

Aside from the resurrection, the story of Jesus feeding the 5,000 is the only miracle recorded in all four Gospels. Obviously, the Gospel writers considered this a very important miracle.

To feed 5,000 people with five loaves and two fish is miraculous but notice that our gospel says, “the number of those who ate was about 5000 men besides women and children.” Many Biblical scholars believe the actual number fed that day could have been between 15,000 -20,000 people. That’s really miraculous!

Let’s look at the context of this passage: Read vs. 13. When Jesus heard what had happened...he withdrew”. Jesus had just heard from his disciples that his friend, John the Baptist, had just been beheaded. I’m sure Jesus was struck with grief and maybe anger hearing this devastating news and so he got into a boat and went out into the lake to be alone with his feelings.

But the scripture says the crowds followed him on foot and when he landed he saw thousands of people, maybe 15-20,000 people waiting for him. If I had wanted to be alone to grieve my friends death and was greeted by that many people wanting my complete attention, I would have been overwhelmed, but it says that Jesus had compassion on them and healed their sick.

Jesus’ disciples were standing by watching all of this and wanted to send the people away because evening was approaching and they were in a remote place (Matthew 14:15). They knew the people needed to reach the surrounding villages soon to buy food, find lodging, or they would likely go hungry (Mark 6:36).

But Jesus has a better idea: He says to his disciples, “You give them something to eat” (Matthew 14:16). The disciples are surprised, knowing that they don’t have nearly enough to feed everyone, and they start to question Jesus. Andrew asks, “What are [five loaves and two fish] for so many?” (John 6:9). And Philip says, ““It would take more than half a year’s wages to buy enough bread for each one to have even a bite!”

Jesus asks them to bring the bread and fish to Him (Matthew 14:18). He then gives thanks for the meal, breaks the bread, and gives it to

His disciples to give to the crowd. Amazingly, the entire multitude is fed with that small amount of food. Jesus provides “as much as they wanted” ([John 6:11](#)), and “they all ate and were satisfied” ([Matthew 14:20](#)). Christ did not just meet the need; He lavished them with so much food that there were “twelve baskets full of broken pieces left over” ([Mark 6:43](#)). Miraculous!

So what does this miracle that Jesus performed so long ago have to do with us today?

Just as God asked his disciples to bring Him all they had, the five loaves and two fish, he also asks us to bring him all that we have and all that we are, so that he can multiply it and feed His people.

When we are willing to offer our lives completely to God, our time, our talents and our resources, God will use these ordinary things to create extraordinary things. God took a situation that seemed impossible, feeding 15,000 people with 5 loaves and two fish, and made it possible. In the same way, God can take a seemingly impossible situation today and make it possible. Miracles still happen today, if we believe in them and if we trust that with God, nothing is impossible.

Like the disciples, we try to figure out our problems and obstacles on our own and don't rely on God to help us. In Proverbs 3 it says, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding.”

It's really interesting that in this scripture, Jesus fed the crowds through his disciples. He said to them, “YOU give them something to eat!” He could have just snapped his fingers and put a meal in front of everyone there, **but instead he gave the job of feeding the hungry to his disciples.**

Because of this, the disciples had to trust the Lord for everything they gave out. They could only give as they received. Philip, Andrew, and the rest were put in a position of total dependence upon the Lord for their supply.

God still uses us in the same way today. We are reminded that no

problem in our lives or in our church is too big for God to handle. God is God. All we need to do, is bring to God, all that we have, and trust that God will multiply our small offerings in miraculous ways. Miracles happen every day, we just have to believe in them and then we will see them all around us. If you think about it, I'll bet you can think of a miracle that has happened in your lives. Things that happened that you never thought were possible.

Miracles can happen at St. Andrew too. I think it was a miracle that you were able to keep your doors open when you thought you might have to close them a few years back. I think it's a miracle that you transformed an empty Sunday School wing into a vibrant Healing Arts Center that now serves our community.

We have some challenges at St. Andrew, just like every other church in this country. Many churches are concerned about having enough finances, enough people, enough volunteers to get everything done that needs to be done to keep the church going. Our fears center around not having enough, but yet in our story today even though there seemed to not be enough, there was more than enough! There was actually, an abundance!

There's kind of a paradox here because on the one hand, we have to trust God and believe that all things are possible when we offer him all that we have and all that we are. And on the other hand, we can't just sit back and expect God to do all the work. Jesus said to his disciples, "You give the people something to eat." The disciples were focused on their own needs and just want to send the hungry away so that they could eat in peace. But Jesus calls on them to have compassion on the people as he did. Jesus calls them to turn their attention to doing His work of nourishing and caring for the people.

We are called to do the same. In the congregational survey, many of you said that you'd like to see us do more outreach into our community and our neighborhood. We are doing some of that already in our outreach to Almost Like Home and Secrest Elementary, but I wholeheartedly agree that we can do more. And not just for the purpose of bringing more people into our church, although some of that might happen as a result, but primarily because Jesus calls us to feed his people, both physically and spiritually.

People of St. Andrew Lutheran:

Is it possible for us to reach out to our community in ways that touch and impact the lives of others who need God's love and compassion?

Yes, (say it with me) with God, all things are possible.

Is it possible for us to grow as a church, spiritually and financially and to invite more adults and children to worship with us?

Yes, with God, all things are possible.

Is it possible that God has a wonderful plan for us greater than we can even imagine and that all we have to do is trust Him and listen to where God is leading us?

Yes, with God, all things are possible.

People of St. Andrew Lutheran, God wants to do miraculous things through you, through us. Are you ready to offer yourselves to Him completely, so that He can work miracles through you? (Repeat)

Yes, with God, all things are possible!