August 4, 2024 + 10:30 A.M. Twelfth Sunday of Pentecost

We Join in Worship

If you need extra space for a wheelchair or walker, or if you have young children with you, please feel free to make use of our Prayground, the extra space across the aisle from the sound booth.

PRELUDE

You Are My All in All

Dennis L. Jernigan, arr. Jan Sanborn

WELCOME

ANNOUNCEMENTS

*THE PEACE OF CHRIST

*CALL TO WORSHIP (Adapted form Psalm 78 and Psalm 34)

Leader:

God commanded the skies above and opened the doors of heaven; God rained down on them manna to eat and gave them the grain of heaven. Mortals ate of the bread of angels; God sent

them food in abundance. And they ate and were well filled.

ALL:

I will bless the LORD at all times; praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul makes its boast in the LORD; let the humble hear and be glad. Magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt the LORD's name together. I sought the LORD, and the LORD answered me and delivered me from all my fears. Look to the LORD and be radiant, so your faces shall never be ashamed. This poor soul cried and was heard by the LORD and was saved from every trouble. The angel of the LORD encamps around those who fear the LORD and delivers them. O taste and see that the LORD is good; happy are those who take refuge in the LORD!

*OPENING HYMN: "Now to Your Table Spread" (515)

INVITATION TO CONFESSION:

Leader:

The author of *Ephesians* writes, "I, therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called." Together let us confess how we have gone astray on this walk.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

God of abundant love, we join our hearts and voices in confessing unto you. We confess that we have allowed the myth of scarcity to overtake our minds. We compete for resources and hold onto them jealously. We individually claim your gifts that are meant for all. We allow hunger to persist in a world that has more than enough food. All too often, we throw that extra food away. Forgive us for accepting the myth of scarcity. Remind us of the truth of abundance. In the name of Jesus Christ, the bread of life, we pray. Amen.

KYRIE: Glory to God, No. 579 (unison)

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

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Friends, hear the

Friends, hear the good news! We are given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift.

ALL:

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Hallelujah! Thanks be to God!

GLORIA PATRI (577)

Glory be to the Father, and the Son, and Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, ever shall be, world without end. Amen. As it was in the beginning, is now, ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

STATEMENT OF FAITH: (The Apostles' Creed)

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

We Hear God's Word

EMBODIED WORD FOR DISCIPLES OF ALL AGES

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Gracious God, we do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from your mouth. Make us hungry for this heavenly food, that it may nourish us today in the ways of eternal life; through Jesus Christ, the bread of heaven. Amen.

HEBREW BIBLE LESSON

2 Kings 4:42-44

EPISTLE LESSON

Ephesians 4:1-10

GOSPEL LESSON

John 6:1-21

SERMON

Bread for All

MUSICAL MEDITATION

Old Church Choir, sung by the FPCH Praise Choir

Zach Williams

We Respond in Faith

THE SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING:

Leader:

The Lord be with you.

ALL:

And also with you. Lift up your hearts.

Leader: ALL:

We lift them to the Lord.

Leader:

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

ALL:

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

...And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven we praise your name and join their unending hymn: Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.

...And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ, we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as we proclaim the mystery of faith. Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and wine. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, that we may be for the world the body of Christ. By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world, until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at his heavenly banquet. Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy Church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever. Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

Our Lord Jesus, on the night of his arrest, took bread, and after giving thanks to God, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: "Take, eat. This is my body, given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took the cup, saying: "This cup is the new covenant sealed in my blood, shed for you for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me." Every time we eat this bread and drink this cup, we proclaim the saving death of the risen Lord, until he comes.

BREAKING THE BREAD AND POURING THE CUP

Leader:

The bread of heaven. The cup of the new covenant. The gifts of God for the people of God.

ALL:

Let us keep the feast!

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

OFFERING INVITATION:

Leader:

When the people were hungry along the Sea of Galilee, a child offered five loaves of barley bread and two fish. From this, all were fed. Let us give our tithes and offerings with the same generosity of that child. If you have not already done so, please place your offering in the plate as you leave. If you are worshiping from home, please mail in your checks or use our online giving option on the website. Let us reflect on stewardship as we listen to today's offertory.

OFFERTORY

I Love You, Lord

Laurie Klein, arr. Jan Sanborn

* DOXOLOGY:

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise God, all creatures high and low; Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, in Jesus fully known; Creator, Word, and Spirit one;

Alleluia! Alleluia!

