



## Twelfth Sunday After Pentecost

28 August 2022

The Episcopal Church of the  
Good Shepherd in Athens, Ohio

Seeking to know and serve Christ in loving service  
to the campus, the community, and the world.

Today's printed [Order of Worship](#)

LESSONS for the Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost (Proper 17-Tract 1):  
Old Testament – Jeremiah 2: 4-13  
Psalm 81: 1, 10-16 (SAID)  
New Testament – Hebrews 13: 1-8, 15-16  
Gospel – Luke 14: 1, 7-14

<https://www.lectionarypage.net>

### The Collect

LORD OF ALL POWER and might, the author and giver of all good things:  
Graft in our hearts the love of your Name; increase in us true religion; nourish  
us with all goodness; and bring forth in us the fruit of good works; through  
Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one  
God for ever and ever. *Amen.*

### The Gospel



## Luke 14:1, 7-14

ON ONE OCCASION when Jesus was going to the  
house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on  
the sabbath, they were watching him closely.

When he noticed how the guests chose the places of

honor, he told them a parable. "When you are invited by someone to a wedding banquet, do not sit down at the place of honor, in case someone more distinguished than you has been invited by your host; and the host who invited both of you may come and say to you, 'Give this person your place,' and then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place. But when you are invited, go and sit down at the lowest place, so that when your host comes, he may say to you, 'Friend, move up higher'; then you will be honored in the presence of all who sit at the table with you. For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted."

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 neighbors, 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."

## The Sermon

### The Restaurant in God's Kingdom

Eating at a restaurant is so commonplace, we probably don't think about it much. But if we were to give it some thought, we might notice there are lots of ways restaurants indicate their intended clientele. Atmosphere – the lighting, decorations, the style of tables, chairs, the presence or absence of booths, the presence or absence of a seating host, wait staff, access for the disabled - is one indication if a restaurant is for families, individuals, couples, or groups of people about the same age. Whether or not alcoholic beverages are served is another indicator. The menu can tell you a lot about a restaurant. If there is a wide or narrow range of choices, if there are options for people with food allergies or on special diets. And of course, there are the prices. How much items on the menu cost will probably say a lot about who eats at the restaurant, and the disparity of income between the customers and the staff.

For many people, eating at a restaurant can be how they feel connected to their community; especially when the staff knows their names and knows what menu items they prefer. When the customer knows a little about the staff, at least enough to have a brief conversation, it also helps feel like a community. They might also enjoy running into friends or neighbors and have a brief chat to catch up on local news or gossip. For some, eating at a restaurant is a rest from the routine of cooking a meal and cleaning up after it. For others, eating at a restaurant is how they celebrate a special occasion. My parents enjoy taking the whole family out to eat for anniversaries and birthdays, usually at a

“fancy” restaurant. They also enjoy treating the whole family to lunch at the best local diner in my hometown every Saturday. Of course, in these ongoing days of pandemic, it is now take-out from these favorite restaurants. But even so, this is a family tradition my husband happily embraced and is one of his favorite parts of visiting my parents.

All of these things: the sense of community, the rest from daily routine, celebration and tradition as well as enjoying a delicious meal at a restaurant is usually only possible through financial security and why often you will find people of similar socioeconomic status in certain restaurants. If you have ever inadvertently walked into a restaurant that was intended for people in a different status than you usually hang out with, then you might be more likely to notice those things.

While not literally the same thing as what Jesus described in today’s Gospel, where guests at a banquet fought over the best seats in the house, it is similar enough for us to compare. There were no restaurants in Jesus’ day. Banquets were a way to get the neighborhood together, or at least the people someone wanted to share a meal with, to celebrate, or rest, like on the sabbath. Ancient writers like Plutarch described the culture of the time in details that include the expectation that if you were invited to a banquet then you had to host one and invite the person who invited you to theirs. Banquets were, in Plutarch’s opinion, troubling because they were opportunities to show off a person’s status, the location of where you sat at the table meant something. Like the VIP who gets the best table at a restaurant.

