



Twenty-Second Sunday after Pentecost

October 24, 2021

*Call to Worship

Adapted from Ann Siddall based on Psalm 63:1

Only the hungry search for bread.

Only the thirsty look for water.

This is a place for those who are hungry and thirsty in spirit.

Only those who ache for meaning will pursue it.

Only those who yearn for a deeper life will seek it.

This is a place for those who ache and yearn for something more.

So let us come here today with our hunger and thirst,

our unsatisfied longings, our heart-felt yearnings,

and let the God of life satisfy our souls.

*Hymn of Praise

"O Worship the King"

UMH 73

***Opening Prayer**

O God, I hunger and thirst for You, I seek and search for You, my life is not satisfied with material things alone. Come fill my emptiness with Your Presence, strengthen my weakness with Your Power, and still my restlessness with Your abiding peace. Let me rejoice in Your Presence, as in finding an oasis in the desert, for I hunger and thirst for You, God of Life and Love. Amen.

Share How You Can Present Your Offering to God

Make your offering personal...through a donation or an act of service...bring to God an offering of praise and gratitude!

Sing the Doxology Together

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Prayers for One Another at Faith and Hope... (adapted from Rev. Richard Fairchild)

*Lord God Almighty, maker of heaven and earth,
we your people acclaim you,
we praise You, we exalt You,
we bless Your holy name.*

*It is Your love that is revealed in the life and death of Jesus,
it is Your power that is seen in his resurrection,
and it is Your majesty that is made known
by his ascension into heaven to be at Your side.*

*Help us, O God, to always keep Your power and Your authority
and Your love and your majesty in our minds
and to never neglect the doing of Your will.*

*Help us to be obedient to the word You place
in our hearts and our minds...*

Lord, hear our prayer...

Father of us all,

*we believe that Christ Jesus should rule within our worship
and our life together as Your people.*

*We believe too that He should rule over our work in the world
and within our family life.*

*Indeed we profess that He wants to be Lord of our lives,
the One who is supreme in deciding how we should relate
to our friends and our neighbors.*

Help us make this visible in what we do each and every day—

*in how we make decisions about how we spend our time and our money,
in how we employ our hands and in how we direct our feet,
in how we speak and in how we think,
in how we rest and in how we work...*

Lord, hear our prayer...

O God, in his time with us

Christ has shown his authority over wind and wave.

We pray that he may bring peace and calm to those who lives are troubled...

We especially pray today for...

Lord, hear our prayer....

Thank you, God most Holy, for hearing our prayers.

All these things we ask of you in the name of Christ Jesus,

who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,

*one God, both now and forevermore. **Amen.***

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name; thy kingdom come; thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

God's Word

Matthew 5:6

The Word of God for the people of God...Thanks be to God!

Message

"An Appetite for God"

Pastor Clark

*Hymn of Faith

"You Satisfy the Hungry Heart"

UMH 629

(verses 1-2, 4-5)

Blessing

***"When you open your hand, you satisfy
the hunger and thirst of every living thing."***

Psalm 145:16



“An Appetite for God”

Matthew 5:6

“God blesses those who hunger and thirst for righteousness/justice, for they will be satisfied.” (NLT)

“You’re blessed when you’ve worked up a good appetite for God. He’s food and drink in the best meal you’ll ever eat.” (MSG)

Introduction

Let’s begin at the end this morning. God blesses in such a way so as to **satisfy**. Here Matthew uses a graphic word: **chortazomai**, which implies being well-filled or stuffed. It was actually used in other settings to describe the fattening of animals. So fast-forward a few weeks to Thanksgiving Day. Many of us will no doubt experience **chortazomai** personally! We will be stuffed, well-filled, and satisfied. So satisfied we will fall asleep watching one of the NFL games on that afternoon!

We know all about that in our society that consumes a vast percentage of the world’s food. Our serving sizes have quadrupled over the past few decades. The only problem arises when we discover that this word applies to so many other areas of life. That’s where we get into grave difficulty.

We look to all the wrong things to fill our hearts and souls! We blindly assume that our soul hunger and soul thirst can be satisfied by the things of this world. Even though we are stuffed; we are still hungry. Even though we are slaked with super-sized drinks, we are still thirsty.

