

Sunday, August 2, 2026
Proper 13A
10th Sunday after Pentecost
Isaiah 55:1-5

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

“Come, and buy!”

My friends,

We are constantly being told,

“buy this.”

“Work harder”

“Just get this,

and you’ll be satisfied.”

We are bombarded

with advertisements.

Because the people selling “satisfaction”
 are not satisfied themselves.

This year,

a spot for a 30-second Super Bowl ad
 cost an average
 of \$8 million.

Some prime last-minute slots reached
 up to \$10 million.

If their stuff is so good,
 why do they have to try so hard?

Everyone is looking for satisfaction,
 and not finding it.

Isaiah asks the devastating question:

*“Why do you spend your money
 for that
 which is not bread,
 and your labour
 for that
 which does not satisfy?”*

That question exposes far more than consumerism.

We spend ourselves
on careers,
entertainment,
success,
reputation,
comfort—
even religion
done as a way to earn merit.

We run in the rat race.

But the problem isn't merely wasting money.
Or working ourselves to the bone.
It's starving
while surrounded
by empty promises.
Starving
while stuffing ourselves
to bursting
with soul-killing nothing.

We run the rat race—

only to realize the prize
at the finish line is death.
*“Why do you spend your money
for that
which is not bread,
and your labour
for that
which does not satisfy?”*

But then suddenly,
 God interrupts
 with His own advertisement:
*“Come,
 everyone who thirsts,
 come to the waters;
 and he who has no money,
 come,
 buy and eat!
 Come,
 buy wine
 and milk
 without money
 and without price.”* (Isaiah 55:1)
 Unlike every earthly advertisement,
 God isn’t trying to get something from you.
 He’s giving.

I.

My friends,
 Every sinner is trying
 to fill the hungry emptiness
 that sin created.
 They’re trying
 to fill the emptiness
 that only God can fill.
 As St. Augustine said,
 “You have made us for yourself,
 O Lord,
 and our heart is restless
 until it rests in you.”

Humans were made
to receive God's love.
But by our sin,
we separated ourselves
from Him.
Sundering us
from the very reason we exist.
You were made
to receive God's love.

Psalm 136,
which we spoke together,
frames **everything**
in that single refrain:
"For His steadfast love endures forever."
Usually,
when we think of creation—
we focus on God's power and glory.
But the Psalm shows
that greatness has a purpose.
"For His steadfast love endures forever."
God created,
sustained,
redeemed—
"For His steadfast love endures forever."

Without that love,
we are aimless.
Empty.
Starving.
Desperate
to fill that ache
with anything.

So we spend ourselves
on that which is not bread.
We labour
for unfood
that does not satisfy.
We stuff ourselves full
of vanities.
We engorge ourselves
on empty puffs
of air
that do no good.
We rob
and cheat
and lie
and mistreat—
but are never satisfied.

We chase everything
except the one thing—
the one Person—
that will set our hearts
at rest.

Even the “good” things
in life are not enough.
The “Hallmark moments” fall short.
Life’s simple pleasures.
The little things we take for granted.
They all fail to hit the spot.

You can have everything—
but if you don’t have God,
you have nothing at all.
In our Epistle,
Paul speaks
of his fellow Israelites.
They had incredible privileges.

Adoption.
 Covenants.
 Torah.
 Temple worship.
 Patriarchs.
 Promises.
 And Christ Himself
 as their own kinsman.
 But they rejected Christ.
 And so,
 Paul has “*great sorrow
 and unceasing anguish
 in [his] heart,*”
 and wishes he could give himself
 in their place.

Even possessing
 all the good things
 that God gives isn't enough
 if one refuses the Giver.
 The deepest hunger
 is for reconciliation with God.
 So,
 “*Why do you spend your money
 for that
 which is not bread,
 and your labour
 for that
 which does not satisfy?*”

But God doesn't simply criticize starving people.
 God sets the table.

II.