We get a glimpse of this history writers like Plutarch described as problematic in today’s Gospel when Jesus attended a banquet hosted by a religious leader. Notice Jesus did not participate in the culturally accepted practice of trying to prove his status by where he sat. Instead, he talked about behaving differently, counter to the culturally accepted behavior of the time. What he said was so counter cultural, some scholars surmise Jesus wasn’t suggesting how to behave, Jesus was telling a parable about the Kingdom of Heaven. All that talk of taking a lower place at the table can still cause discomfort, and one way to deflect that discomfort is to dismiss Jesus’ words as a story. But I am not sure that’s what Jesus was doing. I wonder if Jesus was talking about how those who follow him -like you and me- can by our choices, even simple ones like where we choose to sit, reflect God’s Kingdom in the world.

The call to live counter to a culture of political power, economic, racial and gender inequality can be intimidating. It takes courage to be different, especially when we all have bills to pay.

But just because it can be intimidating, difficult, and challenging doesn’t mean it never happens. If you know where to look, the Kingdom

of God is already here.



One place you can find it is in Red Bank, New Jersey. There is a restaurant there that opened in 2011 and serves direct from farm to table locally sourced food, prepared by professionally trained chefs and their staff. The atmosphere is open and welcoming, accessible to people with disabilities, families, couples, and individuals. The menu only lists the meal choices, because at this restaurant there are no prices on the

menu. That's right, no prices. This restaurant doesn't take credit or debit cards. It is cash only. At this restaurant your meal is already paid for. No matter who you are, what your job or income is, before you get there, before you order or know what you want; your meal, appetizers, drinks, dessert, and all, has already been paid for.

This restaurant operates on a completely different system and is counter to the culture of status and debt we are too familiar with. The way to pay for a meal as this restaurant is to pay it forward. This means you can pay what you can, paying it forward with a donation, or volunteer. Volunteers can wait or bus tables, work in the community garden where the vegetables come from, clean, assist in the kitchen, even wash dishes.

You might suspect a restaurant like this didn't or couldn't make. But not only has this restaurant served over 150,000 meals since it opened, it has expanded to two more locations. The most recent opened two years ago at Rutgers University.

The name of this restaurant chain is JBJ Soul Kitchen. They are a community restaurant that claims, "All are welcome at our table where locally sourced ingredients, dignity and respect are always on the menu." Their manifesto reads like what Jesus was talking about in today's Gospel: "Where there is love there is plenty".



The JBJ Soul Kitchen started as an idea by a woman named Dorothea Hurley Bongiovi, who pitched the idea to her husband one night while they sat on the couch watching TV. She explained to her husband she was becoming aware of how food insecurity and homelessness is not always visible. And how things they take for granted like eating out when they don't feel like cooking or celebrating a special event can be out of reach for many people, and how she believes everyone regardless of economic status should be able to have a nice dinner out with their family. Where they can sit at nice tables in a nice restaurant, be part of a community, and be able to contribute what they can for the meal.

Her husband loved the idea, and together they created a place like what Jesus was talking about in today's Gospel. Where all are welcome, no one is fighting for the best seat at the table because it is a place where all are loved for who they are, not what they are. Dorothea and her husband volunteer at her restaurant. To this day, her husband, when he isn't at his day job, is usually found at JBJ Soul Kitchen. But you won't find him waiting tables or chatting with guests. That's because he doesn't want to be a distraction and doesn't want to take any attention from anyone else. Dorothea's husband is famous, although some of you may not have heard of him. He is Jon Bon Jovi, the founder and lead singer and songwriter for the Grammy Award winning rock band *Bon Jovi* that is responsible for classic songs like *Living on a Prayer*.

And while he is comfortable on a stage, singing in the spotlight in front of tens if not hundreds of thousands of people, Jon enjoys washing dishes at Soul Kitchen. During the pandemic, Jon and Dorothea and their four children worked at their restaurant just so it could provide to go meals for some of their regular clientele. Later, they created outdoor seating so they could serve people in the comfort that is part of Soul Kitchen's manifesto. I think there is a lot of what Jesus said in today's

Gospel embodied in a famous, wealthy musician washing dishes so others can enjoy a relaxing, delicious, meal feeling like they are a valued part of the community, and no one is an object of charity. That is a little bit of God's Kingdom here on earth. We know it is God's Kingdom because it is a place where everyone is treated with the love of God, with dignity and respect.

The pay it forward model at Soul Kitchen inspired us at Church of the Good Shepherd when we started our coffee shop ministry CrossRoads Café. We started CrossRoads Café in response to the question, "how might a church participate in a local economy in a way that looks like Jesus?". Like Soul Kitchen, the success of our coffee shop depends not on getting as many customers as possible by adding to their financial debt, it depends on people believing and living the manifesto where there is love there is plenty by practicing paying it forward.