Where can we find true satisfaction?

Jesus nails it when He says, *“those who hunger and thirst for righteousness...for justice...those who have a healthy appetite for God and what God desires.”*

How would you describe your appetite for God? For the things God desires? Empty? Partial? Filled? Stuffed?

What stirs your spiritual appetite?

- Inward need to feast on God’s Word
- Music that awakens our hearts to sing God’s praise
- The stunning beauty of nature...walking Sunday afternoon at Slate Run
- Movements of the Holy Spirit...Wesleyan Renewal in England...Jeremiah Lanphier in NYC
- Threatening circumstances or suffering...compels us to seek God
- The challenges of marriage and parenting
- Seeking a fresh filling in order to feed others
- Bands of likeminded seekers
- Experiences like the Walk to Emmaus

What’s one step you could take to kindle your appetite for God?

#1 Hunger for God's Word

Jesus began His ministry—not with a magnificent miracle or a heart-stirring sermon. Jesus began His ministry in hunger. The previous chapter tells of the forty days and forty nights Jesus spent fasting in the wilderness being tested and tempted by Satan. Jesus knew about the pangs of hunger. He knew what it was like to hunger for nourishment. Though He knew of another kind of nourishment beyond food!

Look at how Satan tempted Him in Matthew 4:1-4:

*Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted there by the evil. ²For forty days and forty nights he fasted and became very hungry. ³During that time the devil came and said to him, “If you are the Son of God, tell these stones to become loaves of bread.” ⁴But Jesus told him, “**No! The Scriptures say, ‘People do not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.’”**” Jesus was referring back to Deuteronomy 8:3:*

“Yes, he humbled you by letting you go hungry and then feeding you with manna, a food previously unknown to you and your ancestors. He did it to teach you that people do not live by bread alone; rather, we live by every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.”

I believe the heart of what Jesus meant in Matthew 5:6 to hunger for righteousness is to recognize that we are sustained by something other than bread alone. We are nourished by the Word of God. Jesus is calling us to long for God's Word...to feast on God's Word...to be shaped by God's Word.

We must come to God's Word humbly. All too often we approach God's Word selectively. We choose what portions fit our lives and what portions don't. We view it as a smorgasbord to choose from. Instead we must come with a soul-yieldedness to allow God to refine and shape us through His Word. How would you measure your hunger for God's Word at this point in your life? Do you get filled on God's Word? Stuffed? Satisfied? Do you meditate on it? Do you memorize it? Do you actively seek to apply it to your daily life?

Hear this promise: “Jesus replied, **‘I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry again. Whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.’”**

In my pastoral ministry, I had a season in which I was a campus pastor. I worked among loads of students, many of whom were just coming to fresh faith in the Lord for the first time in their lives. One of the hallmarks of that season in my life was to witness their hunger for God's Word. They couldn't get enough of it. Personal study...small groups...more extensive discipleship groups. They didn't just study it they sought to live it and it was eye-opening to see the impact it was having on their faith and life formation.

For a number of years, we had nearly forty students go through the extensive **Disciple Bible Study** which is a 34-week study of the whole Bible. These were university students loaded down with their other studies who had a sincere hunger for God's Word! You couldn't keep them away!

One year we took a huge group to Nashville on a Work Camp building Habitat for Humanity homes. Some folks from Cokesbury and Discipleship Resources came out to interview us. A common theme kept coming out of those students being interviewed: how much Disciple Bible Study was molding their lives! As a result, they sent a recording crew out to interview us and for some years, we were featured on the Disciple Bible Study Promotional Videos.

#2 Thirst for Living Water

If Jesus' ministry began with hunger, it ended with thirst. You may remember one of the things Jesus cried out from the Cross was "I am thirsty!"

"Jesus knew that his mission was now finished, and to fulfill Scripture he said, **'I am thirsty.'**" Soon after Jesus uttered his final words **"It is finished."** He then gave up His spirit and died.

Again, Jesus knows what it is like to be thirsty. Jesus is one with us in those moments when life conspires to be painful and difficult. He thirsts with us. Jesus knows the urgency with which a person dying of thirst is consumed with.

