

Reflection: Luke 14:15-24

In today's gospel reading Jesus paints a picture of God's Kingdom as a great feast, and God himself as wanting many people to share it with him. It will be an occasion of great joy and celebration – but none of those invited want to take part. They come up with reasons – or excuses – why something else in their life is more important. So the feast-provider spreads the invitation wider, to those who would not usually be included.

Those present would understand that the unwilling invitees referred to the religious authorities of the day – the temple priests, the teachers of the Jewish law, and the pharisees, who Jesus repeatedly criticized as appearing to be holy and righteous but who were actually getting in the way of God's mercy, compassion and forgiveness. And those in 'the roads and the lanes' referred to the ordinary people, who were looked down upon by the authorities as unworthy of God's grace but who were responding avidly to Jesus and the message he brought.

Those of us who identify as people of God are called on to pass on the invitation to be part of God's Kingdom to those around us. This does not just mean in actions and words, but also in our attitudes. We need to be regularly checking to make sure that we are continuing to open doors for others to find God, and not to close those doors in their faces as the religious authorities of Jesus's day did.

By sending his only son to be born and live as one of us, and subsequently to be killed on the cross so that we could be put right with God, God has himself gone into 'the roads and the lanes' to find us and make sure that the invitation to share his abundance, glory and joy reaches us. How do we respond to that invitation?

Ian Totterdell, churchwarden



NEXT SUNDAY 07.09.25 Trinity 12

10.30am in the Church

READINGS: OT Deuteronomy 30: 15-20

NT Philemon 1-21

GOSPEL Luke 14: 25-33



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St Thomas, Exeter

31st August 2025

Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

10.30am in the Church including Holy Baptism

Today

Sung Eucharist

Hymn Numbers

All are welcome

335 Meekness and majesty

467 Tell out, my soul

Tuesday 2nd September

7.30pm House Group at John's house.

Wednesday 3rd September

10am Walsingham Mass

Thursday 4th September

9.30-11am St Thomas Tots

10.30-12noon Knit & Natter. See notices

Friday 5th September

9.30am Morning Prayer

10am Staff Meeting



Collect

O God, you declare your almighty power most chiefly in showing mercy and pity: mercifully grant to us such a measure of your grace, that we, running the way of your commandments, may receive your gracious promises, and be made partakers of your heavenly treasure; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Proverbs 25: 6-7

Do not put yourself forward in the king's presence or stand in the place of the great; for it is better to be told, 'Come up here', than to be put lower in the presence of a noble.

Hebrews 13: 1-8, 15, 16

Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured. Let marriage be held in honour by all, and let the marriage bed be kept undefiled; for God will judge fornicators and adulterers. ⁵Keep your lives free from the love of money, and be content with what you have; for he has said, 'I will never leave you or forsake you.' So we can say with confidence, 'The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can anyone do to me?' Remember your leaders, those who spoke the word of God to you; consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever. Through him, then, let us continually offer a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name. Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.

Luke 14: 15-24

One of the dinner guests, on hearing this, said to him, 'Blessed is anyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!' Then Jesus said to him, 'Someone gave a great dinner and invited many. At the time for the dinner he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, "Come; for everything is ready now." But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, "I have bought a piece of land, and I must go out and see it; please accept my apologies." Another said, "I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to try them out; please accept my apologies." Another said, "I have just been married, and therefore I cannot come." So the slave returned and reported this to his master. Then the owner of the house became angry and said to his slave, "Go out at once into the streets and lanes of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame." And the slave said, "Sir, what you ordered has been done, and there is still room." Then the master said to the slave, "Go out into the roads and lanes, and compel people to come in, so that my house may be filled. For I tell you, none of those who were invited will taste my dinner."

Post Communion

Lord of all mercy, we your faithful people have celebrated that one true sacrifice which takes away our sins and brings pardon and peace: by our communion keep us firm on the foundation of the gospel and preserve us from all sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Notices

It has been arranged that **Revd Sarah Mounoury** will be appointed to our parish for a period of six months during our vacancy. Revd Sarah is currently licensed to the Sid Valley Mission Community just north of Sidmouth and completed her curacy earlier this year. This temporary appointment, which will not impact our search for a permanent incumbent, will give us some continuity during this time. Revd Sarah has experience of many facets of parish life and is looking forward to getting involved in our activities including St Thomas Tots, etc. The appointment is full-time and is expected to start in mid October. Revd Sarah and her family will

continue living in Sidmouth during her time with us. We look forward to welcoming them into our St Thomas community.

Sunday 7th September. Extraordinary Annual Parochial Church Meeting to accept the audited Annual Accounts for the year ending 31st December 2024. This meeting will be held in the hall after the service starting at 12 noon.

Knit & Natter From the 24th July we shall be meeting in St Thomas Pleasure Ground every Thursday morning from 10.30 till 12 noon, weather permitting. If it's wet, we shall be in Jess and Jimmy's café (118 Cowick Street). Do join us, or just come to say hello, especially if you aren't a regular at Maple Road.

Thank you to those people who offered their services for cleaning the church after the call for volunteers last Sunday morning. There are still places available on the cleaning rota and for anyone who is able to help with the occasional arrangement of the flowers.

Global Week of Prayer 1st-7th September Churches across St Thomas are encouraged to be united in prayer during this week. A room will be made available at Riverside Church (24 hours a day!) for people to pray for whatever concerns them: our churches, our community, our country, the world. See Ian if you want to sign up for a one hour slot.

On **Thursday 11th September** probably starting at 6pm there will be a meeting for the congregation to discuss what qualities we should be looking for in our new Incumbent. The meeting will be led by the Archdeacon of Exeter, the Revd Andrew Beane. This is a very important meeting and we hope that as many people as possible will attend. In advance of the meeting please consider carefully and prayerfully about what particular roles we think it important our new incumbent should fulfill with us and what qualities they would need. These roles might include our engagement with the local and wider community including the local schools, groups and other churches. The style of worship will be a consideration but should not dominate our thinking. You are welcome to discuss any of these matters with the churchwardens.

