

## The Second Sunday after Trinity, A ✕ D 2008

**Luke 14:15-24** When one of those who reclined at table with him heard these things, he said to him, "Blessed is everyone who will eat bread in the kingdom of God!" <sup>16</sup> But he said to him, "A man once gave a great banquet and invited many. <sup>17</sup> And at the time for the banquet he sent his servant to say to those who had been invited, 'Come, for everything is now ready.' <sup>18</sup> But they all alike began to make excuses. The first said to him, 'I have bought a field, and I must go out and see it. Please have me excused.' <sup>19</sup> And another said, 'I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to examine them. Please have me excused.' <sup>20</sup> And another said, 'I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come.' <sup>21</sup> So the servant came and reported these things to his master. Then the master of the house became angry and said to his servant, 'Go out quickly to the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in the poor and crippled and blind and lame.' <sup>22</sup> And the servant said, 'Sir, what you commanded has been done, and still there is room.' <sup>23</sup> And the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the highways and hedges and compel people to come in, that my house may be filled. <sup>24</sup> For I tell you, none of those men who were invited shall taste my banquet.'"

*In the name of the Father and of the ✕ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

1 The price has been paid, the meal prepared, the table set. Come, for everything is now ready. The Lord sent His servant to summon those invited to the banquet, "Come, everything is now ready." But each had his own excuse. "I have bought a field and must go and see it; please have me excused." "I have bought five yoke of oxen and must go inspect my purchase; please have me excused." "I have married a wife and cannot come." Good excuses, all, if there were ever good excuses, but good excuses don't get you into the banquet. They damn you.

2 The price has been paid, the meal prepared, the table set. Come, for everything is now ready. Go out into the city and invite the poor, crippled, blind, and lame, the dregs of society, those least likely to be invited to a banquet like this. And, even once these outcasts had been made honored guests, there was still room. So the Lord sent His servant outside the city—to the highways and hedges—to compel people to come in. The house will be filled, but none of those first invited will taste the Lord's banquet.

3 The price has been paid, the meal prepared, the table set. Come, for everything is now ready. Now is not the time for excuses. Perhaps you have better things to do—fields to inspect, oxen to examine, chores to do, jobs to accomplish, beds to keep warm. Perhaps you

suppose the feast can be eaten anywhere, but that misjudges the Master of the Banquet, who, while everywhere, is not everywhere for you, not everywhere giving out His forgiveness. Perhaps you dislike the servant sent to compel you to come; maybe he rubs you the wrong way or isn't as likeable as servants in the past. Perhaps you enjoy the food you feed yourself rather than the feast provided—the hateful speech you chew and spew, the computer-generated images your eyes and heart feast upon, the false marriage upon which you gorge yourself without commitment, the poisonous gossip your ears guzzle. Repent. No more excuses, no more false feasts, no more rejecting the invitation, no more despising the Word of God. Repent; either you will have a feast or you will have your excuses. Excuses are plentiful, but everything is now ready.

4 The price has been paid, the meal prepared, the table set. Come, for everything is now ready. The Master spared no expense to fill his house. Before He sent His servants to call, He sent His Son to prepare. Out to the highways and hedges went the Son of God. He marched along the highway from Jerusalem to Calvary. He paid for the banquet with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death. He beckoned the poor, the crippled, the blind, the lame, the sinners whose sin rendered them spiritually dead and helpless. He gathered around His table the tax collectors and sinners. Blessed is he who will eat the Bread of Life in the Kingdom of God, the flesh of the One born in Bethlehem, the city of bread.

5 The price has been paid, the meal prepared, the table set. Come, for everything is now ready. The feast is here. There is no table apart from the Lord's altar. There is no feast apart from at the Lord's altar. There is no guest except the poor, the crippled, the blind, the lame. But at the feast, there are no poor, no crippled, no blind, no lame; those clothed in the robe of Christ's righteousness have His riches, His strength, His eyes, His life.

6 The price has been paid, the meal prepared, the table set. Come, for everything is now ready. The feast doesn't just begin at 9:30 every Sunday morning. In fact, the feast starts an hour earlier than that. Bible class isn't just for your children, nor just for those more

knowledgeable in the faith. It's for you. No excuses, no false feasts, just come. The study of God's Word is the feast of solid food, as St. Paul says. It is everything a sermon is not. It is feast for your ears and minds. The feast is on Wednesday evenings, as well. Private confession is not just for particularly bad sinners, nor for Roman Catholics. It's for you, with your everyday sins, with your besetting sins, with your false feasts. No excuses, no false feasts, just come. The Word of Holy Absolution is the feast for burdened consciences.

7       The price has been paid, the meal prepared, the table set. Come, for everything is now ready. The feast is here, even now. The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world gives Himself to you for the feast. Your sin-scarred lips, your blasphemous tongues, your pride-parched throats, your blood-stained hands here are made holy and whole. The Host is also the Feast. His Body, which was crucified for you, is placed into your mouth. His Blood, which was shed to cover your sins, is poured into your mouth. The feast is free and frequent. It is the source of your life, both now and eternally. The Church lives from the altar. The price has been paid, the meal prepared, the table set. Come, for everything is now ready. What are we waiting for? The line starts here.

*In the name of the Father and of the ☩ Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

*Soli Deo Gloria*  
Pastor Jeff Hemmer  
Hope, Jerseyville