So, when Jesus tells us we are blessed when we thirst, He is calling us to drink deeply of what alone can satisfy our deepest needs. We see this in a powerful scene in John 4 as Jesus has a conversation with the woman at the well. They begin to talk about "living water" which Jesus promises to this woman.

Jesus replied, **"Anyone who drinks this water (from the well) will soon become thirsty again. ¹⁴ But those who drink the water I give will never be thirsty again. It becomes a fresh, bubbling spring within them, giving them eternal life."**

Later in John's gospel in chapter 7, Jesus cries out with a loud voice at the Feast of the

On the last day, the climax of the festival, Jesus stood and shouted to the crowds, **"Anyone who is thirsty may come to me! Anyone who believes in me may come and drink! For the Scriptures declare, 'Rivers of living water will flow from his heart.'"**

So in this Beatitude, where Jesus is blessing those who thirst after righteousness, He is calling us to partake of the living water that alone can satisfy our deepest soul needs. Nothing else can come remotely close to doing what God through the Living Water of Jesus can do for you!

How thirsty are you for living water? Is it to the degree of the Psalmist in Psalm 63:1 or 42:1-2?

"O God, you are my God; I earnestly search for you. My soul thirsts for you; my whole body longs for you in this parched and weary land where there is no water."

"As the deer longs for streams of water, so I long for you, O God. I thirst for God, the living God."

What might it look like in your life to thirst after Jesus' living water? Come to Jesus in a fresh way in your life and you will discover yourself drinking deeply of this living water! If you are not sure how, I want to meet with you one-on-one to pray with you and show you some possibilities!

#3 Living for God Desires...Righteousness and Justice

If Jesus' ministry began in hunger and ended in thirst, all that was in-between was a graphic picture of doing righteousness and justice! His whole mission was for that very purpose. He helped people enter into a right relationship with God and His whole ministry was spent helping people grow a heart for the things God desires.

Jesus wants that for you! If you've never experienced that before, then there is no better time than now!

Jesus had a heart to see all that was broken be made whole once again. For the broken places in our lives and in the lives of others and in the society all around us to be healed... to be put right once again! His whole ministry was devoted to demonstrating that indeed is a reality. Then, His whole life and death fulfilled God's mission by providing a way by which that could ultimately become a reality. When Jesus gave up His life on the Cross, He was opening a new and living way for us to become righteous—not through religious effort—but by His mercy and grace!

"For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right (righteous) with God through Christ." 2 Corinthians 5:21

So, when Jesus calls us to hunger and thirst for righteousness and justice, He is no less sending us an invitation to join Him in this Kingdom endeavor to restore brokenness to wholeness. It starts in our lives but reaches out with sacrificial love to the brokenness of the lives all around us.

That's why I believe in my heart—heightened in this post-pandemic era—that Jesus is inviting us to develop a ministry of healing that helps the broken experience restoration in their lives. What might that look like in our church?

Cornerstone in Portsmouth...area awash in drug abuse and drug-trafficking...we decided we had to be in ministry to those broken by addiction. So we launched **Celebrate Recovery**. Started slow but soon took off. An interesting phenomenon happened. We had also launched Alpha, a ministry through which lots of people were coming to faith in Christ. Some of whom were counselors at what was called The Counseling Center, which was a local 12-step recovery program. As recovering addicts themselves, they in-turn helped us launch Celebrate Recovery with their wealth of personal experience in the field.

The combination of fresh faith in Christ and a desire to make a difference in the lives broken apart from drug addiction made for a powerful combination. While Cornerstone has since moved on from Celebrate Recovery to develop their own Christian based recovery ministry, the amazing fruitfulness of

seeing the broken made whole is astonishing. They regularly see people baptized new into the faith to launch their life of recovery!

What might God be calling Faith do to bring righteousness and justice to Canal Winchester? What might God be calling Hope to do to bring righteousness and justice to Canal Winchester? Not necessarily an addiction recovery ministry, but a healing ministry of some sort!

Conclusion

That brings us full circle! We are back to the God who longs to bless your life with the deepest kind of soul satisfaction imaginable. Jesus wants you to personally experience *chortazomai* which, if you remember implies being well-filled or stuffed.