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION: (Unison)

God of abundant love, we offer these gifts from our own abundance. As we do so, we commit to sharing more of what we have with the hungry. It is in the name of Jesus Christ, the bread of life, that we pray. Amen.

We Go into the World

* CLOSING HYMN: "Loaves Were Broken, Words Were Spoken" (Glory to God 498)

BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

10.000 Reasons

Matt Redman/Jonas Myrin, arr. Jan Sanborn

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* So that we can properly greet people who come to the building during Sunday morning worship, Door A will be the only unlocked external door during the worship service.

Life of the Church

PEEK AT THE WEEK:

SUNDAY 8/4: Worship In Person & Online – 10:30 AM

COMMUNION

School Supply Collection during Worship

Fellowship Hosts: Trustees

MONDAY 8/5:

GA - 6:30 PM

Al-Anon - 7:00 PM

TUESDAY 8/6:

Deacons – 6:30 PM

WEDNESDAY 8/7:

GA - 7:00 PM

SATURDAY 8/10:

Cook for Shelter - 1:00 PM

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- SCHOOL SUPPLY DRIVE TODAY, AUGUST 4TH We're collecting school supplies to support students and teachers in the Highland area! All are invited to bring a few school supplies to worship on Aug. 4th, to be donated to local schools. If you aren't able to come to worship on Aug. 4th, supplies can be dropped off in the collection bin inside Door D at the church (during church office hours) July 28th through August 9th. Thank you for your help in equipping our local students and teachers!
- YOUTH CONNECTIONS POOL PARTY ON AUGUST 11TH AT JEAN SMITH'S All youth and young adults are invited to swim or hang out by the pool from 1-4PM! Friends are welcome! Snacks and beverages will be provided. Please let Heather Casiano know if you plan on joining.
- EAGLE SCOUT PROJECT AUGUST 17TH One of our church members, Robbie Casiano, is working towards earning his Eagle Scout rank in Boy Scouts. His chosen Eagle Scout project is an Essential Items Drive, to benefit our church's food pantry and local homeless shelters. On Saturday, August 17, from 9 am to 3 pm, you can drop off much needed items (listed below) at the church. You can drive up to the curb near Door B, where Robbie and his troop members will accept your donations without you having to even get out! The collection drive will take place rain or shine. If you can't make it on Aug. 17th, there will be a bin in the narthex at church for donated items from Aug. 12–23. Thank you for your help! -non-perishable food (nothing expired or homemade) -hygiene items for men and women, such as toothpaste, toothbrushes, shaving cream, razors, deodorant, soap, body wash, shampoo/conditioner -Socks of all sizes men, women and children -Baby items such as diapers, wipes, powdered baby formula
- FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA! If you don't already follow us on Facebook and Instagram, please start doing so @firstpchighland on both Facebook and Instagram.
- <u>JOIN US FOR FELLOWSHIP AFTER WORSHIP</u> Every Sunday after worship we have delicious snacks, coffee, lemonade, and conversation. Join us for this vital part of our life together!
- <u>INTERESTED IN BECOMING A MEMBER OF FPCH?</u> You are always welcome here, whether a member or not! If you are interested in joining as a member, though, we would love to have you! Please talk to Pastor Tyler if you would like to learn more.

Opportunities to serve as the HEART, HANDS, and FEET of Jesus Christ:

- <u>BLESSING BOX</u> Please continue to place items in the Blessing Box and take items if you are a person in need! Items most commonly donated: Canned goods with pull tabs, socks, toilet paper, non-perishable foods, small snacks, toiletries, baby wipes and diapers. Please check expiration dates!
- <u>HELP STOCK OUR PANTRY!</u> Please pick up a beautifully decorated grocery bag in the narthex and fill it to help the church's food pantry.
- **BIN OF HUGS** Bring in clean, gently used stuffed animals for distribution to migrant families with young children who need the joy of loving welcome!
- GOT SNEAKERS? We are still participating in the Got Sneakers Fundraiser where there is nothing to buy or sell; all we need is your support and your gently worn, used, or new sneakers! Blue bins are located in the narthex, and inside and outside DOOR D by the office. Every pair counts!

