

Martin Luther Chapel – Pennsauken, NJ  
Twelfth Sunday After Pentecost / 1 September 2019

Color: Green

Propers: 17 Series C

Divine Service: II

Proper Preface: Common

Sermon Text: Gospel Reading – Luke 14: 1 – 14  
Sermon Title: “When”

My brothers and sisters in Christ, God **teaches us and trains us up** in the way of  
 **true life**  
 and **true fellowship**.

He **calls us to rejoice** for:

-  our names are **written in the Book of Life**;
-  we have an **inheritance** that moth cannot destroy and thieves cannot steal;
-  Jesus in the **one thing needful**;
-  our LORD **teaches us to pray aright** to our heavenly Father;
-  He **separates the holy from the profane**;
-  and **exhorts us to exert ourselves**
  -  to enter into our heavenly Father’s presence
  -  through Him.

Jesus **tells us the truth** about our exodus with Him

-  from this veil of tears
-  through death
-  and into eternity
-  at our **heavenly Father’s house**
-  and at **His table**.

Today He **speaks clearly, concisely and forcefully** about **true fellowship**:

-  **divine fellowship**,
-  **familial fellowship**,
-  and **eternal fellowship**.

Jesus **confronted** the Pharisee and his cohorts on that day with **the truth** about

-  **fellowship with Him**
-  and, thus, **fellowship with the One who sent Him**.
-  God incarnate **accepted the Pharisee’s summons** to
  -  have table fellowship
  -  **knowing** that it was a false fellowship
  -  on that Sabbath Day.
-  He **reclined at a table**
  -  where the Pharisee and his associates
  -  intended to judge His **every word and action**
    -  with
      -  contempt,
      -  guile
      -  and condemnation

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- ☉ according to
- ✚ their expectations,
- ✚ their tradition,
- ✚ and their law.

☿ The sin of the Adam in the Garden of Eden manifested itself as they assumed

✚ the honored seat of judgment

✚ to render a verdict as to

☉ what was good

☉ and what was evil.

☿ Yet, their blind faith in their laws and codes resulted in

✚ their falling into error – a deep well

✚ where they desired others to join them in a fellowship of

☉ self-righteousness,

☉ self-gratification,

☉ self-exaltation

☉ and hypocrisy.

☿ The true Prophet

☿ is also the divine Judge

☿ who on that day and on this day

☿ **accurately and truthfully divides**

☿ ungodly from Godly fellowship,

☿ leaving legalists of every age

✚ silenced

✚ and struggling with convicted consciences.

Christ even then **continued pulling sinners out of the deadly well** of

☿ sin, death and the power of the devil

☿ that borders the Path of Life.

☿ They had planned to judge

☿ any work performed by the one they considered the illegitimate son of Mary

☿ Thus, the man with dropsy would provide a means to condemn either His

✚ action

✚ or inaction.

☿ Yet, the Son of Man **exposed and condemned** their hypocrisy

☿ **by freeing** the man from his physical infirmity

☿ and **then asked them** if they would deliver

✚ their child

✚ or animal

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† from a well of death  
† on the Sabbath.

✠ Their silence was

✠ a loud and resounding amen  
✠ and a condemnation of their fellowship based on man-made

† standards,

† codes

† and laws.

✠ Our LORD and our God

✠ **continued to pull** people out of the deadly well

✠ as He **traveled steadfastly and humbly** all the way to the cross that awaited Him outside the city of radical peace on:

† that dark Friday;

† that awful and terrible Friday;

† that Good Friday.

Jesus would **not allow** their false fellowship

✠ to overshadow and negate

✠ His true fellowship

✠ that day.

✠ He will **not tolerate** our flawed fellowship to either

✠ compete with,

✠ negate or

✠ overcome

✠ His **true fellowship** on this day with

† His Father

† and His bride,

† you and me.

✠ He will **never accept**

✠ a sinful and fleshly fellowship

✠ that tempts

✠ and enslaves people of all ages to

† compete,

† negate,

† or overcome the **one true and eternal fellowship**

† **He paid for on the cross.**

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 Those who deceive themselves into thinking  
 that they can partake in His means of grace  
 on their terms  
 will find the **Narrow Door securely and forever locked**  
 against their

-  pleas and protests,
  -  self-justification and self-works,
  -  self-righteousness and self-promotion
-  on the Last Day.

 Their mouths will forever be silenced  
 when they are confronted  
 with the truth of their spiritual

-  wretchedness
-  and condemnation.

