

**Lectionary Bible Study  
Our Savior Lutheran Church**

**Lectionary 18**

**Readings Readings and Psalm**

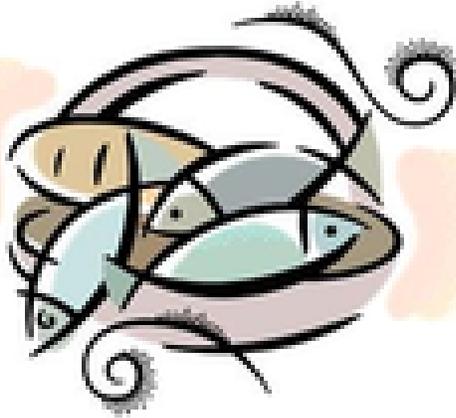
Isaiah 55:1-5, Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21,  
Romans 9:1-5, Matthew 14:13-21

[Click here](#) to join Pastor Mark for a Live Zoom conversation each Wednesday at 10am.

Meeting ID: 868 8793 0554

Password: 654321

Or dial in for audio only: 1-301-715-8592



**Matthew 14:13-21 (NRSV)**

<sup>13</sup> 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. <sup>14</sup> When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd; and he had compassion for them and cured their sick. <sup>15</sup> 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." <sup>16</sup> Jesus said to them, "They need not go away; you give them something to eat." <sup>17</sup> They replied, "We have nothing here but five loaves and two fish." <sup>18</sup> And he said, "Bring them here to me." <sup>19</sup> 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. <sup>20</sup> And all ate and were filled; and they took up what was left over of the broken pieces, twelve baskets full. <sup>21</sup> And those who ate were about five thousand men, besides women and children.

I remember being taught two things about miracles growing up. First, you can't explain miracles. If you can, they are not miracles. Second, miracles are not to be expected, they are to be accepted.

1. *What do you think about miracles?*

A key with any "miracle" story is to **NOT** get distracted by the special effects. Rarely, if ever, can we explain **how** miracles happen. But discovering **why** miracles happen invites us to be open to mystery, wonder, and the impossible possible.

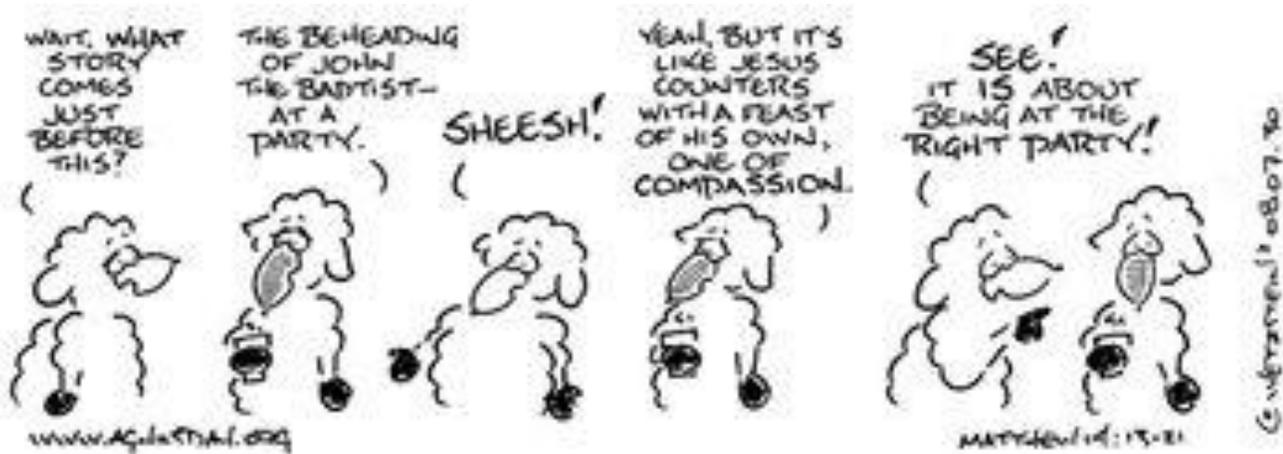
The feeding of the 5,000 is the only miracle recorded in all four gospels. (For extra study, look up all four reports and note the similarities and the differences: (Matthew 14:13-21; Mark 6:31-44; Luke 9:12-17; John 6:1-14).

In Matthew's report of the Feeding of the 5,000 (plus), it is critical to feel one's way into the full meaning of **Verse 13**: *When Jesus heard this ...*" What Jesus had just heard was that his cousin

John the B has been beheaded; killed as the result of jealousy and a foolish promise.

2. *Who is John to Jesus? Was John more than a cousin, a forerunner? Could Jesus have been a follower of John?*

Agnus Day ([www.agnusday.org](http://www.agnusday.org)) makes an interesting connection between the royal feast at which John was killed and the feast to follow that Jesus hosts ...



Before Jesus is moved to compassion, according to Matthew, he had just been rejected by his own town, Nazareth (Matthew 13:53-58); then John is executed (Matthew 14:1-12); and then *Jesus withdrew from there in a boat to a deserted place by himself.*

3. *What is the significance is "a deserted place?"*

It seems there is no escape for Jesus and no space for grieving and singular prayer time. Arriving by boat to the lonely place, he finds a large crowd has followed him on the shore Jesus' heart is filled with compassion.

4. *Define compassion as you think of how Jesus reacted and acted upon finding he could not escape the crowds.*

For those who followed Jesus and were present in that day, the feeding of 5,000 (plus) invites us to remember another wildernesses or deserted place, and another "miraculous" feeding: Moses and the manna (Exodus 16). For those who follow Jesus today, the act of taking bread, praying, blessing, breaking, and giving invites us to remember the Lord's Supper (and even the meal shared with the Emmaus Road disciples).

5. *Being invited to remember how God/Jesus moves from compassion to action, how are we invited to do the same?*

Sharing Jesus compassion for others isn't easy. It's hard work. Considering the scope and need of a hungry world, we might respond like the disciples did when Jesus invited them into action: "*We've got next to nothing here to give (my paraphrase).*" But next to nothing seems to be Jesus favorite thing to work with as all are fed and there is plenty left over.

6. *Describe places where you sense and see people hungering today?*
7. *Describe places where you sense and see God's abundance today?*