

St. Paul's Episcopal Church
Stockbridge, Massachusetts
October 11, 2020 – The Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost

Come to the Banquet

Our gospel lesson today ([Matthew 22:1-14](#)) tells the story of a king who prepares a banquet and issues invitations, only to have them declined. He finally instructs his servants to invite anyone they can find to the feast, finally filling the hall with guests.

Commentators tell us this is really a story about ultimate things: God's gift of eternal salvation through the crucifixion and resurrection of Christ. The listener is therefore exhorted to heed the gracious invitation God offers. But might there also be a message about how we live in these difficult days?

Perhaps Jesus is inviting us to pay attention to the opportunities we have every day to say yes to God's love—to be instruments of God's peace and hope for the world. It makes me think of that reminder to live life that comes from *Auntie Mame*: "Life is a banquet!" In difficult times, we are called to count our blessings, and then to create more.

Welcome to St. Paul's, where all are invited to feast at the table, and then use that meal as fuel to propel us along the way of love.

Music	Rachel Handman, violin	
Prelude:	Gigue from Violin partita no. 2 in D minor	JS Bach
After Sermon:	The Water is Wide	Traditional Hymn
Offertory:	Meditation from Thais	Massenet
After Communion:	Morning Has Broken	Cat Stevens/Yusuf Islam
Postlude:	Someone to Watch Over Me	George Gershwin

Collect

Lord, we pray that your grace may always precede and follow us, that we may continually be given to good works; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

Readings

Exodus 32: 1-14

When the people saw that Moses delayed to come down from the mountain, the people gathered around Aaron, and said to him, "Come, make gods for us, who shall go before us; as for this Moses, the man who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has become of him." Aaron said to them, "Take off the gold rings that are on the ears of your wives, your sons, and your daughters, and bring them to me." So all the people took off the gold rings from their ears, and brought them to Aaron. He took the gold from them, formed it in a mold, and cast an image of a calf; and they said, "These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt!" When Aaron saw this, he built an altar before it; and Aaron made proclamation and said,

“Tomorrow shall be a festival to the LORD.” They rose early the next day, and offered burnt offerings and brought sacrifices of well-being; and the people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to revel.

The LORD said to Moses, “Go down at once! Your people, whom you brought up out of the land of Egypt, have acted perversely; they have been quick to turn aside from the way that I commanded them; they have cast for themselves an image of a calf, and have worshiped it and sacrificed to it, and said, ‘These are your gods, O Israel, who brought you up out of the land of Egypt! The LORD said to Moses, “I have seen this people, how stiff-necked they are. Now let me alone, so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them; and of you I will make a great nation.”

But Moses implored the Lord his God, and said, “O LORD, why does your wrath burn hot against your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt with great power and with a mighty hand? Why should the Egyptians say, ‘It was with evil intent that he brought them out to kill them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth’? Turn from your fierce wrath; change your mind and do not bring disaster on your people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, your servants, how you swore to them by your own self, saying to them, ‘I will multiply your descendants like the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have promised I will give to your descendants, and they shall inherit it forever.’” And the Lord changed his mind about the disaster that he planned to bring on his people.

Psalm 106:1-6, 19-23

- 1 Hallelujah! Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, *
for his mercy endures for ever.
- 2 Who can declare the mighty acts of the LORD *
or show forth all his praise?
- 3 Happy are those who act with justice *
and always do what is right!
- 4 Remember me, O LORD, with the favor you have for your people, *
and visit me with your saving help;
- 5 That I may see the prosperity of your elect and be glad with the gladness of your people, *
that I may glory with your inheritance.
- 6 We have sinned as our forebears did; *
we have done wrong and dealt wickedly.
- 19 Israel made a bull-calf at Horeb *
and worshiped a molten image;
- 20 And so they exchanged their Glory *
for the image of an ox that feeds on grass.
- 21 They forgot God their Savior, *
who had done great things in Egypt,
- 22 Wonderful deeds in the land of Ham, *
and fearful things at the Red Sea.
- 23 So he would have destroyed them, had not Moses his chosen stood before him in the breach, *
to turn away his wrath from consuming them.

Matthew 22:1-14

Once more Jesus spoke to the people in parables, saying: “The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. 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.’ But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his slaves, ‘The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet.’ 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.

“But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?’ And he was speechless. 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.’ For many are called, but few are chosen.”

