

SEPTEMBER 1, 2019
TWELFTH SUNDAY
AFTER PENTECOST



Jesus reverses social standards.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Luke 14:1, 7-14	Humility and hospitality
Monday	Proverbs 25:6-7	Wise sayings of Solomon
Tuesday	Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16	Service that pleases God
Wednesday	James 2:1-13	Show mercy
Thursday	Exodus 2:16-25	Moses flees to Midian
Friday	Luke 1:46-55	Mary's song
Saturday	Psalms 112	Blessings of the righteous
Sunday	Luke 14:25-33	The cost of being a disciple

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

“But when you give a banquet, invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind. And you will be blessed, because they cannot repay you, for you will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.”

Luke 14:13-14 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

God of undeserved kindness, help us to rejoice in a humble life and not to seek the praise of others, through Christ who humbled himself to give glory and honor to you. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

Dear God, you who fill our open mouths with good things, give us hearts to receive this gift of food with thanksgiving. Amen. (Psalm 81:10)

A Blessing to Give:

May the God who lifts up the lowly fill your life with grace and mercy.



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HYMN OF THE WEEK

We Are Called



CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What does it mean to you to be treated fairly?
- What are some expected social standards of behavior you don't like?
- In Luke 14 Jesus was willing to challenge social standards of behavior. Why do you think he did that?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Luke 14:1, 7-14.

Jesus uses current social norms to make a point on how to “be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you” (v. 10b). Place yourself in a humble location in the seating chart and then be invited to a higher place. Why? Because “all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted” (v. 11). But then Jesus makes a direct assault on the social standards of his day. In a world where people “know their place” and “stick with their own kind,” Jesus says that those who can afford a banquet are not to invite people who can do the same for them, but they are to “invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind” (v. 13). The standard of the kingdom of God praises kindness that will not be repaid. It is reminiscent of Mary’s song that comes at the beginning of the Gospel of Luke: “He has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly; he has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty” (Luke 1:52-53). How are the words of Jesus and his mother good news for you and for others?

Pray: **Merciful God, give us faith to trust that our worth is found in your care and honor of us and not the rewards given by earthly powers, through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

SERVICE

In Hebrews 13:1-8, we are given some practical advice on showing hospitality to strangers. Hospitality is being kind and welcoming especially guests into our homes, even when we do not know them. Think of someone in your congregation or at work or school you do not know very well. Invite them to your home for a meal and get to know them through caring conversations in a relaxed setting where it is not the food and way you dress that matters as much as the genuine welcome.

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

Jesus uses a parable about a wedding to show how God’s protocol for good manners is a different way to look at the world. At God’s table everyone is welcome. Gather five paper plates. Write a word to describe four people who you see but do not know on the different plates. Write your name on the extra plate. Place the plates at seats around a table. Take turns sitting in each place and think about how you could make each guest feel welcome at God’s table.



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