

CHRIST THE KING LUTHERAN CHURCH

Making Christ Known

August 14, 2006

The Red Thread

Connecting Sunday Scriptures to Daily Life

Vol. 7 Number 33

BREAD AGAIN?

For the past three Sundays, Jesus has been feeding people bread. When are we going to get meat and vegetables? Bread has always been a universal staple. It is the food that forms the basis of most people's diet. Bread is a symbol of nourishment and hospitality.

In I Kings 19:4-8, Elijah is fleeing in fear for his life. Overcome by fatigue, he sits down in utter despair, unable to go on. He begs God to let him die. Life is just not worth it any more. Like any good parent, God advises rest. Things will look better in the morning. After sleeping, God tells Elijah twice, "Get up and eat." Having no provisions of his own, God provided bread. If Elijah does not eat what God has provided, "the journey will be too much." Elijah ate what the LORD provided, nourishment enough to complete his journey, traveling for forty days (Bible talk for "as long as it takes") "in the strength of that food."

Psalms 34:1-8 praises God for his attentiveness to human struggle and need. The LORD delivers us from fear, rescues us when we flee, feeds us when fatigued. "Taste and see that the LORD is good; happy are they who trust in him!" God gives what we need to sustain us for life's journey. Ephesians 4:25-5:2 instructs God's nourished people how to live together in Christ. The list of virtues and vices are basic for life together, just like bread: speaking truth in love for the sake of building up and nourishing the community.

John 6:35, 41-51 picks up where the Gospel left off last week with Jesus declaring, "I am the bread of life." We need more than bread for our physical needs. Our spirits need nourishment also. God fed Elijah physically and spiritually. That is why he could finish the journey. God sent his Son to meet us at the point of our greatest need, when we sit down, like Elijah, unable to go on with life. Being fed with what nourishes us, giving us faith for the journey of life, is God's initiative. He offers us the hospitality of divine nourishment through Jesus who is the bread of life. This bread does not just fill our immediate need but satisfies our spiritual hunger for eternity.

Jesus promises, "Whoever comes to me will never be hungry." Taste the bread of life that is Jesus Christ. It is just what we need for healthy living. "Take and eat, this is my body given for you." We do not need to look for anything else. The bread of life that comes to us from God is all that we need.

Pastor Marilyn