Prayer List

Anthony

George Nelson Brady Vanes George Griner Guy Hendricks

Bill and Anettia Holmes

Daniel Litwicki David Markley

Pat and David Kingen Diana and Ray Mendoza

Janet Orem Jeanne Nestor

Cindy Waltz and Sister

Yvonne Suroviak

Wendy

Georgette Sknerski Jakob Holden Denise Matthys Steve & Melinda

Jan Oprea Ric Jaeggi Florance Cody Josephine Kim Carol Figley

Kathy & Chuck Pumnea

Nick

Laura Buono Domsic The Windstrups Ruth Dekker Rick Parker Gary Everhart Gale Osterby

Bonnie Kern

Collin & Kathy Stein

Peter Tim

Barbara Morton Caroline Studer Holly Letnich Jaden Mendez Frank Falzone

Doug & Sue Matthews

Robert Urich Richard Simmons Janet Terpstra Glen Nahler Tammy Tom

Jana Tolley

Larry & Bonnie Perryman

Virginia Marshall

Delta Rose Winnie Owen Charity Lynn Shannon David Hamblin

Judy
Breeanne
Joe Petersen
Susan Agbor
Mom Bechtler
A Close Friend

Gloria

John Miramontes Colton Bobonick

Cletus Victor

Mary Ellen Edeus

Crystal and David Cervantes

Cheryl

Marian Clayton Lou Ann Sulowski

Ella P

Donald Churilla Edie Delgano

Melissa

2 Kings 4:42-44

⁴² 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." ⁴³ 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." ⁴⁴ He set it before them; they ate and had some left, according to the word of the Lord.

Ephesians 4:1-10

- 4 I, therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, ² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³ making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace: ⁴ there is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.
- ⁷ But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift. ⁸ Therefore it is said,
- "When he ascended on high, he made captivity itself a captive; he gave gifts to his people."
- ⁹ (When it says, "He ascended," what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰ He who descended is the same one who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things.)

John 6:1-21

6 After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias. ² A large crowd kept following him because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. ³ Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. ⁴ Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. ⁵ 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?" ⁶ He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. ⁷ Philip answered him, "Two hundred denarii would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little." ⁸ One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother, said to him, ⁹ "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?" ¹⁰ 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. ¹¹ 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. ¹² When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, "Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost." ¹³ So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. ¹⁴ 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."

- ¹⁵ 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.
- ¹⁶ When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, ¹⁷ got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. ¹⁸ The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. ¹⁹ 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. ²⁰ But he said to them, "It is I; do not be afraid." ²¹ Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land toward which they were going.

Bread for All

2 Kings 4:42-44; Ephesians 4:1-10; John 6:1-21

We spent all of last month on a powerful journey through *Mark* chapter 6. Well, if you enjoyed taking a deep dive into a single chapter, I've got good news for you—because we are about to do it again! We are even going to stick with the sixes! We are jumping from *Mark* 6 to *John* 6. We will do so with all of the power that overflowed into us in July—the power of faith, the power of hospitality, the power of inner peace, the power of Christ. For, all of this power is on brilliant display back along the Sea of Galilee, where we meet Jesus and his disciples once again surrounded by a crowd of thousands. It is in this familiar, complicated setting that Jesus makes his bold claim that he is the Bread of Life—an identity that will give us life and sustain us throughout the month of August. We have talked before about how the gospels build upon each other, often telling the same stories in different ways. *Mark* is the foundation upon which the other gospels stand. We can think of it as containing the basic ingredients of flour, water, and salt. The yeast and sugar and fat get added in delicious ways throughout *Matthew* and *Luke*. *John* came later and is the most complicated theologically. We can think of it as adding seeds and heat and butter and dipping sauces. It elevates flavor and design to the next level, filling this sustenance with complexity and beauty.

Last week I promised that we would return to the story of the few loaves and fishes feeding the thousands, as it took place right in the middle of *Mark* 6. This same event kicks off the events of *John* 6, setting the stage for the Bread of Life to emerge out of the oven, so to say. Jesus had just spent some time in Jerusalem for a festival, and while there he did the unexpected, which, of course, we should have expected. He chose to spend time by the Sheep Gate, a place known to be the home of the unhoused and untouchable—those who were sick or had physical disabilities and had to beg for their livelihoods. There was a certain man there who had been ill and unable to walk for thirty-eight years. Jesus said, "Stand up, take your mat, and walk," and lo and behold, the man was able to do so! There was an important catch, though, because, of course, the unexpected nature of Jesus' actions had to persist! You see, Jesus had visited this place and performed this miracle of healing on the Sabbath day, when it was not allowed for someone to even carry a mat, yet alone enact a sign of power.

