**John 6:1-14**

**6**After this Jesus went to the other side of the Sea of Galilee, also called the Sea of Tiberias.[[a](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=john+6%3A+1-+21&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-26248a)] **2**A large crowd kept following him, because they saw the signs that he was doing for the sick. **3**Jesus went up the mountain and sat down there with his disciples. **4**Now the Passover, the festival of the Jews, was near. **5**When he looked up and saw a large crowd coming toward him, Jesus said to Philip, “Where are we to buy bread for these people to eat?” **6**He said this to test him, for he himself knew what he was going to do. **7**Philip answered him, “Six months’ wages[[b](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=john+6%3A+1-+21&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-26254b)] would not buy enough bread for each of them to get a little.” **8**One of his disciples, Andrew, Simon Peter’s brother, said to him, **9**“There is a boy here who has five barley loaves and two fish. But what are they among so many people?” **10**Jesus said, “Make the people sit down.” Now there was a great deal of grass in the place; so they[[c](https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=john+6%3A+1-+21&version=NRSV#fen-NRSV-26257c)] sat down, about five thousand in all. **11**Then Jesus took the loaves, and when he had given thanks, he distributed them to those who were seated; so also the fish, as much as they wanted. **12**When they were satisfied, he told his disciples, “Gather up the fragments left over, so that nothing may be lost.” **13**So they gathered them up, and from the fragments of the five barley loaves, left by those who had eaten, they filled twelve baskets. **14**When the people saw the sign that he had done, they began to say, “This is indeed the prophet who is to come into the world.”

**Word and Wonder –**

* In all 4 gospels

In all the gospels, there a lots of people following Jesus. Great crowds, and he stops to teach them. It gets late and the people are hungry. And then they reach the problem:

* There’s not enough money to buy food for all the people
* There might not even be enough food in the surrounding towns for the people to eat, it’s thousands and thousands of people, and they can’t just go to a McDonalds.
* All the food they have is 5 loaves and 2 fish,
* That’s in all 4 gospels, 5 loaves and 2 fish.
* But ONLY John says who gave them the food. Do you remember who had food?
	+ A little boy. He shares his food. Jesus blesses it, and breaks it, and gives it to all the people. And at the end, they had more food LEFT OVER than they started with . 12 baskets full!
	+ How do you think that happened?
	+ The miracle might have been in the bread and fish, that everyone time someone took a bit of bread and fish, more appeared. That sounds like Jesus right? To take something very small and make it big enough for everyone.
	+ But there’s another way this miracle might have happened. It might have been that most of the people there had food. Remember, they chose to follow Jesus away from town. I don’t know about you, but when I leave home for a long time, I always take some snacks. I can’t believe there wasn’t a Mommy in this crowd loaded down with goldfish. But when the disciples started asking “who has food? Bring it up here to share!” no one came. They were worried they didn’t have enough for everyone. I only have enough for myself and my family, surely they aren’t talking about me.
	+ Except the little boy. When he heard Jesus needed food for all the people, he brought his 5 loaves and 2 fish. And when the people saw the boy, and his sharing, they started doing the same, taking enough for themselves and putting the extra in the baskets, passing them around the group.
	+ Maybe, the miracle was the boy and not the bread.
	+ What do you think?

So, this was a big deal.

And whether it was never ending bread

– always more than enough for all

- or the miracle of hearts transformed,
filled with love and grace and then broken open to share with one another
and pour out that abundant love into the world.

This was clearly a sign of a prophet. And the people were excited, to say the least.

**15**When Jesus realized that they were about to come and take him by force to make him king, he withdrew again to the mountain by himself.

**Jesus Walks on the Water**

**16**When evening came, his disciples went down to the sea, **17**got into a boat, and started across the sea to Capernaum. It was now dark, and Jesus had not yet come to them. **18**The sea became rough because a strong wind was blowing. **19**When they had rowed about three or four miles, they saw Jesus walking on the sea and coming near the boat, and they were terrified. **20**But he said to them, “It is I; do not be afraid.” **21**Then they wanted to take him into the boat, and immediately the boat reached the land toward which they were going.

The word of the lord, thanks be to God.

So we’ve got these two really important stories back to back.

Jesus feeding the multitudes Wow.

The abundance. The grace. The love.
Breaking, Blessing, Giving
- yes, this is supposed to remind you of communion -
This is a transformative experience for the disciples and everyone there.

And then, Jesus walking on water.

 The power. The Majesty. “It is I. do not be afraid.”

 We’ve even taken the phrase, “walks on water” to mean – “can do anything.”

Oh, her fans think she walks on water. This super-natural ability.

 There are probably billions of sermons preached about both these texts,

a few are my own.

But it was v. 15, the connecting verse, that pinged in my holy imagination this week.