Today's Gospel and a restaurant chain in New Jersey can remind us God's Kingdom isn't a fable or fantasy that will only come true in the afterlife. It is already here, right now. It is not always easy to see. Sometimes it doesn't look as lovely or joyful as Soul Kitchen. Sometimes the Kingdom of God can make us uncomfortable because it is so contrary to the societal norms we often accept without thought. Like the powerful response offering a small amount of debt forgiveness for students has received. For those living with debt they accrued during their education, this forgiveness feels like a blessed rest, liberation, and respect because it allows them the professional choices education promised. Some are angered because they feel like they are losing something, maybe the place they thought was theirs at the table. Others are relieved because it gives them hope their children will one day have financial security. However you feel about it, I see just how powerful forgiveness is. It's no wonder forgiveness is considered the stuff of resurrection life; it can liberate us from fighting over places of importance to creating a true community where there is plenty, and every seat is a good one because we care for each other and recognize our connections to and dependence on each other. Where no one is unimportant, the dish washer and the waiter and the chef and the customer who wants a meal are all essential members of the beloved community of God, and in fact, are how beloved community happens.

We don't have to be rock stars to find and create Beloved Community. Perhaps today's Gospel can inspire us to look for God's Kingdom and find some courage to choose those counter cultural practices that can reflect God's Kingdom to our neighbors. Whether it's paying it forward at CrossRoads Café, forgiving someone for hurting or disappointing us, washing dishes or help clean up after a family meal so someone else can rest, volunteering to help out here at church or some

other organization, because volunteers are harder to come by these days, intentionally choosing to park farther away from the door of a store, or letting someone in front of you when you are in line, sharing what you can, even practicing thinking about something that upsets you from a different point of view as a way to practice empathy, there are so many ways we can courageously live the ultimate form of pay-it-forward that is resurrection life, through Jesus Christ, who has already paid-it-forward for us all.

---

The Rev. Deborah Woolsey, the Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost,  
28 August 2022

**Images** -- Jon Bon Jovi washing dishes and others serving food at the Soul Kitchen in Red Bank NJ (Source Jon Bon Jovi/Instagram). As Covid permits, the JBJ Soul Kitchen allows patrons to volunteer their time as a means of paying for their meals.

## Please include in your prayers

IN OUR WORLD, we pray for Justin, Archbishop of Canterbury, and for Michael, our Presiding Bishop; we pray for peace with justice throughout the Middle East. We pray for the victims of the coronavirus. We pray for all people affected by natural and environmental disasters. We pray for the people who are suffering from war, especially the people of Ukraine, we pray for the community of Uvalde, Texas, and we pray for all asylum seekers, immigrants and refugees. We pray for Joe our President, Kamala our Vice-President, Mike, our Governor, the Supreme Court and the members of Congress.

IN OUR DIOCESE, we pray for our Provisional Bishop Wayne, the search process for a new bishop, and for Kenneth, Nedi, and Wendell our assisting bishops.

IN OUR PARISH, we pray for Good Shepherd's continued growth, for our Rector Rev. Deborah Woolsey, for our Associate Priests, Rev. Leslie Flemming, and Rev. David McCoy, for our ministry to students, the university, and the community. We pray for our friends at St. Luke's Episcopal Church in Merida, Mexico.

THOSE WHOM OUR PRAYERS ARE REQUESTED: Bud and Carol, Chris L., Gloria R., Jean R., Miriam, Scott, Sharon, T.C., Baby William James, Dana Carlson, Zelma Coleman, Lee Kembell-Cook, Richard DeNune, Roy DePue, Jan Gault, Lindsey and Regina Golden, Rev. Canon Scott Gunn,

Debbie Hunsberger, Bob and Nancy Jackson, Peter Kachenko and family, Julie Nehls, Donald and Junie Oney, Dan and Nancy Reedy, Virginia Richards, Michael Vaughn, Emily Woolsey and we pray for all who care for them. \*\*

ANNIVERSARY: Tom and Anne Walker (8/28)

BIRTHDAY: Sarah Parker (8/28), Nancy Covington (8/30), Richard Dean (8/31), Lyn Butrick (9/3)

FOR THE DECEASED: Nona Forbes, Flor Ortega

\*\* Full names are normally not published online but since the prayer list is not printed for the in-house 10:30 service, we will publish full names unless requested otherwise. If you have a name to be added to the prayer list, Lynn Graham maintains this information. Lynn may be reached at **740-593-5098** or [grahammowery@aol.com](mailto:grahammowery@aol.com).