A lengthy disputation with the religious leaders ensued, during which Jesus delved into the very nature of who he was and from whom his authority came. He made it very clear that God was his Father, and so the accusations of blasphemy and subsequent prosecutions began. Surely recognizing that it was a good time to get out of Dodge for his own safety and for the safety of his followers and to allow tensions to cool down, Jesus went back to the Sea of Galilee. As we learned in *Mark* 6, the crowd thronged around him and his disciples, becoming overwhelming in its press. Also aligning with *Mark* 6, the disciples started grumbling about how they were going to manage to meet the needs of this large crowd, especially in regards to food. But then we see a crucial distinction.

Without knowing it, Andrew, Simon Peter's brother presents a solution. Seeing a child in the crowd who has some food, he says, "There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?" Ufff, that question! It perfectly encapsulates what is called the myth of scarcity—the belief that there are not enough resources in this world to meet the needs of everyone. It is a pessimistic perspective all too often draped in the finery of seductive words like "realism" and "competition." And this myth causes so much harm in the world today! It causes us to believe that we need to own as much as we can and protect it with violence. It makes us look at others as suspicious threats who are trying to take what we own. It allows us to look at others' poverty and hunger with maybe a little bit of sympathy but not much empathy. It propels us into wars to maximize hegemony. It is even the driving force behind occupation and genocide—the claim that there is simply not enough land or water or food or goodwill for everyone, and so entire populations of people must go, including the children. The myth of scarcity. It is an ugly logic. A faulty justification. A false idol. "But what are five barley loaves and two fish among so many people?"

Thankfully Jesus operates according to a very different logic! And thankfully this kid was there to fully support him in that! You see, they choose to follow the divine truth of abundance. God created the world to be a home for all, in which the needs of all would be accounted for and met. God created elements that would foster

life and cause life to persist—soil, water, air, and organic matter. God created ecosystems that would be self-sustaining through exquisite structures and systems of interdependence. God created creatures that could adapt to changes in ecosystems so that they could always find food. And, of course, God created humans with big brains and ingenuity and the ability to feel for others and care for others and the ability to develop technologies that could help to maximize the amount of necessary ingredients and to ensure the distribution thereof to people everywhere. The divine truth is that there is an abundance of food and other resources in this world, and there should be an abundance of people with the hearts to care about other people's needs and the brains to meet other people's needs.

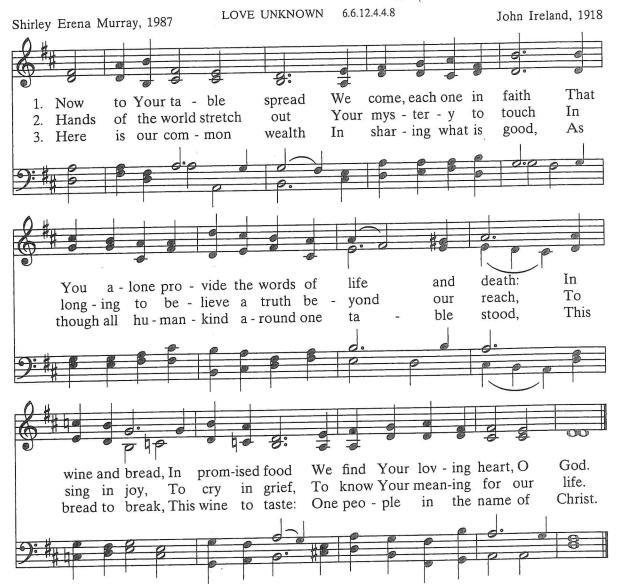
So this child offers his five loaves of barley bread and two fish. But what are they among so many people? Well, in Jesus' hands they are more than enough! He has everybody gather around, takes up the bread, gives thanks, breaks it, and shares it. Hey! Wait a minute! That sounds a lot like what then happened at the last supper in the Upper Room, a lot like what we do here at this table every month. In exquisite Holy Spirit detail, John even points out that this gathering by the Sea of Galilee is taking place around the time of Passover, the holy day that Jesus and his disciples would be celebrating up in that Upper Room. Yes, this whole event is indeed a prophetic precursor, preparing the ground and planting the seeds for the grain that would grow into the sacrament that still sustains us!