Jesus is the God who fills and satisfies. How filled are you? Or do you feel like you are scrambling through life on empty? If so, come and feast on the Word of our Lord. If you are thirsty, come to Jesus anew and drink deeply of the Living Water!

Then hear His call to partner with Him in this grand mission to bring righteousness and justice and healing to those whose lives are broken by the lies of this world. When we hunger and thirst for righteousness, we will devote ourselves to live for what God desires: healing and restoration of those who are broken.

Matthew 5:6 graphic

You Satisfy the Hungry Heart

You satisfy the hungry heart with gift of finest wheat,
Come give to us o saving Lord, the bread of life to eat.

As when the shepherd calls his sheep,
They know and heed his voice;
So when You call your family Lord,
We follow and rejoice.

You satisfy the hungry heart with gift of finest wheat,
Come give to us o saving Lord, the bread of life to eat.

With joyful lips we sing to You,
Our praise and gratitude,
That You should count us worthy Lord,
To share this heavenly food.

You satisfy the hungry heart with gift of finest wheat,
Come give to us o saving Lord, the bread of life to eat.

Is not the cup we bless and share the Blood of Christ outpoured?
Do not one cup, one loaf, declare our oneness in the Lord?

You satisfy the hungry heart with gift of finest wheat,
Come give to us o saving Lord, the bread of life to eat.

The mystery of Your presence Lord,
No mortal tongue can tell;
Whom all the world cannot contain
Comes in our hearts to dwell.

You satisfy the hungry heart with gift of finest wheat,
Come give to us o saving Lord, the bread of life to eat.

You give yourself to us, O Lord,
Then selfless let us be,
To serve each other in Your name
In truth and charity.

You satisfy the hungry heart with gift of finest wheat,
Come give to us o saving Lord, the bread of life to eat.



- *Onn Kantner, and family in Earl's passing*
- *Debbie Fields dealing with significant heart arrythmia issues*
- *Jan Yaple is moving to a special dialysis rehab center in Westerville*
- *Norma Jacks daughter Cindy is gravely ill with Parkinson's disease*
- *Debbie Piermont will have aneurysm surgery this past week*
- *Elizabeth Jones, healing for her radial nerve in her right arm*
- *Marsha Waibel, cancer has returned; surgery upcoming*
- *Dan Mathew, recovering from successful aneurysm surgery*
- *Jan Smith from Faith Church continuing treatments*
- *Sarah Cory and Guy Cory now both in Bickford Senior Living*
- *Praying for one another as Hope and Faith go their different ways*
- *Community Focus: Rebuilding a sense of community in our COVID era*
- *National Focus: Police and fire departments in the face of mounting danger*
- *World Focus: Getting the COVID vaccines to remote corners of the globe*

Tailgate Party/Chili Cook Off on October 30

We are throwing a party! A tailgate party for the OSU vs Penn State match-up! Along with a Chili Cook Off! On Saturday October 30 at Faith UMC (time TBD once we find out when the game will be telecast) we invite you to share in the tailgate excitement! Cornhole games. Something for all ages. Great chili to sample. Desserts to enjoy. Big game atmosphere to pump you up! Bring your lawn chairs.

We need Chili makers! We want to have at least ten different kinds of chili on hand to see who will win this year's cook off. Talk to Dustin or enter online or fill out the card in the rear today before you leave to sign up.

Hopeful Hearts: We still need winter clothing for children ages 1-5!

Educare will receive a makeover of sorts in the coming months: a brand new playground will be installed towards the end of the month, new hallway flooring and Educare office flooring will be installed over the holidays when school is out of session, and new hallway lighting will be installed in October or early November.

Advent Bible Study/Small Group "The Songs of Advent"

As familiar as we are with the songs of Christmas, there are four songs recorded in the Bible to celebrate the birth of Jesus that most of us aren't familiar with. The angels sang a song to the shepherds. Mary sang a song to God after she had time to get over the shocking news that she was going to be the mother of the Savior. Simeon also had a song. Then there's Zechariah's song. Zechariah was an elderly priest who sang after being visited by an angel. We will meet in person on Mondays starting November 29 and continue through December 20 and will meet from 7:00-8:00 PM at Faith UMC. Zoom participation possible with advance notice. There is a \$5 cost for participation.