



40B PENTECOST 10B - ONLINE LITURGY

Just ask

Abstract

Jesus answered, "Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."

John 6:26-27 NIV

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OLD TESTAMENT

Exodus 16:2–4, 9–15

² In the desert the whole community grumbled against Moses and Aaron. ³ The Israelites said to them, “If only we had died by the LORD’s hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate all the food we wanted, but you have brought us out into this desert to starve this entire assembly to death.”

⁴ Then the LORD said to Moses, “I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions.

⁹ Then Moses told Aaron, “Say to the entire Israelite community, ‘Come before the LORD, for he has heard your grumbling.’ ”

¹⁰ While Aaron was speaking to the whole Israelite community, they looked toward the desert, and there was the glory of the LORD appearing in the cloud.

¹¹ The LORD said to Moses, ¹² “I have heard the grumbling of the Israelites. Tell them, ‘At twilight you will eat meat, and in the morning you will be filled with bread. Then you will know that I am the LORD your God.’ ”

¹³ That evening quail came and covered the camp, and in the morning there was a layer of dew around the camp. ¹⁴ When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost on the ground appeared on the desert floor. ¹⁵ When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, “What is it?” For they did not know what it was.

Moses said to them, “It is the bread the LORD has given you to eat.

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GOSPEL

John 6:24–35

²⁴ Once the crowd realized that neither Jesus nor his disciples were there, they got into the boats and went to Capernaum in search of Jesus.

²⁵ When they found him on the other side of the lake, they asked him, “Rabbi, when did you get here?”

²⁶ Jesus answered, “Very truly I tell you, you are looking for me, not because you saw the signs I performed but because you ate the loaves and had your fill. ²⁷ Do not work for food that spoils, but for food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. For on him God the Father has placed his seal of approval.”

²⁸ Then they asked him, “What must we do to do the works God requires?”

²⁹ Jesus answered, “The work of God is this: to believe in the one he has sent.”

³⁰ So they asked him, “What sign then will you give that we may see it and believe you? What will you do? ³¹ Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written: ‘He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’”

³² Jesus said to them, “Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. ³³ For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.”

³⁴ “Sir,” they said, “always give us this bread.”

³⁵ Then Jesus declared, “I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. ⁱⁱ

Response:

For the word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

50B Pentecost 10B - Online Liturgy

Just ask

SUNDAY, AUGUST 1, 2021 | AFTER PENTECOST | PROPER 13 | YEAR B

Old Testament & Psalm, Option I

Old Testament 2 Samuel 11:26–12:13a

Psalm Psalm 51:1–12

or

Old Testament & Psalm, Option II

Old Testament Exodus 16:2–4, 9–15

Psalm Psalm 78:23–29

New Testament Ephesians 4:1–16

Gospel John 6:24–35ⁱⁱⁱ

Following the feeding of the five thousand, Jesus moves out of the immediate scene, prompting some of the crowd to search for him. They find Jesus on the other side of the lake and are clearly keen for another encounter with the man who provided a miraculous picnic. They were not perhaps prepared for the way Jesus responds to them. Suggesting that they had only looked for him because he gave them food, he opens an intriguing discussion about bread, comparing this everyday necessity to himself as the source of all life and that their work is to believe in him who sustains all things.

How can we do the work that God wants? Are we convinced that believing in Jesus is sufficient, or do we too ask for signs?

This week we explore the question: what must we do to perform the works of God?

	Pre-Service
	Introit
	<p style="text-align: center;">Greeting</p> <p style="text-align: center;">May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ The Love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all</p> <p style="text-align: center;">and also with you</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;">We Gather</p> <p style="text-align: center;">We come with our curiosity and questions. We come seeking answers.</p>

We are grateful for our daily bread,
but we yearn for the bread of eternal life.
Let us seek to be fed and filled
with God's life and love.

Acknowledgements

Lord God, giver of life,
you bless us with all we need –
and with so much more.
Keep us from being so focused on physical needs
that we neglect our spiritual food.
Feed us with your word,
satisfy us with your presence,
and strengthen us by your Spirit –
that we may share your eternal life.
Amen.

We say Sorry

Lord, when we fail to trust you in all things:
forgive us,
and help us to trust you more.

When we complain that you have forsaken us,
you have left us, abandoned us:
forgive us,
and help us to trust you more.

When we choose to go our own way
because your way doesn't seem to make sense:
forgive us,
and help us to trust you more.

When we don't challenge injustice,
and instead, accept things as they are:
forgive us,
and help us to trust you more.

When we keep asking for more signs,
more proof, more of everything:
forgive us,
and help us to trust you more.

When we trust a little, then snatch it back:
forgive us,
and help us to trust you more.

Amen.

