

# The Church That Nearly Died

Key Words: **Hunger**

Key Verse: "And he said, 'Bring them here to me'." *Matthew 14:18*

The Archdeacon said, "We need to close this church. The cost of repairs would be nearly \$100,000, and you only have 24 members." The committee had expected to be without a pastor for awhile, but not this. Millicent had been a member of the church for 85 years, and she knew if it closed, she would lose all contact with the outside world. She also knew it seemed impossible for 24 elderly people to raise \$100,000, but at the next meeting, Colin stood up. "I think we should try," he said. "Let's raise the money and keep the church open." Millicent felt like crying. "We *can't*," she said, "look at us! We have nothing to offer." The others agreed. Even at 78, Colin was full of wild plans.

Mary spoke up. Since her stroke two years ago, Mary hardly ever spoke. "I think we should pray about it," she said. The committee agreed. They began to pray about the church once a week. One day Colin rushed in. "All we have to do is raise \$50,000. We can get a grant for the rest." The committee stared at him. "How on earth can we raise even \$50,000?" asked Millicent. "We have two years," said Colin. "Everyone can do something. Each of us has to raise \$1,000 this year and next year, that's all."

All! Millicent nearly choked at the thought, but then she remembered her Granny's recipe for pies. At \$6.00 each,

she would need to sell 3-4 pies a week. It didn't sound quite so bad. She heard herself agreeing with Colin. It seemed extremely important that Mary should pray daily for them. There were pancake breakfasts, potluck suppers, auctions, bake sales and garage sales. There were big services when the village was invited, and many villagers wanted to help. They ran money-raising schemes of their own. They said that if those "wrinklies" could raise \$1,000, so could they! The money started coming in. Mary continued praying. The committee gathered weekly and offered their prayers. Two years later, they had the money they needed, and much more. They had a church which now had 50 members, and which, solidly based on prayer, was lifted up by faith. When the time came to appoint a new pastor, they had several applicants because the church was seen as active and growing.

Millicent lived until she was 91. She died full of joy, for in the last few years she'd discovered the kingdom of God on earth.

## Questions

**Why is it important for people to work together?**

**Can you tell about a time you had to share your food?**

# Gospel Grams

Today's Gospel Story  
is from  
**Matthew 14:13-21**



- Picture Differences
1. Missing eye on man
  2. Missing beard on man
  3. Basket on ground
  4. Missing shoe
  5. Leaf on ground
  6. Colored head scarf
  7. Sun in sky
  8. Colored beard on man

- Crossword Puzzle
- Across
1. Fish
  2. Five
  3. Disciples
  4. Loaves
  5. Twelve
  6. Women
  7. Sick
  8. Crowds
  9. Foot
  10. Filled

## Answers

- Make Words
- Some of the over 100 possible words:
- AFRAID
  - BAND
  - BANDS
  - BASH
  - BEAD
  - BEADS
  - BEAR
  - BEARS
  - BRAND
  - BRANDS
  - DEAD
  - HAND
  - HANDS
  - DISH
  - HEAD
  - HEADS
  - DEAD
  - DREADS
  - FEAR
  - FEARS
  - FISHED
  - FRIEND
  - FRIENDS
  - SHED
  - SHADE
  - RIP
  - READ
  - READS
  - READ
  - HEADS
  - DEAD
  - DEAR
  - DEAD

### Make Words

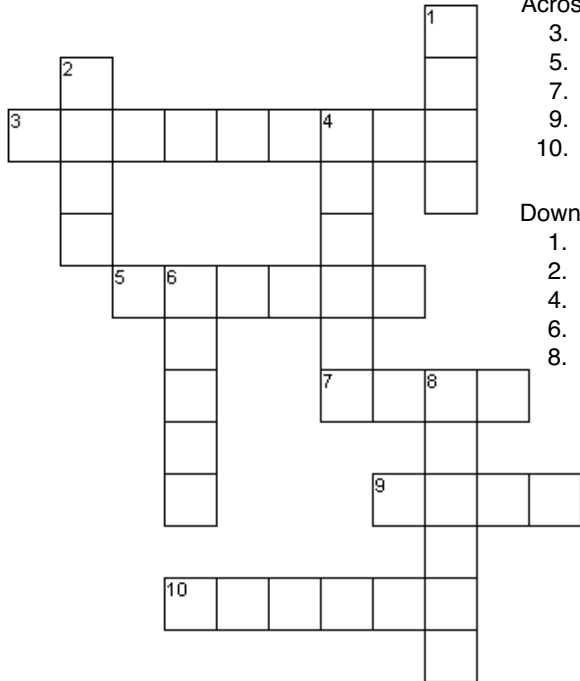
Using the letters in the phrase below, see how many words you can make from this phrase from our Gospel story today: You may use each letter only as many times as it appears in the phrase.

“Fish and bread.”

- |           |           |
|-----------|-----------|
| 1. _____  | 11. _____ |
| 2. _____  | 12. _____ |
| 3. _____  | 13. _____ |
| 4. _____  | 14. _____ |
| 5. _____  | 15. _____ |
| 6. _____  | 16. _____ |
| 7. _____  | 17. _____ |
| 8. _____  | 18. _____ |
| 9. _____  | 19. _____ |
| 10. _____ | 20. _____ |

### Crossword Puzzle

Complete this crossword puzzle using the clues from today’s Gospel story. Read the clues. Then fill in the squares below with the answers to the questions.



#### Across

3. They passed out the food
5. \_\_\_\_\_ baskets full
7. Jesus cured them
9. The followed Jesus on \_\_\_\_\_
10. They ate and were \_\_\_\_\_

#### Down

1. There were two of these
2. How many thousand men ate?
4. There were five of these
6. These and children also ate
8. They followed Jesus

### Picture Differences

Below are two drawings. There are eight differences in these drawings. How many can you find? Circle the differences in each drawing then check the answers on the back.

