

## The Fourteenth Sunday after Trinity YEAR C September 1, 2013

### INTRODUCTIONS

*For use by lectors, in order of service, parish bulletins and magazines*

**Jeremiah 2:4-13**: God speaks out against God's people who have forgotten God's salvation and turned to other gods – God's people have abandoned God who is the fountain of living water and have dug cracked cisterns for themselves.

OR **Sirach 10:12-18**: In pride people have departed from God, and God has brought them low and put the humble and lowly in their place.

OR **Proverbs 25:6-7**: Don't push for a place of greatness. Rather wait for an invitation than be humiliated.

**Psalms 81:1, 10-16**: God brought Israel out of Egypt, and longs for Israel to listen to God and follow God's ways, but they want nothing to do with God.

OR **Psalms 112**: Those who fear and obey God, who are generous and righteous will know a life of goodness, confidence and richness.

**Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16**: Words to live by: Love one another and be hospitable, share the pain of those who suffer, be faithful in marriage, be content with what you have and follow the example of faithful leaders.

**Luke 14:1, 7-14**: Jesus advises his followers not to take places of honour at feasts, in case they be asked to move and are humiliated. Rather, he invites them to take seats at the foot of the table, so that if they are invited to a better place, they will be honoured. Further, when hosting dinners, he encourages them to invite those who cannot repay – the marginalised and rejected.

Readings at - [http://bible.oremus.org/?show\\_adj=no&passages=Jeremiah%202:%204-13%0Acw%20Psalm%2081:%201,%2010-16%0AHebrews%2013:%201-8,%2015-16%0ALuke%2014:%201,%207-14](http://bible.oremus.org/?show_adj=no&passages=Jeremiah%202:%204-13%0Acw%20Psalm%2081:%201,%2010-16%0AHebrews%2013:%201-8,%2015-16%0ALuke%2014:%201,%207-14)

### COLLECTS OF THE DAY

#### Collect One

Almighty and everlasting God,  
Give unto us the increase of faith, hope, and charity;  
and, that we may obtain that which thou dost promise,  
make us to love that which thou dost command;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

#### Collect Two

Almighty God,  
whose only Son has opened for us  
a new and living way into your presence:  
Give us pure hearts and steadfast wills  
to worship you in spirit and in truth,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Heavenly Father, help us delight in worship on every sabbath day, for you delight to hear us sing, pray, and give you thanks together.

Loving Christ: **Help us share the faith.**

Holy Spirit, remind us that you had plans for us before we were born, and like Jeremiah, regardless of our age, please use us well.

Loving Christ: **Help us share the faith.**

Heavenly Father, forgiver of sins, healer of disease, giver of opportunities to be your person in the most surprising ways, we bless your holy name.

Loving Christ: **Help us share the faith.**

God Almighty, you have been known as a consuming fire, but now you come as the God who shakes away created things, so that holy things, which cannot be shaken away, remain. Receive our reverence and our awe as our worship.

Loving Christ: **Help us share the faith.**

Lord Jesus Christ, you have made the Sabbath Day holier than ever, by healing another. As part of our worship, help us reach out to others on this day of worship.

Loving Christ: **Help us share the faith.**

You know of more needs among than we know, Lord Jesus. Nevertheless, we name persons who wish you near, and ask for your healing \_\_\_\_\_.

Loving Christ: **Help us share the faith.**

Listening God, hear our prayers. **Amen.**

### POST COMMUNION

Lord God,  
the source of truth and love:  
Keep us faithful to the apostles' teaching and fellowship,  
united in prayer and the breaking of bread,  
and one in joy and simplicity of heart,  
in Jesus Christ our Lord.

### PRAYERS

God of power and justice,  
like Jeremiah you weep over those  
who wander from you,  
turn aside to other gods,  
and enter into chaos and destruction.  
By your tears and through your mercy,  
teach us your ways  
and write them on our hearts  
so that we may follow faithfully  
the path you show us. Amen.

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Gracious God, your Son Jesus Christ fed the hungry with the bread of life and the word of your kingdom. Renew your people with your heavenly grace, and in all our weakness sustain us by your true and living bread, even Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen *Methodist Worship*

God, you have poured the Spirit of your Son into our hearts so that we call you father. Give us grace to devote our freedom to your service that we and all creation may be brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen. *Methodist Worship*

Almighty Lord and everlasting God, we beseech you to direct, sanctify and govern both our hearts and bodies in the ways of your laws and the works of your commandments; that through your most mighty protection, both here and ever, we may be preserved in body and soul; through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. *Common Worship*

Lord God, your Son left the riches of heaven and became poor for our sake: when we prosper save us from pride, when we are needy save us from despair, that we may trust in you alone, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. *Common Worship*

Grant us, O Lord,  
to seek first your Kingdom and your righteousness.  
Out of the abundance of your grace,  
grant us sufficient light and strength  
for our journey.  
Forgive what we have been,  
sanctify what we are  
and order what we shall be,  
in you and for you, now and for ever. Amen  
*Mary Tileston, 1820 -1895*