## At-Home Worship

Christ Church Cathedral Cincinnati live streams its services Sundays at 10 a.m. These are saved and can be watched anytime later.

<https://cincinnati.cathedral.com/ccj/ccc/join-online/>

Washington D C -- there's much to explore at the the National Cathedral's online portal. <https://cathedral.org/worship/>

## Beautiful Day Beautiful Service



We celebrated the love of God under clear blue skies this morning and joyfully sang God's praise in the sunshine. We also blessed the new



landscaping project, finally complete after over a year. Today's service signified our commitment to love and cherish the world God created because we are dependent on the earth and its wellbeing for our own. This commitment is made and lived out of joy, as it connects us to God, our loving Creator.

Thank you to the volunteers who came early and helped set up, and to the volunteers who stayed behind to help put things back inside. Many hands and legs make for light and enjoyable work. Thank you, altar guild, and LEM, for the extra work you do to make this joyful celebration possible.

Our next outdoor service will be Sunday, September 11.

## Coming up on the Calendar

**Sunday, September 4, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist**

**Sunday, September 4, 3:00 p.m. - - Funeral service for Virginia (Jody) Smith**

**Sunday, September 11, 10:30 a.m. - - Outdoor Service with special remembrance for 9/11**

**Wednesday, September 14, 9:30 a.m. - - Prayer Shawl at Julie's**

**Thursday, September 15, 7:00 p.m. - - Vestry Meeting**

**Sunday, September 18, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist**

**Sunday, September 25, 10:30 a.m. - - Holy Eucharist**

**Wednesday, September 28, 9:30 a.m. - - Prayer Shawl at Julie's**

## Events Looking Forward

**Oct. 7-10 (Friday – Monday) College Student Retreat in the Hocking Hills**

**Nov. 6 (Sunday) Newly Refurbished Organ Celebration 3pm (first in a series)**

**Nov. 19 (Saturday) Diocese of Southern Ohio Convention Hybrid zoom**

and in person in Cincinnati

Nov. 24 (Thursday) Thanksgiving Day service 10:30 am

Nov. 24 (Thursday) Thanksgiving Meal for parishioners 1:30 pm

Dec. 24 (Saturday) Christmas Eve 7pm

Dec. 25 (Sunday) Christmas Day 10:30 am

## Notes & Announcements



## Blessing for Church Yard

O merciful Creator, make us always thankful for your loving providence, and grant that we, remembering the account that we must one day give, may be faithful stewards of your good gifts. We ask you to bless this church yard as a sign of our combined labor and gratitude for the generosity of resources freely given. May the work be a sign of our care for all that is entrusted to us. Bless the plants with growth, as you bless us with your presence through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives

and reigns, one God, for ever and ever, Amen. *Based on prayer on BCP page 259*

---

## Mother Deborah Not Available Thursday, September 1

Mother Deborah will be having a minor surgical procedure on Thursday and will not be available all day. If you have an emergency please contact the Senior Warden, Alex Buckley. Although this is a minor procedure,

Mother Deborah asks your prayers, and is grateful for your support and well wishes.



## Invitation to Sharing God's Love Rocks – how a craft can be a fun way to share God's love.

A few months ago, a colleague (Lutheran pastor in Dayton) invited me to join their Facebook Group called "Sharing God's Love Rocks". Admittedly, I joined before investigating what it was. I just liked the title. Turns out the Facebook Group is part of a ministry my colleague and his parish are doing together involving

painting rocks with uplifting spiritual images and words and them "hiding" them around their neighborhoods.



Over the months I've enjoyed seeing the creativity of my friend and his parishioners and how they got a lot of joy out of doing this. I learned there are people all over the world who paint rocks and then put them out in their neighborhoods; it's a movement of positivity.

