

COMMUNION BREAD

1 c. white flour
1 c. whole wheat flour
1/8 tsp. salt
1/3 c. water
3 tbsp. melted butter
1 egg, slightly beaten
1/8 c. honey

Mix liquid ingredients. Add the dry mixture. Roll out on lightly floured surface making circles 8 or 9 inches. Bake on ungreased cookie sheet at 350 degrees for about 15 minutes.

Does anybody know what kind of recipe this is???

What do you think you'll get when you mix everything together? A gloppy mess or something delicious?? Is it going to be junk food or nutritious. Will it make you sick or make you healthy. Will it give you a tummy ache or cure the grumbellies??

Well, let's mix it up and see what happens.

OK. Who wants to touch it and see what it feels like. First, we better make sure our hands are clean (sanitizer). Now we get to shape it. Have you guessed what this is?

Yes, it's dough. What kind of dough? Bread dough? What kind of bread? It's Jesus bread. All of the things we put into this recipe were ingredients that Jesus used when he was ministering to all the people in Palestine. So it really is Jesus' bread. But more than that, it is the bread we are going to use for communion today. This bread will be the bread that Jesus uses to become his body, and feed us, so that we can all share in his life, his death and his resurrection. It is bread from heaven. That is why we will mark every loaf with the cross. Because that is the sign of new life for us.

I'll just pop it into the microwave while we pray.

Thank you. Who wants a little taste of this Jesus bread? Ok. Here you go. You can eat

HOLY CARBOHYDRATES!!!

Who hasn't heard of the food pyramid? It's a nutritional guide for healthy living. The base of the pyramid contains the cereal and grain categories, the next level is fruits and vegetables, as the pyramid tapers toward its apex, meats and dairy products appear, and right up at the top are the fats and oils.



So, looking at the food pyramid, it appears that carbohydrates are our friends. Breads, potatoes, rice, beans. They put fuel in our physical furnaces. Carbohydrates breaking down into a simple blood sugar. Glucose. The thing that provides the calories that our body burns to give us energy. Energy to do, energy to live—to walk, to run, to talk, to listen, to work, to play, to dance and sing, Energy to eat. . .to eat more carbohydrates. And if you have a female furnace, the really essential energy. Energy to shop. Carbohydrates even provide our energy to participate in physical worship. If we don't put any fuel into our furnace, our muscles grow weak. We soon lose our oomph. We find our get up and go and got up and gone!! They are absolutely essential to organic life.

But if you are weight conscious, or if your body has problems burning the glucose that comes from carbohydrates, you discover that they might be the enemy. Too much blood sugar in your system, and a functional healthy liver stores the excess glucose as fat. If you are diabetic, your pancreas fails to produce enough insulin to regulate the glucose levels in your blood. When

blood glucose rises to abnormally high levels it can induce coma, organ failure, even death. So we humans seem to have a love hate relationship with carbohydrates. On the one hand, they are our allies (and they taste marvelous). On the other hand they can become our adversaries, causing weight gain and obesity and diabetes. But we cannot have life without them. So what's the solution? Counting carbs. There are booklets, guides, and counters to help you count the carbohydrates. It can help ensure healthy eating.

Now when Jesus tells us, I am the bread of life, he is talking the basic building block of spiritual energy. And his carbs work pretty much like our physical carbs. They are circulated by our hearts to give spiritual movement and life to the Body. One difference. Instead of counting the carbohydrates, we count on the carbohydrate. We count on the bread of life. We count on Jesus Christ. Holy carbohydrates!!

Do not work for food that spoils. Don't count on perishable items. Work for, count on food that endures to eternal life, which the Son of Man will give you. On him God the Father has placed his seal of approval."

All food contains an expiration date. It is therefore temporary.

Why did crowds throng around Jesus? Why did they become Jesus groupies? Initially it was because he had supplied them with some material necessities. Bread and fish. To quote Pastor Kent Hughes, they liked the idea of a fish maker and a bread baker -- someone who could provide them with material things they wanted. "

They were counting the carbs. But they were not yet counting on the bread of life.