Words of Assurance

When we have not trusted God with our lives

	<p>and walked away, we can always come back into God's everlasting arms, knowing that we are loved and forgiven. Amen.</p>
<p>Hymn/song TIS #440 (AHB #364) – "Christ, from whom all blessings flow"</p>	
<p>Welcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a jug of water, • some flour, • a little yeast, • a little oil, • small loaf or bread roll. <p>Jesus said that all we have to do is to believe in him, the living bread. No more, no less, no special skills, and whoever we are.</p> <p>'Yet, look at what they can do when they work together.' <i>Mix the four ingredients in a bowl. Then remove the bowl and display the loaf/roll.</i></p> <p>Jesus said, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry." <i>Then break the bread. Invite everyone to sit quietly and listen to Suzanne Toolan's 'I am the Bread of Life'</i></p> <p>Video I am the Bread of Life A prayer of approach O God, giver of manna from heaven, you provided for Moses' followers in the desert. O Christ, bread of life, you fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fish. O Holy Spirit of the living God, here with us as we come together today, we ask you to feed us with all that we need, and that, thus fed, we might be satisfied. Amen.</p>	
<p>Readings Exodus 16:2–4, 9–15 <i>Bread from Heaven</i> John 6:24–35 <i>Jesus the Bread of Life</i></p> <p><i>respond</i> For the word of the Lord</p>	

	Thanks be to God
	Hymn/Song
	Choir

Response

A Bishop was once asked by a student,
 “What is the first thing we should do when we start with a new church?”
 And he replied. “Go to your office, sit down and stay there until you realize
 that what your church is doing is the most important mission in the community.
 And then give thanks that Christ has called you to be part of it.”^{iv}

We are heading into the second half of 2021,
 and maybe it’s a good time to check in with our expectations for this year
 and see if anything needs to be re-adjusted.
 Some of us have had a better year than we expected;
 some of us have had it worse.
 All of us have certain plans and expectations for how the rest of the year will go.
 Are you optimistic or pessimistic about the next five months?

There is a quote
 “Expectation is the mother of regret.”
 Think about that for a moment.
 It sounds pessimistic to me.
 Maybe it was an expression of a person that didn’t expect his future to go well
 all didn’t turn out like they expected.
 How do you react when life doesn’t meet your expectations? ^v

There is a story of a man who had a nephew,
 who had, on every occasion, said to the man,
 “I hope you will remember me in your will.”
 So the man died, and the family was gathered for the reading of his will.
 The lawyer came to a line which read like this,
 “And to my nephew Harvey,
 who has repeatedly asked to be remembered in my will,
 I say ‘Helloooooo Harvey.’” ^{vi}
 Expectation was the mother of regret for that poor nephew.

We heard in our Exodus reading
 in response to his people’s plea for help in the wilderness,
 God gave them food enough for each day and said, in effect,
 ‘Trust me for tomorrow!’
 Psalm 78 says,
 They ate till they were gorged— he had given them what they craved. ^{vii}

God fed and protected them,
 but he also required them to be obedient and faithful.
 It was a two-way deal.

In our John reading,
 when the crowds asked Jesus for a miraculous sign,

he gave them a similar answer.

“I am the bread of life.

Whoever comes to me will never go hungry,

and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.”^{viii} John 6:35

That was an answer that raised even more questions!

It is good to ask challenging questions

as we try to understand what God’s work for us may be.

God can deal with our complaints against him

and he hears our questions.

But perhaps, as is always the case with Jesus’ teaching,

we will never get a straight answer,

to make sure that we are stretched by working it out for ourselves.

Our natural instinct is that, before we are willing to do the work God wants,

we need to ask more questions.

But perhaps God needs us to just make the first move,

to step forward,

not knowing where we are going

but trusting him to guide our next step,

to know where our next meal will come from.

The living bread of which Jesus speaks is a gift

that will do much more than just feed our bodies for the day.

It will sustain us for life,

in all its challenges and interactions.

Just as a shared meal includes conversation, laughter, relationships and intimacy,

so the sharing of our lives with others can meet many needs.

During lockdown,

a keen English west-country gardener

wanted to help those who could only get out for their daily walk.

She operated a bring-and-buy stall at the roadside outside her house,

encouraging many to take healthy exercise in their own gardens

while raising thousands for local cancer charities.

The socially distanced conversations about plants

also fed the souls of the lonely.

There is more to being fed than eating bread.

As we do the work of God

by believing in the one whom he has sent,

our lives will reflect the quality of the Living Bread that we have shared.

It is still a two-way deal

as we respond to what we have received by sharing it.

A woman tells of visiting Zambia

and meeting Christians who were fortunate to get even one meal each day.

Physically, they were needy and hungry.

And yet, they were filled with joy and love and hope.

She writes, "I met people who although hungry
were filled with the truth of Jesus in their lives
and the sure and certain knowledge that He will sustain them.

This is exactly what Jesus meant when he said 'I am the bread of life.'

Jesus feeds us.

He feeds us on the inside with love and hope and grace and forgiveness." ix

Skateboarding is a new Olympic Sport in the Tokyo games.

This is a story about Eddie,

one of the most famous names in skateboarding.

He could perform amazing tricks on his skateboard and still land on his feet.

He even created a special skateboard trick that is named after him.

By age 18, Eddie was the two-time world skateboarding champion.

But Eddie discovered that his achievements and awards and fame didn't bring him any satisfaction.

He dropped out of the sport and became dependent on drugs and alcohol.

As he says, "In the early '80s, I was at the top.

There was nowhere else to go.

