

XIX after Pentecost/Proper 23 Year A

Sunday, October 11, 2020

Introduction

In Jesus' parable about a great banquet, those invited do not come, so the invitation is extended to others. Even amid anxiety and hardship we rejoice in the peace of God which surpasses all understanding. With great joy, we go forth from worship to share the wonderful invitation with others hungering and thirsting for the abundant life of God.

Readings and Psalm

[Philippians 4:1-9](#)

Rejoice in the Lord always

[Psalm 23](#)

You prepare a table before me, and my cup is running over. (*Ps. 23:5*)

[Matthew 22:1-14](#)

The parable of the unwelcome guest at the wedding feast

Prayer of the Day

Lord of the wedding feast, call us again to your banquet. Strengthen us by what is honorable, just, and pure, and transform us into a people of righteousness and peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

Reading: Philippians 4:1-9

Though writing from prison and facing an uncertain future, Paul calls on the Philippians to rejoice and give thanks to God no matter what the circumstance. God's peace is with us and binds together our hearts and minds in Jesus Christ, especially when things around us do not seem peaceful.

¹My brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved.

²I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord. ³Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life.

⁴Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. ⁵Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. ⁶Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

⁸Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. ⁹Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

A The Word of the Lord.

C **THANKS BE TO GOD.**

Psalm: Psalm 23

You prepare a table before me, and my cup is running over. (Ps. 23:5)

¹The LORD is my shepherd;

I shall not be in want.

²The LORD makes me lie down in green pastures
and leads me beside still waters.

³You restore my soul, O LORD,
and guide me along right pathways for your name's sake.

⁴Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,

I shall fear no evil;

for you are with me;

your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

⁵You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil, and my cup is running over.

⁶Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.

Gospel: Matthew 22:1-14

Jesus tells a parable indicating that the blessings of God's kingdom are available to all, but the invitation is not to be taken lightly.

¹Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: ²“The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. ³He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. ⁴Again he sent other slaves, saying, ‘Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.’ ⁵But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, ⁶while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. ⁷The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. ⁸Then he said to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. ⁹Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.’ ¹⁰Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

¹¹“But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, ¹²and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?’ And he was speechless. ¹³Then the king said to the attendants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ ¹⁴For many are called, but few are chosen.”

Prayers of Intercession

When I say, “Lord, in your mercy,” you respond, “**Hear our prayer.**”

With confidence in God’s grace and mercy, let us pray for the church, the world, and all those in need.

A brief silence is held as we gather our prayers.

Gracious host, fill your church with a spirit of joyous hospitality. We pray for pastors, bishops, teachers, church leaders, and all children of God as they invite others to your table of boundless grace.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Gracious host, as creation waits with eager longing for redemption, protect your creatures that are mistreated. Restore valleys, mountains and pastures, forests and still and running waters. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Gracious host, as you set a table in the presence of enemies, so bless the efforts of diplomats, international peace workers, and world leaders who navigate conflict. May they proceed with dialogue and understanding, so that justice and peace prevails. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Gracious host, let your gentleness be known among those who are weary or ill. We pause to name our loved ones before you: *pause*
Strengthen nurses, doctors, medical care workers, and caretakers who provide for their needs. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Gracious host, when we are quick to judge outward appearance, remind us how you clothe all in your mercy. We pray for ministries that provide needed clothing and other personal care assistance in our communities and beyond. Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

We pray for the offerings we bring.
Our ordinary gifts seem small when we stand in your presence. Multiply the gifts we are able to offer to make them abundant, not merely enough, that you may be seen through us.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Hear now the prayers of our hearts as we offer them before you both silently and aloud:

Silence for the prayers of people's hearts

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Gracious host, as we remember those who have died and are gathered at the heavenly banquet, comfort us with your presence. Assure us of your peace at all times.

Lord, in your mercy,
hear our prayer.

Listen as we call on you, O God, and enfold in your loving arms all for whom we pray, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Blessing

The LORD bless you and keep you.
The Lord's face shine on you with grace and mercy.
The Lord look upon you with favor and [little cross here] give you peace.

Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Christ is with you.

Thanks be to God.

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Prayers adapted by Interim Pastor Janet S. Peterman

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