We still do the same things today. We look to Jesus as the One who will
Make us happy
Solve our problems
Heal our infirmities
Make our dreams come true
Give us "happily ever after"

The crowds wanted a Jesus who would help them live "the good life". Jesus tells them that they are being short-sighted. They are looking for a quick fix.

The student who grabs a term paper off the internet instead of doing the research and learning in the process

Don't sweat over the things that perish. Quit counting on the loaves and fish. Count on me instead.

I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry.

What does he mean.

First. He is our daily bread. Holy carbohydrates!! Jesus is our daily bread

Max Lucado puts it so well,

What bread is to hunger, Jesus claims to be for the soul.

Travel to almost any country and sit in any restaurant and they'll serve you bread. Bread is a staple. If the poor have nothing, they have bread.

If the rich have everything, they still have bread. Bread is not regional food nor a national dish. No country claims to be the exclusive source of bread. It may be in the form of a tortilla in Mexico or a bagel in New York, but bread is available everywhere. So is Christ. He is not bound by

Boundaries. No country claims him. No regions own him. No nation monopolizes him. He is everywhere at the same time. Universally available. Bread is eaten daily. Some fruits are available only in season. Some drinks are made only at holidays. Not so with bread. And no so with Jesus. He should be brought to our table every day. We let him nourish our hearts, not just in certain months or on special events, but daily.

I am the bread of life—Jesus is strength. Jesus is assurance. Jesus is. Holy carbohydrates!

During World War II, the Germans forced many twelve- and thirteen-year-old boys into the Junior Gestapo. These boys were treated very harshly and given inhumane jobs to perform. When the war ended, most had lost track of their families and wandered without food or shelter. As part of an aid program to post-war Germany, many of these youths were placed in tent cities. Here doctors and psychologists worked with the boys in an attempt to restore their mental and physical health. They found that many of the boys would awaken in the middle of the night, screaming in terror. One doctor had an idea for handling that fear. After feeding the boys a large meal, he put them to bed with a piece of bread in their hands, which they were told to

save until morning. The boys then slept soundly because, after so many years of hunger, they finally had the assurance of food for the next day.^{1[3]}

I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be thirsty. Jesus is eternal life.

We can survive up to a month without food, but we cannot survive more than a few days without water. Water is life-giving. Life maintaining, life sustaining. Without it we shrivel up and die. Without water for our spirit, our souls shrivel and die. But his promise is that if we come to him, we will NEVER be thirsty.

God has given us perishable bodies,, which encase souls that long for immortality. Deep down inside each of us, we crave to live forever. That is why we seem to have an innate fear of death and dying. We are born into the death at the very moment of our birth, and yet our instincts are to fight it off with every ounce of physical strength and every medical and technological resource we have. Otherwise, reason shouts, you live, you die. Is that it. Is that all there is.

Yet we are created with a spiritual DNA deep within that informs us there must be more. When Jesus says he is the bread of life that quenches our thirst for all time, he is saying that he is the assurance that there is something beyond the grave. Death is no longer the enemy.

Daily bread. Bread of life. Holy carbohydrates. We count the carbs in our diet. How do we count on the holy carb of life? How do we count on our daily bread? How real, how tangible is the Bread of Life in our daily walk.

As the people said,, “Lord, give us this bread that we may have eternal life.”

This week, I want to challenge each of us to reflect deeply on how our lives are impacted by the bread of life? Does this holy carbohydrate affect any of ways we expend our energies?

- The way we work?
- The way we spend money?

- The way we relate to others. . .even those difficult others?
- The way we spend our time.
- The way we deal with success
- The way we deal with failure and disappointment
- The way we view birth and death and eternal life?
- The way we worship?

All who come to him will never be hungry. . .and all who believe in him will never be thirsty. Amen.