

Reflection

Have you ever had a 'pinch me' moment? A moment when you find yourself given some opportunity and feeling entirely unworthy. For me, such a feeling came in July 2022, when I found myself sitting on a stage at Exeter University one seat away from (and, indeed, on a much bigger seat than) the rapper Michael Owuo Jr, known as Stormzy. If you're unfamiliar with Stormzy, please note his work comes with a strong language content warning! But he's a 3-time Brit award winner, Glastonbury headliner and his music has been streamed 4.3 billion times on Spotify. He was on the stage at the Uni receiving an honorary degree for philanthropic work. And I was there because – well, certainly not because of anything I had achieved – I had simply been invited. I felt entirely unworthy.

I wonder if the wedding guests in Matthew 22 felt a like I did on that day? Those originally deemed worthy to make the guest list had declined, and now the invite was extended to all. Those looking for work in the marketplace, those begging in the streets, those who had not 'earned' their place through any impressive achievement. All without condition. They were simply invited.

The wedding banquet is a memorable illustration of that almost unfathomable quality we call grace. Christ calls us without condition. He knows how messy our lives sometimes are, he knows our darkest secrets, and yet he still invites us, offers us a robe at the door, and beckons us in.

One of Stormzy's most well-known songs *Blinded by your Grace pt 2* (thankfully free of bad language) describes his own experience of God. Its refrain goes: "Lord, I've been broken. Although I'm not worthy. You fixed me. I'm blinded by your grace. You came and saved me."

From global megastar to me and you. From the gravest sinner to the holiest 'saint.' From poorest to richest, those whose earthly achievements are vast to those who have done little the world would take note of. Christ invites us all. His grace is amazing.

Rev Hannah



NEXT SUNDAY 18.10.26 Luke the Evangelist
10.30am in the Church



OT Acts 16: 6-12a
NT 2 Timothy 4: 5-17
GOSPEL Luke 10: 1-9

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St Thomas, Exeter

11th October 2026
Nineteenth Sunday after Trinity

10.30am in the Church

Today

Sung Eucharist

Hymn Numbers

484 The King of love my shepherd is
430 Rejoice in the Lord always
259 Jerusalem the golden
518 Thy hand, O God, has guided

Tuesday 13th October

7.30pm House Group at Helen's house

Wednesday 14th October

10am Holy Communion (BCP)

Thursday 15th October

9.30-11am St Thomas Tots

10.30-12noon Knit & Natter at Jenny Tuckett's house

Friday 16th October

9.45am Morning Prayer

10.15am Staff Meeting



Collect

O God, forasmuch as without you we are not able to please you; mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen**

Isaiah 25: 1-9

O Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you, I will praise your name; for you have done wonderful things, plans formed of old, faithful and sure. For you have made the city a heap, the fortified city a ruin; the palace of aliens is a city no more, it will never be rebuilt. Therefore strong peoples will glorify you; cities of ruthless nations will fear you. For you have been a refuge to the poor, a refuge to the needy in their distress, a shelter from the rainstorm and a shade from the heat. When the blast of the ruthless was like a winter rainstorm, the noise of aliens like heat in a dry place, you subdued the heat with the shade of clouds; the song of the ruthless was stilled. On this mountain the Lord of hosts will make for all peoples a feast of rich food, a feast of well-matured wines, of rich food filled with marrow, of well-matured wines strained clear. And he will destroy on this mountain the shroud that is cast over all peoples, the sheet that is spread over all nations; he will swallow up death for ever. Then the Lord God will wipe away the tears from all faces, and the disgrace of his people he will take away from all the earth, for the Lord has spoken. It will be said on that day, Lo, this is our God; we have waited for him, so that he might save us. This is the Lord for whom we have waited; let us be glad and rejoice in his salvation.

Philippians 4: 1-9

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm in the Lord in this way, my beloved. I urge Euodia and I urge Syntyche to be of the same mind in the Lord.

Yes, and I ask you also, my loyal companion, help these women, for they have struggled beside me in the work of the gospel, together with Clement and the rest of my co-workers, whose names are in the book of life. Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near. Do not worry about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. Finally, beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. Keep on doing the things that you have learned and received and heard and seen in me, and the God of peace will be with you.

Matthew 22: 1-14

Once more Jesus spoke to the chief priests and Pharisees in parables, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. Again he sent other slaves, saying, "Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet." But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his slaves, maltreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his slaves, "The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet." Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests.

'But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, and he said to him, "Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?" And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, "Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." For many are called, but few are chosen.'

Post Communion

Holy and blessed God, you have fed us with the body and blood of your Son and filled us with your Holy Spirit: may we honour you, not only with our lips but in lives dedicated to the service of Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**

Notices

Thanks to all who donated food items etc., to the Foodbank.

On Friday 16th October between 6-8pm there will be the first meeting of the Urban Exe Resilience Network in our hall. All welcome to attend.

On Sunday 18th October we will be launching a new evening service. More details to follow.

Advance Notices

Sunday 25th October There will be a multi-cultural All Souls celebration in the Church, Churchyard and Hall. Our service will be as usual but the refreshments will be in the church and the time shortened.

Sunday 1st November All Souls/All Saints. Next week we will be asking for names of loved ones to be read out at the All Souls service.

Sunday 8th November. There will be the usual gathering at the memorial in the churchyard followed by a joint service here with the Methodist Church.