

## Walking Empty

I confess, Creator and Consoler  
That often all your offers—  
They seem empty to me.  
It is not knowledge I need,  
For Scripture says your Son was sent.  
I know it, but it feels empty!  
This half a heart inside hates  
My own over-weak hopes.  
Am I just an empty shell still walking?  
Where lives the longing for love  
That impassioned practice with purpose?  
Am I now empty of it?  
I recall a real romance,  
And feeling that my Father fetched his finest.  
But tonight it seems empty.  
And so with wanting I will wait.  
This selfish soul, it sits.  
Come soon, and fill my emptiness.

—Kirk Norris

We celebrate the Lord's Supper weekly—and in a circle, at the end of worship. A word of direction is given, and with this everyone stands and moves to the walls. The cup is passed in two forms: in a chalice and then in small individual cups. You are free to choose.

And as this is the Supper of the Lord Christ, please listen to the instructions we give as to what qualifies a visitor to participate. **But whether you intend to take communion or not, please join us in the circle.**

Second Sunday in Lent  
Old Orchard Church  
March 4, 2012 — 10:15 –11:50 a.m.

See print copy for artwork.

The Crucifixion by Saburo Takashima (c. 1930)

**I am the living bread  
that came down from heaven.  
If anyone eats of this bread,  
he will live forever.  
This bread is my flesh,  
which I will give for the life of the world.**  
(John 6:51)

## Descent to the Cross: I Am the Bread of Life

For the life of the world  
Jesus gives his own flesh  
to be torn, beaten, and nailed.  
He who alone can satisfy our hunger  
for love and intimacy,  
for forgiveness and healing,  
for security and purpose,  
for joy and peace,  
is arraigned and judged an imposter.  
God is condemned by man;  
He who fills us with good things  
is himself emptied.  
He who is the true Object of our heart-desire  
becomes the object of our hatred.

How bittersweet the Cross!  
How worthy of praise he who hangs on it.

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Second Sunday  
in  
*Lent*

### Today's Scripture

Old Testament Lesson: Exodus 16:1-8

New Testament Lesson: John 6:25-35

### Today's Sermon

"A Kingdom Work Ethic"  
Luke 12:35-48

*Jonathan Shumate, seminary intern, preaching*

## Christ as Food

The middle-class affluence of our culture has spawned a whole new interest in rich food and drink: specialty coffee shops with their delicious aromas, gourmet food shops of every kind, more and more ethnic restaurants with exotic fare, and now reality TV shows that revolve around temperamental chefs and the rich, inviting dishes they cook up. We are developing ever more sophisticated tastes and being taught to savor our flavors. And food truly is a wonderful gift from God!

But in truth, we are a culture of full bodies and starved souls. Every man, woman, and child lives with a hungry soul: hungry for love and acceptance and forgiveness, for purpose and a place to belong. Everybody is hungry to be somebody and find a security that cannot be taken away. That's why Christ came into the world. He came claiming to be the only One who could satisfy our soul-hunger when he said,

**I am the bread of life. The one who comes to me will never go hungry....**  
(John 6:35)

As you go through this second week of Lent, let me encourage you to meditate on John 6 (the Gospel reading for today) along with Isaiah 55:1-3 (part of our call to worship this morning) and put some hard questions to yourself: Am I eating the free food—which is Christ, the richest food? Or am I feeding my soul on the cheap stuff, like the praise of other people, or financial security, or success, or the work of ministry, or endless fun, or work, or sexual fantasies, or cigarettes, or moral discipline, or family togetherness—or a hundred other created things we bite down on to try and satisfy our craving hearts? Only he who is uncreated can satisfy that craving.

But how strange, that God invites us to **buy** his food when he knows we are spiritually broke:

**You who have no money—come, buy and eat!** (Isaiah 55:1)

Why? Perhaps because the cost of the soul-food which satisfies, God himself in Christ, is the most expensive around: a humble—and painful—willingness to say, "My heart is hungry. It feeds on so many things; but nothing fully satisfies. Fill me, O God." Or perhaps God invites us to "buy" his food because it cost Christ a great deal—his life—so that it could be free to us. Either way, the point is the same: it is possible to feast on Christ's love, his beauty, his grace, his resurrection life, and find satisfaction in him. But God warns us too: if we fill up on other things, we will starve.

So don't suppress the pain of your soul-hunger by eating out more, or filling up on pita chips. Admit the hunger, that ache in your soul, and then turn to Jesus and feed on him who is true Bread this week. It's free, but it's the richest food around.

*— Ron Lutjens*