*“Come, everyone who thirsts,
 come to the waters;
 and he who has no money,
 come,
 buy and eat!
 Come,
 buy wine and milk
 without money
 and without price.
 ...Listen diligently to me,
 and eat what is good,
 and delight yourselves in rich food.”* (Isaiah 55:1–2)

My friends,
 Isaiah 55 sounds almost impossible.
 How can food be free?
 Nothing in life is free.
 Someone has to pay.

Well,
 someone has paid.
 The feast is free
 for **us**
 because **Christ** paid everything.
 Jesus took the sin
 that separated us from God.
 He became that sin,
 suffered,
 and died.
 He bore the wrath of God.
 Our sin is gone.
 Jesus reconciled us
 to God the Father.
 He rose from the dead
 so that we could be
 with Him forever.

This is the feast Isaiah advertises.

This is the feast
the Spirit revealed
to Isaiah earlier:

*“On this mountain
the Lord of hosts will make
for all peoples
a feast of rich food,
a feast of well-aged wine,
of rich food full of marrow,
of aged wine well refined.
And He will **swallow** up
on this mountain
the covering
that is cast
over all peoples,
the veil that is spread
over all nations.
He will **swallow** up death forever;
and the Lord God will wipe away tears
from all faces,
and the reproach
of His people
He will take away
from all the earth,
for the Lord has spoken.”* (Isaiah 25:6–8)

God has **swallowed** up death forever.

In Christ,
God has obliterated death.

What a marvellous exchange
this feast of the cross is!
God swallows death,
and we eat life!
The fullness of this feast will come
at the return of Christ:

*“When the perishable puts on the imperishable,
 and the mortal puts on immortality,
 then shall come to pass the saying
 that is written:
 “Death is **swallowed** up in victory.”
 “O death,
 where is your victory?
 O death,
 where is your sting?”
 The sting of death is sin,
 and the power of sin is the law.
 But thanks be to God,
 who gives us the victory
 through our Lord Jesus Christ.” (1 Corinthians 15:54–57)*

Likewise,
 Hebrews chapter two says,
*“But we see Jesus,
 who was made a little lower
 than the angels,
 now crowned
 with glory
 and honour
 because He suffered death,
 so that
 by the grace of God
 He might **taste** death
 for everyone.” (Hebrews 2:9)*

We eat life
 because Christ ate death.

The feast is free
 because of Jesus.
 The feast satisfies
 because the feast is fellowship
 with God.

“You have made us
for yourself,
O Lord,
and our heart is restless
until it rests in you.”

This is why
“*Christ,*
who is God over all,” (Romans 9:5)
is not merely the host.
He is the bread.
He is the wine.
He is the meal Himself.

In John chapter 6,
“*Jesus declared,*
“I am the bread of life.
He who comes to Me will never go hungry,
and he
who believes in Me
will never be thirsty.
..For My Father’s will
is that everyone
who looks to the Son
and believes
in Him
shall have eternal life,
and I will raise him up
at the last day.” (John 6:35–40)

“*I tell you the truth,*
He who believes has everlasting life.
I am the bread of life...
I am the living bread
that came down from heaven.
If anyone eats of this bread,
he will live forever.

*This bread is My flesh,
 which I will give
 for the life
 of the world.” (John 6:47–51)
 “Whoever eats My flesh
 and drinks My blood
 has eternal life,
 and I will raise him up
 at the last day.
 For My flesh is real food
 and My blood is real drink.
 Whoever eats My flesh
 and drinks My blood
 remains in Me,
 and I in him.” (John 6:54–56)*

What we labour for is not bread,
 But what God gives is real food.

With Jesus Christ,
 the God-shaped hole in us is filled.
 We remain in Him,
 and He in us.
 At last,
 we may be satisfied.

III.

My friends,
 Jesus has already begun
 serving the feast.
 We see Him pointing to the feast
 in our Gospel Reading.

