy bread.

What is your favorite bread? Do you enjoy it with sandwiches? Do you eat bread with every meal?

Some of us have a gluten allergy, and cannot eat bread -- what is your favorite substitute for bread if you cannot have bread?

If there was one food you could write a song about your love for that wasn't bread -- a food you cannot live without, what is that food?

Gathered by God, we live our faith with: Compassion, Grace, Gratitude, and Joy

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