Watch, Lord,  
with those who wake or watch  
or weep tonight,  
and give your angels charge  
over those who sleep.  
Tend your sick ones,  
O Lord Jesus Christ;  
rest your weary ones;  
bless your dying ones;  
soothe your suffering ones;  
pity your afflicted ones;  
shield your joyous ones.  
And all for your love's sake. Amen  
*Compline collect*

O Holy Spirit, come as the wind to forward our goings. Come as the dove to launch us heavenward. Come as the water to purify our spirits. Come as the cloud to abate our temptations. Come as the dew to revive our languor. Come as fire to purge our souls; for your truth and your name's sake. Amen

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*Christina Rossetti, 1830-1894*

God, you have poured the Spirit of your Son into our hearts so that we may call you Father. Give us grace to devote our freedom to your service that we and all creation may be brought into the glorious liberty of the children of God. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and for ever. Amen.

Lord Jesus, we give you our hands to do your work. We give you our feet to walk in your way. We give you our tongues to speak your word. We give you our hearts to love you, now and for ever. Amen. *Lancelot Andrewes (1555-1626)*

Friends in Christ,  
God invites us to hold the needs of our sisters and brothers  
as dear to us as our own needs.  
Loving our neighbours as ourselves,  
we offer our thanksgivings and our petitions  
on behalf of the church and the world.  
Hear our prayers, God of power,  
and through the ministry of your Son  
free us from the grip of the tomb,  
that we may desire you as the fullness of life  
and proclaim your saving deeds to all the world. Amen.

As you heard the prayer of Isaac and Rebekah, O God,  
and guided them in the way of your love,  
so listen now to those who call upon you.  
Move us to praise your gracious will,  
for in Christ Jesus you have saved us from the deeds of death  
and opened for us the hidden ways of your love.  
We ask this through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord God, friend of those in need,  
your Son Jesus has untied our burdens  
and healed our spirits.  
We lift up the prayers of our hearts for those still burdened,  
those seeking healing,  
those in need within the church and the world.  
Hear our prayers  
that we may love you with our whole being  
and willingly share the concerns of our neighbors. Amen.

Creator God,  
you call us to love and serve you  
with body, mind, and spirit  
through loving your creation  
and our sisters and brothers.  
Open our hearts in compassion  
and receive these petitions  
on behalf of the needs of the church and the world.  
Holy One,

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hear our prayers and make us faithful stewards  
of the fragile bounty of this earth  
so that we may be entrusted with the riches of heaven. Amen.

We praise your abiding guidance, O God,  
for you sent us Jesus, our Teacher and Messiah,  
to model for us the way of love for the whole universe.  
We offer these prayers of love  
on behalf of ourselves and our neighbours,  
on behalf of your creation and our fellow creatures.  
Loving God,  
open our ears to hear your word  
and draw us closer to you,  
that the whole world may be one with you  
as you are one with us in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God of mercy and healing,  
you who hear the cries of those in need,  
receive these petitions of your people  
that all who are troubled  
may know peace, comfort, and courage.  
Life-giving God,  
heal our lives,  
that we may acknowledge your wonderful deeds  
and offer you thanks from generation to generation  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

God of salvation,  
who sent your Son to seek out and save what is lost,  
hear our prayers  
on behalf of those who are lost in our day,  
receiving these petitions and thanksgivings  
with your unending compassion.  
Redeeming Sustainer,  
visit your people  
and pour out your strength and courage upon us,  
that we may hurry to make you welcome  
not only in our concern for others,  
but by serving them  
generously and faithfully in your name. Amen.

God of majestic glory,  
in humility you have revealed yourself  
in the incarnation of your Son, Jesus Christ,  
who took the lowest place among us  
that we might be raised to the heights of divinity.  
Teach us to walk the path he prepared for us,  
so that we might take a place at the table with all who seek the joy of his kingdom. Amen.

Almighty God,  
in your goodness, you provide for the needy.  
Remove from your people the pride of place

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and the pursuit of power that mocks humility.  
Open our hearts in generosity and justice  
to the neglected and lonely,  
that in showing esteem for others,  
we may honour and please you  
through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit. Amen.

### LECTIONARY NOTES

#### **REFLECTIONS ON THEME:**

The theme this week is easy to spot – but tough to preach and implement in our world. Pride leads God's people to turn to their own resources and reject God's ways and God's resources (Jeremiah & Psalm 81). The result of this is inevitable failure or harm (Sirach) or the humiliation of being turned away from sought-after places of honour that we do not 'deserve' (Proverbs & Luke). Rather, honour and fullness of life are found in a humble commitment to following God's ways (Psalm 112), remaining faithful and trusting, and living with grace, generosity, compassion, fidelity, and inclusive hospitality (Hebrews and Luke).

