

JULY 21, 2021

AGAPE FROM AFAR

Adjusting to life amidst Coronavirus

A WORD FROM PASTOR JILL

As a way to remain connected during this time apart, I will be putting together a weekly newsletter with a reflection based on the upcoming Sunday scripture passage. I hope that by taking a few moments to reflect on the Word of God and pray, we can feel grounded and connected to God and to one another during this uncertain time. *-Pastor Jill*



The passage for this Sunday is from John 6:1-21. This is the story known as the "Feeding of the 5,000". A large crowd is gathered on a hillside to hear Jesus speak. Jesus asks the disciples where they are going to find food to feed all these people. The disciples insist it would be impossible to feed such a large crowd. Jesus instructs the disciples to feed the crowd from a boy's lunch of 5 loaves of bread and 2 fish. The disciples feed the entire crowd and end up having 12 baskets left over.

Reflect more on this passage on the following pages.



Read the passage:

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 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.'

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 lake, got into a boat, and started across the lake to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. The lake became rough because a strong wind was blowing. When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the lake 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 towards which they were going.



Reflect:

1. Some people understand this story as a supernatural miracle. Others believe that people in the crowd gave from their own pockets and bags. Whichever version you believe, what do you think is the significance of this story?
2. After Jesus feeds the 5000, the crowd calls him a prophet. Why do you think the description prophet was chosen after this miracle?
3. Why do you think the passage specifies there were 12 baskets left over? What can we learn from this?
4. What is this passage calling you to do today? This week?

Pray:

Thank you, O God, for creating abundance out of nothing. Help us to share whatever we have, so that it might be multiplied. Amen.