

Monday 3 November: Reflection on Luke 14:12–14 (Bob Bailey)

He said also to the one who had invited him, 'When you give a luncheon or a dinner, do not invite your friends or your brothers or your relatives or rich neighbours, in case they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid. 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.'

Hospitality permeates Jesus' middle Eastern and Jewish cultural world: Abraham entertained God in the desert; Jacob wrestled with God; Jesus relied on the hospitality of sinners and strangers for his everyday needs. Jesus found hospitality in the most unlikely of places, the human heart.

Many Jewish festivals are richly celebrated with food and liturgy. They also often extend to the stranger. Here the remembrance of God's generosity and deliverance is shared with the world in concrete terms, through bread. *Philoxenia*, the Greek word for hospitality, is made from the words *philo*, 'to love', and *xenia*, 'stranger'. Hospitality is to love the the stranger, to invite them into your trust and relationship. In a highly stratified and patronage-driven society, Jesus' call to bless those who cannot repay you was utterly counter-cultural and a threat to the very fabric of Roman society. Yet we see the importance of hospitality in the Epistles. The Church grew, and grows, through this radical encounter with a God who identified with the poor and oppressed. The crippled, lame and blind find a home with a God, and a community, that cared and loved them.

We cannot repay God's generosity. In the banquet of life, we are confronted with the truth that payment is one-sided. Everything that is REALLY important cannot be bought, earned or traded.

Bread: the basic, everyday foodstuff. Is there anything more delicious than warm, freshly baked bread? Bread reveals so many things: our interconnectedness; the goodness of the earth to grow the wheat; the work of the farmer in harvesting it; the milling of seed to make flour; the almost mystical combination of flour, yeast and water to make bread. Which we share to bring us life.

But there is another side to the work of hospitality. We may ask Jesus to enter the hospitality of our hearts, but what about our hearts finding their hospitality in God? During our current deprivation of human company and hospitality, many of us have been bereft of the sharing of our humanity that is so basic to our identity.

My prayer is that we can cultivate our hospitality, even in these deprived times. May we continue to support one another and the stranger we may never meet. We share one bread: the hospitality of God. Let no one go hungry, because we too were strangers in a strange land who were led to a place of freedom and plenty. Amen.

Tuesday 4 November: Reflection on Luke 14:15–24 (Pat Rogers)

One of the men sitting at the table heard this and said to Jesus, 'How happy are those who will sit at the table in the Kingdom of God!' Jesus said to him, 'There was a man who was giving a great feast, to which he invited many people. At the time for the feast he sent his servant to tell his guests, 'Come, everything is ready.' But they all began, one after another, to make excuses. The first told the servant, 'I have bought a field and have to go and look at it; please accept my apologies.' Another one said, 'I have bought five pairs of oxen and am on my way to try them out; please accept my apologies.' Another one said, 'I have just got married and for this reason I cannot come.' The servant went back and told his master. The master of the house was furious and said to his servant, 'Hurry out to the streets and alleys of the town and bring back the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.' Soon the servant said, 'Your order has been carried out, sir, but there is room for more. So the master said to the servant, 'Go out to the country roads and lanes, and make people come in, so my house will be full. None of those men who were invited, I tell you all, will taste my dinner!'

How many of us have received an invitation that we have had to think about before accepting? I know I have. There have been times when I have been invited to go somewhere with a friend when I have said, 'Can I get back to you about this?' For me it has sometimes happened during school holidays when I am expecting to hear from the family about when they will be bringing our grandchildren over to Leeds. I would check with the family to make sure the dates don't clash before accepting. My family in this case is my priority.

When Jesus told this parable he was in the home of an important Pharisee. The Pharisees were the teachers and interpreters of the written law, or *Torah*, which is the first five books of the Old Testament, the oral law, which is the deliberations of teachers over the centuries as to how the Torah was to be applied to everyday life, and the writings, most of which make up the other books of what we call the Old Testament. According to Rabbi Leo Trepp in his book *A History of the Jewish Experience*, some Pharisees were priests, some were rich and some were poor.



All Saints'
at the heart of the
community

SUNDAY 8th NOVEMBER
2020
REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY



On Sunday 8th November, there will not be a ceremony at the War Memorial or in church.

The services have been pre-recorded to include commemorations specific to each of the three villages. There are two YouTube options for each.

1. One starts at 10.15am with 10 minutes of pre-service images and music leading into a Remembrance Sunday service (with hymn, anthem, readings, sermon and prayers), followed by the Act of Remembrance (naming the fallen, laying wreaths, the Last Post, two minutes' silence and Reveille) and then the National Anthem.
2. The other option starts at 10.45am and consists solely of the Act of Remembrance section, for those who do not wish to view the church service.

These two services are timed so that the two minutes' silence occurs at exactly 11.00am. The link for Barwick is as follows:

10.15am Remembrance Service – <http://youtu.be/mJmowsyA6Lg>

10.45am Act of Remembrance, etc – <https://youtu.be/ny3rGJEgdDI>

As a mark of respect for the fallen, John and Moya will be tolling the church bells (live) from 10.30 to 11am, with a pause for the 2 minutes silence, then further tolling.

If you are unable to watch online the BBC have services.

Remembrance Sunday: the Cenotaph
Sunday 10.15am BBC1, 10.30am Radio 4



By a monument of marble,

By a monument of marble,
Or a simple wooden cross,
Here we gather to remember
Sacrifice and tragic loss.
Blood-red poppy petals flutter,
Each a symbol for a life,
Drifting in a crimson curtain,
Shadow of our constant strife.

Solemn silence now surrounds us
As we stand in memory.
Why must factions stir up conflict?
This eternal mystery
Troubles hearts and stirs the conscience,
Urges us to think again;
Face the urge of confrontation,
Yet reduce this searing pain.

For the sound of war still thunders
Through our planet, on this day.
Every hour new victims suffer,
Even as we meet to pray.
God, we need your help and guidance
In our constant search for peace.
Move us on to new solutions
As we pray that wars may cease.

Letter from Andy 7th November 2020

Tomorrow is Remembrance Sunday, where we give thanks for the sacrifice of those who died in past wars defending the freedoms of the many. There is an ironic parallel in that today the many are sacrificing their freedoms to protect the lives of the few, and while some chafe against the restrictions there is a 'rightness' to accepting those restrictions in order to protect the vulnerable of society.

Remembrance Sunday is also about a communal activity, a societal remembering. An event of national significance that brings us together as a nation. Whether you agree with war or not we can all stand with each other and recognise and remember those who have fallen. In standing together there is comfort and community. It is one of the great concerns of the lockdowns that communal activities have been curtailed and events such as Remembrance Sunday acts driven online. Whilst I hope that the online offering that the church has produced for Remembrance Sunday evokes some measure of 'Remembrance Sunday response', I recognise that we all are in need of social interaction, a standing togetherness that the current lockdown makes difficult.

We may not be able to gather in communal activities, but we are able to care for one another in small acts of generosity that make a difference to those we care for. My wife is a teacher in Barwick School and as part of one lesson challenged both herself and her students to think of 8 acts of generosity they can make that will make a difference to those around them. She is currently making a cake for a friend.

As we recognise the sacrifices of those in the past, and in the present, let us also act generously to both ourselves and those around us, sharing the love and caring for those who might need a hand of friendship.

Blessings.

Andy

**Last Wednesday 4th November was the last service in church,
for the time being.**

**Individual prayer in church is allowed,
more details next week.**