Isaiah says, “*come,*”
 and the crowds come.
 Isaiah says, “*buy without money, and eat!*”
 In Matthew, no one pays any money.
 The disciples suggest the crowds leave
 and buy food.
 “*Send them away*
to...buy food for themselves.”
 But Jesus refuses.
 “*They need not go away;*
You give them something to eat.”
 Then Jesus simply gives.

No one earns.
 But all eat.
 Everyone receives.
 And all are **satisfied**.
 There is abundance.
 12 baskets of abundance.
 The number
 of completeness
 and perfection.
 The number
 of God’s people.
 This is a meal that satisfies.
 A meal that creates God’s community.

Isaiah promises a rich feast—
 and Christ fulfills the promise.
 Overflowing food.
 Filling the hungry
 with good things.
 Quenching the thirst of the thirsty.
 “*They all ate*
and were satisfied,
and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls
of broken pieces that were left over.” (Matthew 14:20)

“Come,
 all you who are thirsty,
 come to the waters;
 and you who have no money,
 come, buy and eat!”
 Come to Jesus!
 Gather to Christ!
 For His steadfast love endures forever!
 “Come,
 buy wine
 and milk
 without money
 and without cost.” (Isaiah 55:1)

IV.

My friends,
 Christ still feeds His people.
 He gives us a foretaste
 of the feast to come.

God has always been feeding His people.
 He gave manna
 in the wilderness.
 He fed Elijah by the brook.
 On the shores of Galilee
 He fed the 5,000.
 He fed His people
 with the Word.
 Moses said to Israel:
 “He humbled you,
 causing you to hunger
 and then feeding you with manna,
 which neither you
 nor your fathers had known,
 to teach you
 that man does not live
 on bread alone

*but on every word
that comes
from the mouth of the Lord.”* (Deuteronomy 8:3).
He feeds us also by the Word.
And He feeds us with the Lord’s Supper.

One Lord.

One faith.

One promise.

One feast.

Every Lord’s Day,

Jesus still says. “Come!”

Time and space are opened.

The future feast bleeds into now.

A preview of heaven.

A foretaste of the feast to come.

Here,

God gives more

than bread and wine.

He gives Himself.

He gives Christ’s body
and blood.

The price

of the feast fully paid.

A foretaste

of the marriage feast

of the Lamb,

where death is gone forever.

Christ is truly here

to heal

and forgive.

Scripture says,

*“The cup of blessing
that we bless,
is it not a communion
in the blood of Christ?
The bread that we break,
is it not a communion
in the body of Christ?”* (1 Corinthians 10:16)

This meal is our participation,
our sharing,
our fellowship
in Christ’s blood
and body.

We truly receive Christ.

“You have made us for yourself,
O Lord,
and our hearts are restless
until they rest in you.”

We come

to the altar
in both anticipation
and early participation
of the feast to come.

That feast is
where death is swallowed up forever,
and God Himself wipes away every tear.

My friends,

Jesus says, “Come!”
He still runs His advertisement
through His Church.
Yet we are not salespeople
trying to convince people
to purchase something.
We are beggars telling
other beggars
where the feast is.
We simply repeat the invitations
we’ve first heard ourselves:
“Come,
everyone who thirsts!”

The world’s advertisements say,
“Give me your money.”
God’s advertisement says,
“Give me your thirst.
Your lack.
Your sins.
Your death.”

The world’s products leave us wanting more.
Christ satisfies.

When the world drives you
to believe we need
just one more achievement,
one more thing
to finally be content,
Jesus intervenes.
Jesus says,
*“Come to Me,
and I will give you rest.”*

When guilt convinces you
that you must somehow earn
another chance with God,
Christ says,

*“without money
and without price!”*

When suffering leaves you feeling empty,
Christ still spreads His table
in Word and Sacrament.

When you're tempted
to measure life
by what you possess,
remember,
the richest people are those
who receive what is bought
“without money or price.”

So,

*“Come,
everyone who thirsts,
come to the waters;
and he who has no money,
come,
buy and eat!
Come,
buy wine
and milk
without money
and without price.”* (Isaiah 55:1)

*The peace of God, which surpasses understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus,
amen.*