



# 5000 FOR DINNER

Welcome to this week's circuit service. This week we look at the feeding of the 5000, with contributions from across the circuit. We hope this service will be a blessing for you in the week ahead.

This service is available as a full length video service at: <https://youtu.be/lijYRtWEbL8>

## OPENING PRAYER

God of our hopes and dreams,  
we are empty, and long to be filled;  
we are hungry, and long to be fed;  
we are lost, and long to be found.  
Gather us into your love,  
and pick up the pieces of our lives,  
just as Jesus gathered up the fragments  
of the five loaves and two fish  
that remained after feeding the five thousand.  
Call us anew to eat our fill  
and to find our true nourishment in Jesus,  
the bread of heaven.  
Amen.



## HYMN THIS IS THE DAY

This is the day,  
this is the day that the Lord has made,  
that the Lord has made.

We will rejoice,  
we will rejoice and be glad in it,  
and be glad in it.

This is the day that the Lord has made;  
we will rejoice and be glad in it.

This is the day,  
this is the day that the Lord has made.

This is the day,  
this is the day when he rose again,  
when he rose again.

We will rejoice,  
we will rejoice and be glad in it,  
and be glad in it.

This is the day when he rose again;  
we will rejoice and be glad in it.

This is the day,  
this is the day when he rose again.

This is the day,  
this is the day when the Spirit came,  
when the Spirit came.

We will rejoice,  
we will rejoice and be glad in it,  
and be glad in it.

This is the day when the Spirit came;  
we will rejoice and be glad in it.

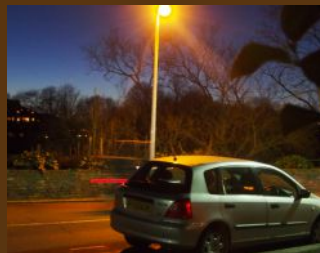
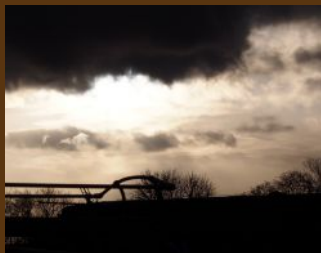
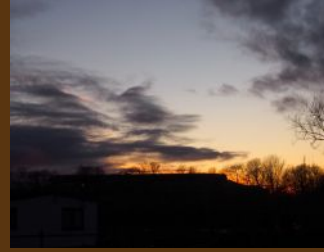
This is the day,  
this is the day when the Spirit came.

*Anonymous, Singing the Faith #152*

## PRAYERS OF PRAISE AND ADORATION

Mighty God,  
Though we stretch imagination to the limit,  
We barely begin to glimpse how wonderful you are.  
Though you sometimes seem distant,  
You are ever near.  
Whatever we face, you are there, seen or unseen,  
Your hand is always at work.  
For the constancy of your love

And the faithfulness of your purpose,  
We give you our praise,  
In the name of Christ  
Amen



*Photos from Jack Powers*


Gracious God,  
We can never thank you enough,  
For your blessings are too many to number  
And your goodness is too wonderful for words.  
So we come,  
As we so often before,  
To express our gratitude for all we have received  
From your bountiful hands.  
Amen

## STORY STONE SOUP

*Adapted and Retold by John Logan.* The first published version of this story goes back to 1720 by Madame de Noyer, France.

There are many different versions of the story, with a few twists and turns depending on what you want the story for. My version of the story is based on the first English version of the story by a man called Robert Moser in 1808. I particularly like his ending! But as with all good stories you can take it where you want!

This story is base in Zurich, Switzerland, but it could be anywhere. It could be in your house, or garden or local gathering place. It begins like this:

A woman wearing a green headscarf and an orange dress is sitting on the ground in a market setting. She is looking towards the camera with a slight smile. The background shows other people and market stalls, though they are out of focus.

Someone told me the other day that they were in the Rosenhof market, minding their own business, as you do. It was a fairly quiet day in the market, because, truth be known no one had any money. You see the crops had failed and famine had taken over all around us. SO no one had money to spend in the market and in actual fact there wasn't much to sell either. But some people kept coming, because that's what they did... came to the market that is.

Anyway this particular day, my friend tells me, a very distinguished looking lady came into the market area. It was the hat that did it. It was a very large and colourful hat covered in fresh flowers. She was very noticeable, not just because of the hat, but because of what happened next. Apparently, she walked over to the fire in the centre of the market place. There was always a fire in the centre of the market place, because that is where all the old market traders gathered to tell stories at the close of the market each day.

Anyway, this lady was carrying a fine woven bag with her. It was a bit worn, but you know quality when you see it! She pulled out of her bag a pot, a cooking pot. You know the type and filled it with water, and then, and you won't quite believe this, out of her bag she pulled a stone. Yes, that's right, a stone.

She placed the stone in the water. By now, so my friend says, everyone was watching. She placed the pot on the fire and announced, 'would anyone like to join me for some delicious stone soup?'. Apparently a lot of people were muttering and a few laughing, but they were all so hungry that any offer of food was taken up readily. Firstly, a young boy spoke, 'I would so much like to join you, I haven't eaten anything for two days.' 'Good, good, I am so pleased' she said, 'The stone soup is cooking nicely, it won't be long now. What it could do with is a little seasoning,' she said and before she knew it someone gave her a potato which she popped into the pot, then a carrot or two, and someone else a small turnip, then some cabbage and so the vegetables kept coming. They had all been saving them for their supper that night. But the thought of lovely fresh and filling soup was too good an offer to ignore.