There was just some kind of emptiness.

I thought maybe if I do drugs, I can fill that emptiness.

But it didn't work out.

At one point, I found myself out on the street,

not knowing why I was there." x

Eddie found work at a fast-food restaurant.

One day he was chatting with a customer,

and she began telling him about the hope she had found

in knowing Jesus Christ.

She told Eddie, "You will never find fulfillment in skateboarding or drugs.

You'll only find it in Jesus Christ.

He alone will give you a satisfying purpose in life."

Eddie committed his life to Jesus that day.

He began going to church and growing in the faith.

Today he still participates in skateboarding exhibitions,

but he is also a pastor.

The mission statement of his church is "Loving people to life." xi

We search for that one thing that will satisfy.

Maybe some status symbol or title or achievement or relationship

that will make us feel complete.

But none of them can supply what our soul is really hungry for.

Bread from heaven

that is our greatest need.

Christ is that bread.

Jesus came into the world to love people to life.

And you will only find your identity and purpose and your best life

when you turn your life over to Jesus Christ. xii

Amen

	<p>Hymn/song TIS #538 – “Feed us now” Mann</p>
	<p>Offering <i>Based on Ephesians 4:1-16</i> OFFERTORY SENTENCE: May we be generous in our giving. May we do so for the simple and pure reason that we are, all of us together, the people of God.</p> <p>OFFERTORY PRAYER: God, the Scriptures tell us that you cause the rain to fall on the just and the unjust, that you love without partiality, that we are one community in you.</p> <p>We pray today that the money we give, here and in other ways, might all be used to foster one world. Amen.^{xiii}</p>
	<p>Notices</p>
	<p>Prayers for all people Heavenly Father, giver of all good gifts, we pray for all people who willingly use their time and gifts in the service of others.</p> <p>We pray for all who set up and work in charitable organisations: bless them as they so freely give of their time and talents.</p> <p>We pray for people who work together to bring healing, for all who work in hospitals, homes, the community: bless them as they bring blessing to others.</p> <p>We pray for those who dedicate their lives to serving God in religious orders and communities: bless them in their gifts of prayer, hospitality and service.</p> <p>We pray for people with the gift of words, for teachers, writers and communicators: bless the seeds that they sow.</p> <p>We pray for those who don't feel as if they have a gift, or feel as if it goes unnoticed: bless them with the knowledge that they matter to you.</p> <p>We pray for our church as a welcoming community,</p>

	<p>constantly being built up by our love for you. Bless us, Lord. Amen.</p>
	<p>Lord's Prayer Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, ^{xiv} now and forever. AMEN</p>
	<p>Hymn/song TIS #599 – “Take my life and let it be”</p>
	<p>We are sent out As we seek to do what you want, Lord, may we bring bread to the hungry – food for bodies and food for souls, strength for the journey, and hope for the future. In Jesus' name. Amen.</p> <p>May the Lord bless us and keep us May His face shine upon us and be gracious to us May he lift up His countenance upon us and give us peace</p>
	<p>Benediction TIS #768 – “Praise God from whom all blessings flow” Frances Ridley Havergal</p>
	<p>Thank you</p>

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- ⁱ [Revised Common Lectionary](#). (2009). Bellingham, WA: Faithlife.
- ⁱⁱ [Revised Common Lectionary](#). (2009). Bellingham, WA: Faithlife.
- ⁱⁱⁱ [Revised Common Lectionary](#). (2009). Bellingham, WA: Faithlife.
- ^{iv} James Love http://www.jameslove.com/sermons/yeara_pentacost16_2002.htm.
- ^v "Let Every Heart Make Room for Promise," Daniel D. Chambers, First Congregational Church of Berkeley, <http://www.fccb.org/worship/sermons1996.php>.
- ^{vi} Where There's A Will . . . (Dr. Walter Jones) Northminster Presbyterian Church <http://www.northminsteratl.org/sermpdf/05012005.pdf>.
- ^{vii} The New International Version. (2011). (Ps 78:29). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan.
- ^{viii} The New International Version. (2011). (Jn 6:35). Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan
- ^{ix} Emma Major, <http://llmcalling.blogspot.com/2012/08/bread-from-heaven-sermon-on-john-624-35.html>.
- ^x "Ex-skateboarding champ Eddie Elguera talks tricks, drugs and God" by Elaine Yau, South China Morning Post, August 12, 2015, <https://www.scmp.com/magazines/48-hours/article/1847566/ex-skateboarding-champ-eddie-elguera-talks-tricks-drugs-and-god>.
- ^{xi} "Pastors on the Boards: Eddie Elguera, Christian Hosoi Talk About How Faith Changed Their Lives," Written by Brian Blueskye, CV Independent, <https://www.cvindependent.com/index.php/en-US/news/features/item/1876-pastors-on-the-boards-eddie-elguera-christian-hosoi-talk-about-how-faith-changed-their-lives>.
- ^{xii} ChristianGlobe Networks, Inc., Dynamic Preaching Third Quarter Sermons, by King Duncan
- ^{xiii} Based on Ephesians 4:1-16
- ^{xiv} English Language Liturgical Consultation, 1988