Jesus almost running away, escaping from the adoring crowds, to a mountain by himself.

That in between the signs and the miracles and the teaching and the healing

and the being amazing

 – being JESUS

– even Jesus needed a break.

This is the one of the moments that makes me think Jesus might have been an introvert. I mean, he was clearly very charismatic and loved being around people, but I think it might have exhausted him too.

That’s the thing about being an introvert – and I speak from experience – it’s not that we don’t like being with people. I love a good party. I mean, Sunday morning when we get to come to church and sing and pray and talk – it’s my favorite part of church.

Being with all of you is the BEST part of the job.

But its’ also the most exhausting.

The Sunday afternoon nap is a scared tradition in our dual clergy household.

I remember when we first moved to Greensboro, Grace was 3 and Jake was 1. Rob and I were both solo pastors and 2 different churches. Preaching every week. We’d both come home on Sunday afternoon to our little condo, and we couldn’t get away. There were these two precious faces smiling up at us, wanting to play. Mommy Daddy, let’s build and craft and dig and sing and bake and play games. We didn’t have any family in town, or any friends really, we were new, so there was no one to help.

I used to take them to a local park – it was actually a church playground nearby – and they would play on the playground and I sit in the car with the doors and windows open, watch them through the windshield, and I would just weep.

I was just. So. Tired.

It’s not that bad anymore. The kids know that on Sunday afternoons they scatter and take care of themselves, but there’s something about this last year that reminds me of that time.

That constant need. Work and family and church, There’s always someone who needs your attention, right?

I know the parents out there feel me on this.

Especially when the kids are small, but when they get older it’s the practices and clubs this last year with the virtual school they just need you all the time.

I suspect all of us know this feeling.

Many of us spent significant portions of the last year working from home,

and when your home is your office – you can never get away.

All the things need your attention all the time.

And I can’t even imagine the stress all our essential workers were dealing with

 – if you weren’t working from home last year

– lives depended on you. Full stop.

Maybe directly, maybe indirectly,

but you needed to be open, to be working in the field,

or the world wouldn’t work and people would die.

And nothing was easy or normal for ANYONE.

Every single person was working miracles every single day.

I mean, teachers, amiright? Business owners, you know what I mean. You were pulling rabbits out of hats and juggling 50 million new mandates and bending over backwards to do even the simplest things.

Even our retired folks, you were learning the tech and troubleshooting the apps and sewing the masks and bending over backwards to take care of all the people with all the restrictions.

And the world said, “okay great. We’re going to need you to walk on water now.”

And. You. Did.

Over and over and over again. You did all the things.

You are ridiculously amazing. All of you. The entire world.

And here’s what we can take from this scripture,

Even Jesus Took a Break

(so can you)

I hope you get to go to beach for a week and turn off your phone.

I hope you get to visit all your grandchildren all over the country and let their parents have a date night.

I hope you get to take the trip you postponed.

But even more than that, I hope you take an afternoon off.

Or – GASP – a whole day. Even two. Every week.

Go find your mountain, or your hammock, or your garden, or your bed

And take a break.

This isn’t just about summer, its’ about the long haul of life.

Because the world isn’t done changing. And the needs are getting more complicated and insistent by the second.

There will be multitudes to feed tomorrow. And the next day. And the next.

And we will be called into the storm – maybe not to walk on water – but to swim steadily or tread water at the very least.

And if we’re ever going to be ready

 If we have any hope of living out our callings with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love

We’ve got to rest.

And we’re in good company. Jesus, Right here in the scripture, and really throughout the gospels, Jesus takes time away, He leaves the crowds behind and heads for the hills, the wilderness, the garden.

We’ve got God the creator, who rested on the seventh day,

who blessed that day and made it holy,

a gift of love and connection and grace and peace to all creation.

And we have the Holy Spirit, who comes and goes as she will,

but is everywhere the giver and renewer of life.

Our affirmation of faith today speaks of that Spirit.

It’s an excerpt from the Brief Statement of Faith – which I’ll admit is not all that brief when compared to other confessions like the apostle’s creed .

Written in the late 1980s as the northern and southern branches of the Presbyterian church re-unified after so many years apart,

this deeply reformed confession not only speaks truth,

but calls us to live truth,

to be bearers of the good news in our whole lives

– in both our work and our rest.

Let us stand and speak this truth together now:

We trust in God the Holy Spirit,
everywhere the giver and renewer of life…
In a broken and fearful world
the Spirit gives us courage
to pray without ceasing,
to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior,
to unmask idolatries in Church and culture,
to hear the voices of peoples long silenced,
and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace.
In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit,
we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks
and to live holy and joyful lives,
even as we watch for God’s new heaven and new earth,
praying, “Come, Lord Jesus!”