"Sow broadly!"

Parables are not supposed to be 1 to 1. It isn't supposed to be you just plug in God for King, Jesus for son, and Jews for first invitees, and Christians for second invitees. If that were the case, we'd end up with a vindictive King God who murders anyone who says no to him, levels his own city in a tantrum, invites the refugees he made, and still punish those who show up.

That is terrible theology, in my opinion. I sure don't want to follow a tyrant God. When I come to scripture, I make the choice to read it with love. I believe scripture has wisdom and teachings for all ages, and all peoples. But the message it gives us depends on the way we approach it.

Through a lens of love, I think Matthew told his version of the parable this way because he was addressing the grieving survivors of the destruction of the capital city of Jerusalem a few decades after Jesus' death. Matthew's friends and family were asking: how could God let God's own holy city be destroyed? Matthew remembered one of Jesus' parables, and used it to answer: God must have willed the city's destruction. Why would God have willed it? Well, perhaps because people rejected God. Why would people reject God? For business, for family, for many reasons. Now what? Now we, the Jews who survived, and the Gentiles -- the non-Jews around us -- are banding together. God must still be inviting us, all of us. God hasn't abandoned us, even if it feels like it. And lest we get complacent, we must still do as God asks.

Through a lens of love, this parable is not a tyrant God. It is God refusing to give up on us. It is helpful for Matthew and his time.

God refusing to give up on us is timeless good news.

So what do we do about the poor guy who is tossed out anyways - right at the end? This is one of the major differences between Luke and Matthew's telling of the parable. And it highlights how cultural expectations are important to understanding ancient insults! It was expected, back then, that the wealthy would provide clothing for guests. It is a sign of their wealth, and generosity.

Sort of like we all get wedding favours today. But you wouldn't be insulted if you weren't given a little bag of candy. And the bride and groom wouldn't be insulted if you left behind your token.

It is a token.

Now imagine you rent a hotel room. When you get in the room you find there are no sheets or pillows. You call the front desk, "Where are my sheets and pillows?"

They reply, "Did you bring them?"

"Why would I bring them! This is a hotel!"

"Because most people intending to sleep at a hotel intend to sleep with sheets and pillows. Why weren't you prepared?"
"Because hotels always provide sheets and pillows!"

The hotel, and you, have totally different ideas on who is supposed to provide the sheets and pillows. You may also have different ideas of ownership. You said "my sheets and pillows" but they're not really yours. You intended to leave them at the hotel. They were rented for a night. Maybe the hotel thought you meant your literal sheets and pillows from your bed at home.

In Jesus' time, people expected a wedding robe if they are invited to a fancy rich wedding. The rich host expected the guests to wear the provided clothing. Each honoured the other. So the person who arrives and refuses the gifted robe is here to cause trouble. They're not about giving and receiving honour and celebrating the prince's marriage. They're here to be the party pooper. So they're escorted out to join the others who don't want to be at the party.

I hear in this story the modern good news that we're provided with all we need to join God's kin-dom. It is our choice, however, if we want to join. God won't take from us our free will. We decide if we want to wear the robe made of justice, righteousness, hope and patience, love and mercy. We choose to participate in the party that has sown seeds near and far - inviting everyone worthy and unworthy. We choose if we're okay rubbing elbows with those we'd rather hadn't been invited.

In 2 Corinthians, Paul writes that the more we sow the more we reap. The more you invest in each other, the more others invest in you. The more you share generously, the more generous others are to you. The more you love on others, the more love comes your way. This is absolutely not the teaching that your wealth is tied to how much you give towards the church or charity. No prosperity gospel here. It is absolutely the teaching that love multiplies love. Care multiplies care. And extravagant welcome inspires people to extravagantly welcome.

The good and timeless news is an extravagant welcome is offered to you.
Come to the table and eat and drink - without money, without worthiness - come to God's table because God invites you.
Come not because you're ready and in your best clothes.
Come because God offers all you need to participate.
Come receive a foretaste of heaven where all are equal, wrongs are healed, and all creation is invited to be one.
Come of your own free will.
Come to a thanksgiving feast, a wedding feast, a celebration that is happening outside of time with all who have come before, all who will come after, and all of us gathered in the now.
The good news is God sows broadly, abundantly. God lovingly invites us to join the kin-dom just as we are. For this, I can proclaim: thanks be to God for such an indescribable gift!
Amen.