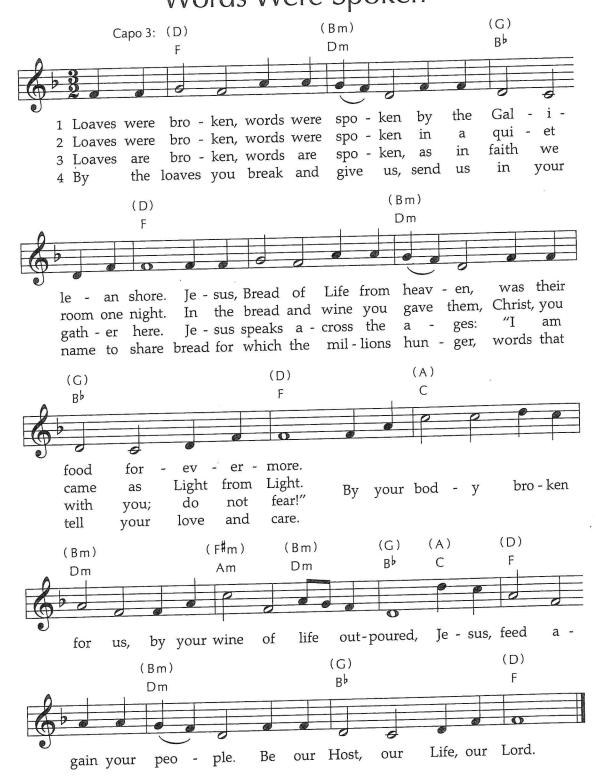
And wow do we ever need the reminder of what those original seeds were! For, they were the seeds of abundance. They were the seminal evidence that even when things look scarce, there is always more than enough with God. And so, this table is an ever-present symbol of abundance, an ever-persistent invitation to absolutely everyone, an ever-pressing motivation to make sure that all are indeed fed. For, after Jesus gave thanks to God, broke the bread, and shared it, there was more than enough for the thousands gathered. And let me remind you that it very well could have been more than five thousand, for women and children were often not included in official counts. And then, of course, there were twelve baskets of leftover bread gathered afterwards. Abundance. More than enough.

There are different theories as to how this miracle happened. They run from the supernatural to the mundane. The supernatural explanation that most of us probably first assume is that Jesus used his wonder working power to multiply the five loaves and two fish into more than enough food to feed thousands and then have leftovers. Such a feat was certainly within Jesus' power. The mundane explanation, that is still marvelously miraculous, is that the child's generous sharing of the bread and fish in his possession inspired others in the crowd to pull out the small bits of food that they may have been carrying. With all of those small bits combined, then, there was more than enough food to feed thousands and then have leftovers. As I said, this, also, would be a miracle. For, it is no small thing to get thousands of people to reject the myth of scarcity and embrace the truth of abundance by sharing instead of jealously holding onto what they had. And so we either have miraculous multiplication or miraculous inspiration.

I want us to keep reflecting on both possibilities in the weeks ahead, as we keep learning about the Bread of Life. For both possibilities have important lessons for us. God has the power to ensure that there is more than enough for everyone. Indeed, God has already done this through the act of Creation and the catalyzing of those exquisite natural structures and systems that make interdependent ecosystems. In this way bread and fish are constantly multiplying. AND we have the power to ensure that there is more than enough for everyone. Through that same act of Creation, God gifted us with big hearts and big brains. We have the capacity to care enough about others to make sure that their needs are met. We have the capacity to develop ways to distribute resources so that all are fed. May we be inspired by our Lord who never doubted that there would be enough food, even when his disciples grumbled. And may we be inspired by the child who offered his five loaves and two fish, somehow also recognizing that there would be enough. And so may we have faith like a child! And so may we remember that it is the children who suffer the most because of the myth of scarcity—the children of Gaza, the children of Sudan, the children of Chicagoland. For their sakes, let us choose the truth of abundance!

And so, there we have it. At the beginning of *John* 6, we see that the Bread of Life makes it abundantly clear that there is bread for all...and then even some tasty leftovers for the next day! Hallelujah! Amen.





Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.

The first two stanzas of this text deal with events in the past (the feeding of the multitude and the Last Supper) and the final two with events in the present. The recurring last four lines of each stanza serve as an affirmation of Christ's continuing presence at all times.