 The fellowship Jesus **offers** you and me this day  
 is not

-  a ritualistic fellowship,
-  a self-gratifying fellowship,
-  a lifeless fellowship
-  resting on human reason and strength

 but one **rich in**

-  **reverence,**
-  **mercy,**
-  and **peace**
-  **resting upon divine**
-  **justice**
-  and **grace through faith.**

When God **called us by name** as His children

 there was an

-  **immediate,**
-  **ongoing**
-  and an **eternal fellowship**

 into which He **ushered us**  
 on that **day of our salvation.**

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 Just as we did not choose our father or mother  
 we did not choose our heavenly Father  
 but He **chose us as His children**  
 for **the sake of Jesus.**

 When He **brought us through the blessed waters of holy Baptism** on that day  
 He **put His name on us,**  
 His **complete name on us-**  
 **†** the name of the Father,  
 **†** and of the Son,  
 **†** and of the Holy Spirit  
 **making us holy**  
 **†** for we were joined to Christ in a death like His  
 **†** and He **raised us up in a resurrection like Jesus'.**

 When He **chose us**  
 He **opened up His entire family,**  
 **welcoming you and me** into His  
 **†** **divine,**  
 **†** **intimate**  
 **†** **and eternal fellowship.**

 When He **chose us**  
 we had nothing that  
 **†** made us attractive to Him  
 **†** or merited His love  
 but rather we were covered with the obscenity and profanity of  
 **†** self-gratification,  
 **†** self-centeredness,  
 **†** self-righteousness  
 **†** and self-justification  
 **†** and we stank of death.

 When He **chose us as His child** Jesus  
 rescued us from a fellowship of death with  
 **†** rebellious and lawless people,  
 **†** a perishing creation,  
 **†** and a hate-filled illegitimate and hellish father

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and **brought us into the fellowship of life** with  
† a **holy and righteous people,**  
† the **promised new heaven and new earth,**  
† and the **loving and compassionate heavenly Father,**  
† the **true Son of God and Son of Man,**  
† and the **LORD and Giver of Life.**

When **God looks at you and me He sees**

† a child that is both perfect and righteous in every aspect  
† AND a child that is  
† poor in spirit,  
† mourning our sinful condition and inability to free ourselves,  
† gentle and selflessly meek,  
† hungering and thirsting for righteousness,  
† tenderly and compassionately caring for our neighbor before ourselves,  
† striving to preserve the peace God has **bestowed upon us in our vocations,**  
† and empathetically and fervently praying for our brothers and sisters that even now are being persecuted for His name sake.

When He **brings us into the fellowship of His family**

† **here** at Martin Luther Chapel  
† and **around the world**  
† He **calls us to recline next to Jesus** at His table,  
† freely eating **the bread of life**  
† and joyfully drinking **the living water.**

Yet, in love, God **warns us**

† not to think, say or try to move  
† into the preferred seat of  
† His only begotten  
† and beloved Son  
† for He **will tell us to move to the lesser seat,**  
† and we will be rightfully humiliated and shame-filled  
† before our brothers and sisters.

My brothers and sisters in Christ,

† rejoice,  
† by the **power of the Holy Spirit,**  
† when **God calls us to begin anew**

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 this day

 the **divine,**

 the **intimate,**

 the **eternal fellowship**

 with **Him and all His holy ones**

 here in time

 and those in eternity.

 He who is **almighty, all knowing, and all powerful raised us up out of**

 our poor estate,

 our lowly means,

 and our spiritual bankruptcy

 that enslaved us in a temporal and fatal fleshly fellowship

 with sin, death and the power of the devil.

 He **raised up us and our brothers and sisters in Christ**

 to the **blessed estate of His family**

 **as His children,**

 **bestowed on us the righteousness and blessedness of Christ Jesus,**

 and **made us co-heirs** with Jesus in His kingdom whom have

 **close,**

 **intimate**

 and **eternal fellowship** with

 **Him**

 and **each other.**

 Now -let us acknowledge and embrace the divine imperative “When.”

 “When” He **summons us to fellowship on Sunday**

 let us humbly and obediently gather here

 with our brothers and sisters at Martin Luther Chapel.

 “When” He **summons us to fellowship through a brother or sister**

 let us humbly and joyfully appear as their guest

 at the appointed time and place

 where they have prepared a wonderful banquet.

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**“When” He summons us to extend His fellowship to our brothers and sisters**

† let us humbly and joyfully invite all in

† love,

† peace

† and joy,

† without

 distinction

 or discrimination.



**“When” God extends His right hand to us in fellowship**

† great is our reward in Christ Jesus

† veiled here in time

† and yet it will be fully visible there in eternity.

Amen and Amen.