Scripture Reading – Oct.11, 2026 - LCUCPC
2 Corinthians 9:6-15 - NRSV Ue

6 The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows
bountifully will also reap bountifully. 7 Each of you must give as you have made up your mind,
not regretfully or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to provide
you with every blessing in abundance, so that by always having enough of everything, you may
share abundantly in every good work. 9 As it is written,

"He scatters abroad; he gives to the poor;
his righteousness endures forever."

10 He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for
sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. 11 You will be enriched in every way for
your great generosity, which will produce thanksgiving to God through us, 12 for the rendering of
this ministry not only supplies the needs of the saints but also overflows with many
thanksgivings to God. 13 Through the testing of this ministry you glorify
God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and
by the generosity of your partnership with them and with all others,
14 while they long for you and pray for you because of the surpassing
grace of God that he has given you. 15 Thanks be to God for his
indescribable gift!



Matthew 22: 1-14
The Parable of the Wedding Banquet

22 Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: 2 "The kingdom of heaven may be
compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. 3 He sent his slaves to call those
who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. 4 Again he sent other
slaves, saying, 'Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and
my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet.'
5 But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, 6 while the
rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. 7 The king was enraged. He sent his
troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. 8 Then he said to his slaves, 'The
wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. 9 Go therefore into the main streets, and
invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.' 10 Those slaves went out into the streets and
gathered all whom they found, both good and bad, so the wedding hall was filled with guests.
11 "But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a
wedding robe, 12 and he said to him, 'Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?'
And he was speechless. 13 Then the king said to the attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot, and
throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.' 14 For
many are called, but few are chosen."

May God's spirit shape our understanding of these words.
And may they awaken in our hearts

M4M – Your Generosity Matters – Oct. 11, 2026 for LCUCPC

Credit: St. Luke's United Church **Published On: September 21, 2026**



HOUSE OF FRIENDSHIP

The congregation at Saint Luke's United Church in Toronto, Ontario understands that belonging rarely happens by accident. It grows through deeply intentional acts of welcome that are joyfully offered to every single person.

Arriving in Canada is only the beginning of the journey for many newcomers. While there is relief in finding safety, there's also the daunting task of building a new life—finding housing and work, learning unfamiliar systems and languages, making new connections, and carrying the weight of experiences that don't disappear at the border. For some, those experiences include extreme persecution and trauma. Finding a comfortable place to truly and deeply belong, while facing other challenges, can be a long and exhausting process.

Every Sunday, the congregation at St. Luke's is prepared for someone new to come through the doors. Of course, there are warm greetings, name tags, and introductions. There is also time in the service where people will leave their seats to offer a hug, handshake, and friendly conversation to all.

"Our Passing of the Peace tradition is that early in the service, we get up, and we move around. We're hugging each other, and we're fist bumping, all while our music director is playing music in the background. It's very crowded, as you can imagine, and people are leaning over pews and such. At that point, people who have been introduced as new, our members of the congregation are reaching out to them and welcoming them and quite intentionally. And this also continues at lunchtime."

After the service, everyone gathers downstairs for what they affectionately call "coffee hour," a name that hardly captures the generous meal waiting around the tables. People find a full, warm meal awaiting them.

The food is important, but it's conversation that nourishes the community. Around the table, people who might never have met elsewhere find themselves sharing a meal and learning about one another. A newcomer to Canada sits beside someone who has worshipped at Saint Luke's for decades. Someone rebuilding their life after escaping persecution discovers neighbours who are genuinely interested in their story, without expecting them to tell it all at once.

One newcomer, who had fled severe persecution before coming to Canada, described finding more than a church. They found people who journeyed with them. As they joined groups, celebrated milestones, and continued to build a new life, the congregation is celebrating alongside them. The community at St. Luke's understands that healing takes time, and trust is built through consistency, kindness, and simply showing up for one another.

This is the ministry of hospitality at Saint Luke's. It's not just about opening church doors and having a sign, but about opening a community, one where people are known by name, welcomed with care, and reminded that they do not have to face life's next chapter alone. Through Mission and Service, we help support ministries like Saint Luke's United Church that create spaces of belonging for newcomers and neighbours alike. Together, we are helping to build communities where God's welcome is lived, shared, and experienced every day. Let's give generously.