I like a wedding. It's an opportunity to meet up for a celebration. Family, friends and neighbours all come together to join in the feast.
In today's gospel story, Jesus tells a parable about a King who prepared a wedding banquet for his son. Everything is ready; the tables are prepared; the food is waiting and the invitations have gone out.
But something unexpected happens. The invited guests refuse to come. Not even an apology.
The King sends his servants out again. "Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner. Come to the wedding banquet". They still refuse to come. A personal invite from the King and they still think they have something better to do.
So the invitation is opened to others, to anyone the servants can find. At last the wedding hall was full.

This parable speaks powerfully about God's invitation, our response and the importance of being ready to meet him.
The first thing we hear is that God, the King, prepares the banquet. The King prepares everything. The guests were not asked to prepare the meal. They did not earn their invitation. The King provided it all. This reminds us of God's grace.
God Has prepared a way for us to come into fellowship with him. Through Jesus Christ, God offers forgiveness, reconciliation and new life. The Christian faith begins not with what we do for God but with what God has already

done for us.
The table is prepared, the invitation has been sent. The question is “will we come?” Sometimes we spend our lives trying to make ourselves worthy of God’s live. We think we need to be good enough before we can approach Him. But the gospel tells us, that God invites us first, just as we are. Jesus Says “Come to me all you who are heavy laden and I will give you rest”.
God’s invitation is an invitation of grace; and the invitation cannot be ignored, it must be answered. The tragedy of the parable is that those who were invited refused to come.
They had excuses, some went to their farms, others to business and some even mistreated the servants who brought the invitation. Their problem was not that they had no invitation - their problem is that they would not respond to it. Surely this is a warning to us. It is possible to hear God’s invitation, again and again and continually put off our response.
We say
Perhaps another day
When life settles down
When I have more time
When I am older
But none of us know how much time we have.
God’s invitation is precious because it is an invitation to life. We should not allow the distractions and busyness of life to become more important than our relationship with God. God’s invitation is wider than we can imagine.

When the first guests refuse to come, the King tells his servants “Go to the street corners and invite to the banquet anyone you find... The invitation goes out to everyone and anyone. This is one of the beautiful truths of the gospel. God’s grace is not reserved for a small group of people who think they have got everything together. Jesus came for ordinary people. He came for the broken, the lonely, the sinful, the searching and the forgotten. The church therefore should be a place where people hear “Come there is room at God’s table. We should never become people who decide that someone else is too far away from God.

The invitation belongs to God and he sends us into the world to share it. But the invitation calls for a changed life; for the parable takes an unexpected turn, The King notices a man not wearing wedding clothes and asks, “Friend how did you get in here without wedding clothes. The man has no answer. It is obvious he was not ready to meet God. The wedding garment is a symbol of a change of life, we do not need fancy clothes, but we do need to Clothe ourselves in righteousness, we need to wear clothes of respect; Clothes of humility. Clothes of love. Clothes of forgiveness, we need to clothe ourselves in kindness and thankfulness, to clothe ourselves in the new life that God gives us through Jesus Christ, When Christ comes into our lives, we are changed, He changes our attitudes He changes the way we see other people. He changes our priorities. We must be ready for that invitation.

Jesus ends the parable with the sobering words
"For many are invited but few are chosen".
Can we ask ourselves the question "How am I responding to God's invitation?
The picture Jesus gives us is ultimately a picture of God's kingdom as a great celebration – a wedding feast prepared by a King. No less. The invitation has gone out. There is room at the table/ God calls us into a relationship with him through Jesus Christ. But we must respond.
Perhaps today you don't feel so near to God. The invitation is still there. Perhaps you have been following Christ for many years; the invitation may call you deeper. Today life is so busy that you may have pushed God to the edges.
Today is an opportunity to return. The King says "Come to the wedding banquet. Come with your burdens, Come with your failures. Come with your questions. Come with your hopes, Come with your fears Just Come.
When we receive the invitation let us not only enter the banquet hall, but let us allow him to clothe us with a new life - a life of faith, love, holiness and service.
The table is prepared
The invitation has been given the question is "Are we ready to accept it"

Let us pray
Thankyou Lord for the invitation you have given us through Jesus Christ.
Forgive us for the times when we have been too busy, too

distracted or too unwilling to respond to your call.
Help us to receive your grace with thankful hearts.
Clothe us with the righteousness of Christ.
Transform our lives so that our words and actions, and our attitude reflect your love,
Help us to share your invitation with others and never forget that there is always room at your table...
May we be ready when you call us and may our lives bring honour to your Son Jesus Christ.
Amen