#### **CONNECTING WITH LIFE:**

**GLOBAL APPLICATION:** In our celebrity-obsessed world, the quest for recognition, influence, wealth, fame and the praise of others drives all too many of us. Ultimately, this pride-filled drivenness leads us into conflict and destructiveness, as all of life becomes a game of winners and losers. The great narratives of different faiths are then placed in competition with each other for the 'honour' of being the 'ultimate truth'. The priorities of nations are placed into conflict as politicians wrestle to find a place in the corridors of world power, while their people's needs are used as bargaining chips or forgotten altogether. Values, integrity and fidelity all end up being expendable as success, victory or popularity become the ends which justify any means. And, as this driven, competitive way of being spreads through the world, we all pay the price in increasing rates of divorce, heart (and other) disease, conflict and inequality. But, of course, those who end up paying the most are those at the 'bottom' of the game – the innocent losers. Into all of this a simple word of justice speaks – humility can heal our world. As we learn, individually, nationally and globally, to live with simplicity, contentment, respect and integrity – and expect the same from our leaders and our corporations – the game of winners of losers begins to shift to a playful, collaborative game of shared benefit. And then, our eyes are opened to the fullness of life that is found in the hidden, poor and forgotten places – places that the rich and wealthy never see.

**LOCAL APPLICATION:** The proud values of our world have too often and too easily been adopted by people and communities of faith. We give more importance and value to the big, the rich and the successful pastors, writers and churches, while ignoring the smaller ones who may be doing far more practical and important work within their communities of touching the poor, the rejected and the suffering. Worship leaders are the new rock stars, preachers the new motivational gurus, churches the new stages on which slick performances are produced each week, while church goers strive to become the next singing, speaking or writing sensation. More than this, we compete against ourselves, claiming that our version of the Gospel, our worship or our interpretation of the Scriptures is better than others. And we strive to be the best recognised and most influential in our neighbourhoods or cities. Too often the voices that lead and influence us even in the

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Church are not those who are the most devoted, prayerful or compassionate, but those who have succeeded at society's game. What would it mean for you, as an individual and as a church community, to take the lowliest seat at the table? To step out of the game of success and winning, and into the world of simplicity, humility and service? To give the most attention and energy not to the wealthy, recognised or influential, but to the forgotten, the marginalised and the excluded? What would your Church look like if it embraced humility and simplicity as its primary values? How would it need to change?

### SERMON OUTLINE

#### Luke 14: 1, 7-14 a meal on the Sabbath

Jesus was frequently invited to meals – a great honour to host such a wonderful teacher as Jesus....

**1. The Privilege of hospitality:-** as Jesus went *to the house of a leader of the Pharisees to eat a meal on the Sabbath* – one of the **Separated Ones** – elitest in their attitude. It seemed a generous gesture, but was there an ulterior motive - *they were watching him closely* – especially as he proceeded to heal *a man suffering from dropsy*. As the meal progresses, Jesus disregards their criticism of his action & continues to teach....

**2. The Places of honour:-** at a banquet or feast - *do not sit down at the place of honour* – in case you will be asked to move - *then in disgrace you would start to take the lowest place*. Imagine the humiliation, embarrassment & loss of face! Instead *sit down at the lowest place*, & you may be invited *"Friend, move up higher"* – what a delight & pleasure that will be instead!

**3. The Promotion of humility:-** *<sup>11</sup>For all who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.* Plummer commented: **"Humility is the passport to the kingdom of heaven"**

Jesus advises his host not to invite a select group of guests as *they may invite you in return, and you would be repaid*. Rather, invite the outcasts of society: *the poor, crippled, lame, & blind*. There may be no personal prestige or public acknowledgement but more importantly *<sup>14</sup>You will be blessed by my Father in heaven & will be repaid at the resurrection of the righteous.*

By Norman Porteous

### ONLINE SERMON SOURCES

#### Ministry Matters

<http://www.ministrymatters.com/bin/5984/this-sunday-9113#axzz2cVq6qjbV>

"Humility," sermon discussion from Frederick Buechner, Frederick Buechner Blog.

<http://frederickbuechner.com/content/weekly-sermon-illustration-humility>

"How Open Is Our Table?" the Rev. Eric Shafer, Day 1

<http://day1.org/2138-how-open-is-our-table>

[www.churchnewsireland.org](http://www.churchnewsireland.org)

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### CHILDREN

[Worshiping with Children](#), Proper 17, Including children in the congregation's worship, using the Revised Common Lectionary, Carolyn C. Brown, 2013.

<http://worshipingwithchildren.blogspot.co.uk/2013/07/year-c-proper-17-22nd-in-ordinary-time.html>

["Sermon of the Week,"](#) / ["Mensajes para niños."](#) Sermons 4 Kids, Charles Kirkpatrick, Object Lessons & Children's Sermons, Coloring Pages, Puzzles. Sermons4Kids.com.

<http://www.sermons4kids.com/>

[ChildrenSermons.com](#), Children's Sermons in English, Sermones en Español, Jim Kerlin. Often has lectionary suggestions.

<http://www.childrensermons.com/>

["Left Out?"](#) Children's Sermon from Sermons4kids.com.

<http://www.sermons4kids.com/left-out.html>