

PROPER 23: WE ARE INVITED

THE STORY: MATTHEW 22:1-14

The wedding banquet is given by the king (God) for the son (Jesus). Many guests are invited ahead of time and say they will come, but on the day of the wedding, no one will come and some, in fact, abuse the slaves he sent to gather them. The king (God) is furious and sends troops to punish them. The wedding banquet is still ready, so the king (God) tells the slaves to go and gather all who are in the streets, good and bad, to the banquet. They come, ready for the banquet – all except one, who is singled out and taken away.

YOUNGER CHILDREN

Reflection Questions:

- I wonder why no one came to the feast?
- I wonder why the king got so angry?
- I wonder what the strangers on the street thought when they were invited to a wedding feast?
- I wonder what this might tell us about God's invitations to us?

OLDER YOUTH

- Why do the guests not go to the wedding feast?
- Why would the king choose people from the streets to go to the party?
- Have you ever been invited to a party but ignored the invitation?
- Have you ever not been invited to party and how did you feel?
- Why are you expected to wear your finest when you attend a special celebration?

ACTIVITY

Prepare for God's Party:

- Create and give out invitations
- Decorate the space for the party
- Select a gift to give to God at the party
- Select and decorate snacks
- Select a prayer to be read at the start of the party

Enjoy your party and then end with a Closing Prayer: Gracious God, We thank you for our time together today. Thank you for the feast that reminds us that we are all invited and all welcome at the table. Help us to remember to always be preparing our hearts and souls for you to come into our lives in new and amazing ways. Amen.