After weeks of enjoying other people's art and creativity, I thought I should participate in whatever way I can. With classes beginning and with our new landscaping in front of the church right now being comprised primarily of rocks, I decided now was a good time. So, I bought some large, flat rocks and painted them. Some look like sheep

because we are Church of the Good Shepherd. There are others that have flowers, stars and the moon, one I painted to look like a cactus. After the paint dried, I wrote a brief Bible verse on them. Then, on Sunday morning, I "hid" them among the stones and gravel in

our front yard. We'll see if they are noticed, picked up, if others join them. If you enjoy this kind of activity, I invite you to contribute. Paint a rock and put it in our yard with our gravel. It might just brighten someone's day, and you might find for yourself that sharing God's love really does rock.

Many Blessings,  
*Mother Deborah*



---

**For Bishop Transition News and Updates**

**[-- Follow this link --](#)**

---

## **Diocese of Southern Ohio 80th General Convention**

**Saturday, November 19.** Delegates and clergy may attend in person or via zoom. For more see the [DSO E-Connections newsletter](#). Keep up with the latest [Convention information HERE](#).

---

[Follow this link](#) if you want **HELP WITH EASTERN KENTUCKY FLOOD RELIEF** directly via the Episcopal Diocese of Lexington.

[Follow this link](#) to support Humanitarian Response to the Crisis in Ukraine via ERD.

Alternatively if you want to help the folks who have been negatively impacted by climate disaster and war anywhere in the world please consider contributing to [Episcopal Relief and Development \(ERD\)](#) which is the official ministry of the Episcopal Church.

---

It was a beautiful day for our outdoor service, approximately 35 people celebrated. Michael Luelloff supplied the photos for today's news.



## Contacts, Information

### Quick Links

[Parish website](#)

[Sermons](#)

[Parish calendar](#)

[Staff](#)

[Campus Interest](#)

[E-News Guidelines  
and Back Issues](#)

### Pandemic Notes:

[Link to the DSO guidelines  
for  
returning to in-person  
worship](#)

In light of local conditions we request all persons wear masks inside the church building **regardless** of vaccination status.

**Office Hours:** 10:00 a.m.–

[Diocese Southern Ohio](#)

[Bishop Transition](#)

[\[E\]Connections](#)

[Episcopal News Service](#)

[Episcopal Journal & Café](#)

2:00 p.m., Monday through Thursday. Masks are required.

The **Church Building** is not open for public meetings and gatherings but during office/CrossRoads hours the thrift shop and chapel are available for individuals. Masks are required.

**CrossRoads Café** -- Join us Sunday after the 10:30 service.

## Contact Information

**For pastoral needs**, please contact The Rev. Deborah Woolsey at 937-689-8895 (cell) or 740-593-6877 (church), or by e-mail at [revdebwoolsey@gmail.com](mailto:revdebwoolsey@gmail.com).

**To find out more about Good Shepherd** and other matters, please contact Alex Buckley, Senior Warden, at 740-593-5513 or by e-mail at [macbuck@yahoo.com](mailto:macbuck@yahoo.com).

**For maintenance matters**, please leave a note at the office or contact Dana Carlson, Junior Warden, at 740-664-2022 or by e-mail at [carlsondana@hotmail.com](mailto:carlsondana@hotmail.com).

**For emergencies**, please call The Rev. Deborah Woolsey at 937-689-8895.

**NON-emergency messages** can be left on the church's answering machine (740-593-6877).

## [DONATE to Good Shepherd](#)

The above takes you to the Parish page where you can find instructions or donate on-line via PayPal, If you have a preference, please indicate on the the "Add special instructions to the seller" section the purpose of the donation -- e.g. organ fund, plate collection, etc.

Check out the Church's [YouTube Channel](#).

LIKE us on Facebook [Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd](#)

**The parish office administrator** is Barbara Martin (740-593-6877) or [barbara@chogs.org](mailto:barbara@chogs.org).

**The Episcopal Church of the Good Shepherd**, 64 University Terrace, Athens OH 45701

740-593-6877  
[chogs@chogs.org](mailto:chogs@chogs.org)  
[www.chogs.org](http://www.chogs.org)

[45701](#)

**Office Hours:**  
Masks are required.

10:00 am - 2:00 pm  
Monday - Thursday  
740-593-6877  
[chogs@chogs.org](mailto:chogs@chogs.org)

---

Blessings !

Church of the Good Shepherd | 64 University Terrace, Athens, OH 45701

[Unsubscribe foster.theodore@gmail.com](mailto:foster.theodore@gmail.com)

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by [foster.theodore@gmail.com](mailto:foster.theodore@gmail.com) powered by



Try email marketing for free today!