Guest Musician - Rachel Handman

Today we are honored to welcome violinist, **Rachel Handman**. Rachel is originally from Hyde Park, NY. Her virtuosity and improvisational ability appears in many musical forms, including classical, bluegrass, Irish, pop and folk. Broadway show credits include *Dr. Zhivago*, *Something Rotten!*, *Miss Saigon*, *Carousel* and currently, *West Side Story*. Rachel is a long-standing member of the Hudson Valley Philharmonic and is Associate Concert Master of the Ridgefield Symphony Orchestra. With recent and upcoming performances at Carnegie Hall, she also plays in the New York Oratorio Society Orchestra under the direction of Kent Tritle. She has toured Mexico with Philharmonic Orchestra of the Americas, and Germany, both on stage and in the orchestra with the shows *My Fair Lady* and *On the Town*. Loving travel and exposure to other cultures, Rachel lived in La Paz, Bolivia where she was in the National Symphony of Bolivia, concertized with a string quartet, and eventually joined a Salsa band named Guapacha! After returning to the states, Rachel began fiddling and immersing herself in different folk and fiddle styles. With her band, Uncommon Ground, she has performed at many festivals, including the Doc Watson Festival, Carolina in the Fall, and Winter-Hawk festival. Rachel has also performed with Natalie Merchant, Norm Lewis, Jennifer Hudson, Roberta Flack, Bette Midler, and the legendary Ray Charles. She teaches fiddle workshops at Summer Strings, a music camp run by her family in Poughkeepsie, NY, and is a resident visiting artist at Music at Port Milford chamber music festival in Milford, Ontario.

Congregational Survey

Help us plan our worship opportunities for fall and winter.

Looking forward to the late fall and winter, we are exploring how we will continue to worship and keep each other safe and healthy. A survey asking for your input is currently underway. You should have received an email or snail mail invitation last week to complete the survey. If you have not received it or if you received the email invite and would prefer a printed copy please contact Gretchen by leaving a voicemail at the office, 413-298-4913, or emailing her, stpaulsstockbridge@gmail.com.

Sermon on the Mount: A Beginner's Guide to the Kingdom of Heaven

Continuing this Tuesday, 7:00-8:30 pm, on Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82609960553?pwd=U05FZ1FIZHhTeWNWbitkWINOOFk3Zz09>

or call in: 646-558-8656 Meeting ID: 826 0996 0553 Passcode: 446609

Dr. Amy Jill Levine, Professor of New Testament and Jewish Studies at Vanderbilt University, has built her career on helping Christians understand the Jewish context of Jesus' life and ministry. Her newest book, *Sermon on the Mount*, is a readable and thought-provoking look at these fundamental teachings from Matthew's gospel. Father Sam will use this book (available in paperback or for the Kindle) as the guide to our six-week study, in partnership with the folks of Grace Church of Great Barrington and Christ Trinity Church of Sheffield. Continuing this Tuesday, October 13, we will gather on the Zoom platform, 7:00-8:30 pm. **Please read chapter two in preparation for this session.** Questions? Ask Father Sam.

Worship Teams (If you exchange shifts with someone, please notify the Church Office by Thursday morning at stpaulsstockbridge@gmail.com.)

Today, October 11

Celebrant: The Rev. Jane Tillman
Preacher: The Rev. Sam Smith
Ushers: Jorja Marsden
Reader: Darryl Lafferty

Next Sunday, October 18

Celebrant: The Rev. Sam Smith
& Preacher:
Ushers: Duncan Pollock
Reader: Jean Rousseau

Parish Prayer List

- People we pray for on Sundays: **Cecilia, Thelma**
- Long-term prayer list: **Piers, Katrina, Khali, George, Jeff, David, Doug, Barbara, ZsuZsa, Charles, Tom, Rich, Ronnie, John, George, Christy, Michael, Karen**
- Our partners at Grace Church, Great Barrington and their priest Libby; Christ Trinity Episcopal-Lutheran, Sheffield and their priest Erik; the Austen Riggs community and the Riverbrook Residence; victims of violence, abuse, persecution and disaster at home and abroad; those impacted by the pandemic
- Outreach Ministries of the Week: **St. Paul's Children's Center**
- Diocesan Cycle of Prayer: **Church of the Reconciliation, Webster**
- Anglican Cycle of Prayer: **Church of the Province of Uganda**
- Birthdays: **Jean Rousseau & Anne Skakel** (11th), **Tom Race** (13th), **Faith Savery** (17th)
- Anniversaries: **Matt & Danielle Fillio** (13th)