

PrairieLand Parish

As we unite in worship today, we extend a warm welcome to each one present.  
May we together experience the presence of God

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**We Gather to Prepare Our Hearts to Meet Our Lord**

**Prelude. - Welcome. - Announcements – Joys/Concerns**



**Opening Meditation and Centering**

God provides.

It seems clear that this is one of the messages from our texts this week. But it should also be clear that God provides for our needs in unusual and sometimes confusing ways. Whether it is manna and quail in the desert or a surprisingly generous but perhaps somewhat unfair payment for labor, God provides in ways that give us pause and, hopefully, makes us think.

When we look at the stories written as well as our own lives, we see that God works in partnership to meet needs. Effort is required to gather the manna that forms each morning and to capture the quail that roost in the evening. Labor in the vineyard is a part of the covenant made with God as we claim the joy of belonging to the kin-dom. We aren't passive recipients of God's grace but must be engaged in the process of discovery and acceptance.

God provides - we gather, and we share.

As we hear the gospel reading today, we will also notice that there is a hospitality issue in the text. Who is welcome in our vineyard? What barriers or hierarchies get in the way of truly welcoming those who may not yet belong to the body? Do we go out of our way to include and incorporate even those who may look different from us, those who may respond differently from us?

You see, who we are together is who we are as we worship.

There is joy in service, so let us unite in or call to worship and find that joy together.

**A Call to Worship**

Come! Now is the time to worship!

**We come to worship God who provides!**

When the Israelites wandered in the wilderness, God provided manna and quail.

**God provides in unexpected ways.**

Jesus tells a story of vineyard workers, some who work all day and some who work mere hours, yet the generous landowner paid all of them equally.

**God provides in unexpected ways.**

God does provide in unexpected ways, yet manna, quail, and grapes need gathering and harvesting.

**We respond to God's provision by gathering and harvesting all that God provides.**

Come! Now is the time to worship!

**We come to worship and partner with God who provides for the long haul!**

**Opening Prayer**

**God most high, your ways are not our ways, for your kindness is lavished equally upon all. Teach us to welcome your mercy toward others, even as we hope to receive mercy ourselves. We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, God for ever and ever.**

**Praise Hymn UMH #139 "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty" (verses 1,2,5)**

*Author: Joachim Neander*

*Harmonizer: William Sterndale Bennett*

**1. Praise the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!**

**O my soul, praise him, for he is thy health and salvation!**

**All ye who hear, now to his temple draw near;**

**join me in glad adoration!**

**2. Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously reigning  
bears thee on eagle's wings, e'er in his keeping maintaining.**

**God's care enfolds all whose true good he upholds.**

**Hast thou not know his sustaining?**

**5. Praise to the Lord! O let all that is in me adore him!**

**All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before him!**

**Let the amen sound from his people again;**

**gladly forever adore him.**

**Gospel Reading..... Matthew 20:1-16 (NRSV)**

**The Laborers in the Vineyard**

20 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. 2 After agreeing with the laborers for a denarius for the day, he sent them into his vineyard. 3 When he went out about nine o'clock, he saw others standing idle in the marketplace, 4 and he said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.' So they went. 5 When he went out again about noon and about three o'clock, he did the same. 6 And about five o'clock he went out and found others standing around, and he said to them, 'Why are you standing here idle all day?' 7 They said to him, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said to them, 'You also go into the vineyard.' 8 When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the laborers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.' 9 When those hired about five o'clock came, each of them received a denarius. 10 Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received a denarius. 11 And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner,

12 saying, 'These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.' 13 But he replied to one of them, 'Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for a denarius? 14 Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. 15 Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?'[a] 16 So the last will be first, and the first will be last.'"[b]

This is the Word of God, for the people of God, **Thanks be to God!**

### **Children's Sermon**

#### **Faith Hymn UMH #662 "Stand Up and Bless the Lord" (verses 1,3,5)**

Author: James Montgomery  
Adapter: William Crotch (1836)

**1. Stand up and bless the Lord,  
ye people of his choice;  
stand up and bless the Lord your God  
with heart and soul and voice.**

**3. O for the living flame  
from his own altar brought,  
to touch our lips, our minds inspire,  
and wing to heaven our thought!**

**5. Stand up and bless the Lord;  
the Lord your God adore;  
stand up and bless his glorious name,  
henceforth forevermore.**

### **Message**

#### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Gracious God, may your Spirit give strength to all your people as they work and Witness in your world. Unite us in your truth and love, and help us to show your love to others.

We pray for all people, for places where there is war or famine.

*(all pause for silent prayer)*

May those who lead the nations of the world be given wisdom.

We pray for our community and for all who live and work in this area.

*(all pause for silent prayer)*

God our friend, we pray for our families and friends. May we be able to help each other just as you love and help us. We pray for those in need, those who are sick, for those in hospital, and for those with other problems.

*(add names if announced)*

*(all pause for silent prayer)*

Compassionate God, give your strength and healing to all those who are sad or lonely. And bless all those who try and help them.

We pray today for all who mourn, that they may feel your care for them.

Loving God we give this week into your hands. Be with us in all that we will do, May we enjoy this week and learn and grow in it.

God of love grant our prayers. And give us grace to work for; and in the purpose of your love as we find our way to be living examples of your Son who taught us to pray, Our Father...

## **Offertory/Doxology**

### **Offertory Prayer**

*God of endless patience, we know that the sound of our complaining is not the music that pleases your ears. We complain about the food that is under or overcooked, and you hear the stomachs that have no food. We whine about the bed being too soft, and you see instead those whose bed is the sidewalk or the floor of a cell. May the offering we bring today be an act of praise that drowns out the noise of our complaining. May it find its way to bring comfort to your children who have little or nothing; and when that happens, may it be joy for your eyes and ears. In Christ, we pray. Amen. (Exodus 16:2-15; Matthew 20:1-16)*

## **Departing Hymn UMH 130 "God Will Take Care of You". (verse 1)**

Author: Civilla D. Martin (1904)

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**Be not dismayed whate'er betide,  
God will take care of you;  
Beneath his wings of love abide,  
God will take care of you.**

### **Refrain:**

**God will take care of you,  
through ev'ry day, o'er all the way;  
He will take care of you,  
God will take care of you.**

## **BENEDICTION**

Go out from here as workers in God's upside-down kingdom,  
where the last are first and the first are last,  
where needs are met in miraculous ways,  
and there is grace enough for all!

And may the blessing of God, the love of Jesus Christ,  
and the presence of the Holy Spirit surround you and sustain you in the coming days.  
Amen.

## **Postlude**