After a while the soup was ready and the stone carefully removed, 'After all the stone wouldn't taste very good on its own!' the lady said with laughter in her voice. And just at that moment along rushed the owner of the spice stall and said in a very excited way, 'Just put this salt and pepper from my stall in and this soup will be incredible!' So that's what they did, and do you my friend said to me afterwards, 'there was enough soup, enough whole, hearty, filling, delicious soup for everyone!'. .

But what about the soup stone? What happened to that? 'Well', my friend said, 'The recipe was spoken about so much that everyone wanted to borrow the soup stone, and when they did the same amazing things happened- there was soup enough for everyone. Then eventually', she continued, 'people realised that there were other stones too that could make stone soup, and soon the people Zurich were no longer hungry.'

And that would be the end of the story had not the world needed to learn the secret of the stone soup recipe more than ever.

I wonder who you could help make stone soup today?

## MATTHEW 14:13-21 FEEDING THE FIVE THOUSAND

Now when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns. When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick.

When it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, 'This is a deserted place, and the hour is now late; send the crowds away so that they may go into the villages and buy food for themselves.' Jesus said to them, 'They need not go away; you give them something to eat.' They replied, 'We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish.' And he said, 'Bring them here to me.' Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven, and blessed and broke the loaves, and gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the crowds.

And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

### HYMN IN CHRIST ALONE

Singing the Faith 351

### SERMON GOD'S MIRACULOUS PROVISION

*With Rev. Adam*


Feeding of 5,000 is one of the two miracles recorded in all the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). The other one is the resurrection.

A time of crisis and panic- one time I was the lead minister at a Youth conference which was held in a remote place. We made some arrangements with a bakery to bring delivery of bread. Delivery truck had a break down on the way... NO BREAD- now faced with hungry, angry young faces in need of their breakfast!!! We had to substitute bread with cooked rice and the situation calmed down.

**The message of the feeding miracle is simple: God will provide.** God's provision for his people has always been symbolized by food- we recall the manna in the wilderness at the exodus.

The desperation of the human condition is seen in the absence of food. In times of crisis we often get powerless and we are quick to give up/ surrender.

- For the disciples, the problem is too BIG for them, nothing to offer- There cannot be a solution!

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- Solution- “Send them away”. Maybe they are acting responsibly as faithful trustees.

**Never judge your problems in the light of your resources.....** Trust God to do something BIG!!!

### **Jesus’ Compassion:**

- Where the disciples turn the mothers and children away, Jesus says “let them come to me for the kingdom of heaven is theirs”.
- To all those who are troubled with life, he says “Come to me and I will give you rest”.  
\*When the disciples suggest sending the people away, Jesus has something greater in mind, for as the shepherd, he would supply the needs for his flock.

Jesus said to them, “They need not go away; you give them something to eat.”  
(verse 16) (Jesus does not send any one away empty- he will not turn you away)

**The banquet of compassion** (you are his guest) - sitting on the green grass (Mark) representing how Jesus can transform the wilderness into a place of refreshment, the good shepherd who leads his flock to green pastures. They ate to their fill- left over (12 baskets) “I shall not want”.

**God requires our participation** - he only asks for our trust and obedience.

Jesus invited his disciples to distribute the bread and fish, and to collect the leftovers. In this miracle God invites us to be part of the ongoing work of Christ. We are his hands, and feet to serve others- to feed them, clean them, water them, cloth them, to provide healing and comfort to the broken hearted and not to send them away! **Amen**

## **PRAYER FOR OTHERS**

Loving God,  
You are our Creator and Sustainer.  
When You open Your hand,  
You satisfy the hunger and thirst of every living thing.  
And so we look to You whenever we are in need,  
trusting in Your love and Your abundant goodness.

As You once fed the hungry crowds with five loaves and two small fish,  
we ask that You would again fill those who are empty this day.  
Pour out Your Spirit on all who hunger and thirst.

We pray for those who are physically hungry—whose stomachs are empty.  
We think of the people around the world who are facing critical food shortages;  
who are suffering the effects of malnutrition and starvation;  
and watching helplessly as loved ones die.

**Lord, in Your mercy, open Your hand.  
Pour out Your Spirit, so that they may be filled.**

We pray for those who are emotionally empty—  
who are lonely and long for companionship and love,  
who are caught in the grip of depression,  
**or overwhelmed with grief.**

**Lord, in Your mercy, open Your hand.  
Pour out Your Spirit, so that they may be filled.**

We pray for those who are spiritually empty—  
who are troubled, but don't know where to turn;  
who long for purpose and meaning, but don't know where to look;  
who need You, but do not yet know You.

Lord, in Your mercy, open Your hand.  
Pour out Your Spirit, so that they may be filled.

God, we praise You for Your abundant gifts in our lives.  
Pour out Your Spirit on us as well.  
Fill us with Your compassion and love,  
so that we would willingly share some of our abundance  
with those who have need.

**Lord, in Your mercy, open Your hand.  
Pour out Your Spirit, so that we may be filled.**

We pray in the name of Jesus Christ,  
who came so that all of humanity might come to know  
the abundant life that comes from You.

Amen

## HYMN SENT BY THE LORD AM I

Singing the Faith #239

## BLESSING

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Love of God and the Fellowship of the Holy Spirit be yours, now and forever. Amen

*Thanks to everyone who helped put this service together. Prayers of Praise and thanksgiving were from Nick Fawcett (2000 prayers for public worship) and prayers of intercession are from [https://cmb.s.mennonitebrethren.ca/worship\\_resources/jesus-feeds-the-multitude/](https://cmb.s.mennonitebrethren.ca/worship_resources/jesus-feeds-the-multitude/)*