

# Out: sharing Jesus with our community

## discussion guide

based on **Luke 14.15-24** (Linked to sermon of 2/10/16)  
which can be accessed at [www.stjamesbythepark.org/current-sermon-series](http://www.stjamesbythepark.org/current-sermon-series)

*This was the fourth part of our 'developing our church vision' series. Please see the attached handout which is another excerpt from the vision document the PCC have put together.*

Intro: How are you doing at regularly praying the prayer we looked at at the beginning of this series (Ephesians 1.17) for each other? Why not pray it again now?

Read Isaiah 25.6 where the prophet pictures the coming Kingdom of God as a great feast. That's the background to the discussion Jesus has at a dinner party in Luke 14.

1. The Kingdom of God is like a party (or a banquet feast). Does that feel like an appropriate way to describe God's Kingdom? Why / why not? What do you think your friends who aren't Christians would make of that image?
2. Read Luke 14.16-21. These people had all responded positively to the initial invitation but then backed out at the last minute with feeble excuses. What excuses do we make for failing to put seeking God's kingdom first in our list of priorities?

There are 3 waves of invitations that go out, which correspond roughly to 3 of our approaches to mission as a church community.

- Initial invitations – to those Jesus' listeners thought deserved an invitation – the religious people. Corresponds to our 'attractional' mission which particularly suits those with some sort of church background.
- Second invitations – to those people Jesus' listeners considered unworthy Jews – religious outcasts who lived nearby. Corresponds to our 'engaged' mission which particularly suits those who wouldn't consider themselves religious, but are maybe spiritually open.
- Third invitations – to those people Jesus' listeners considered beyond the pale – eg non-Jews (Gentiles). Corresponds to our 'emerging mission' which will suit those who don't believe in a God, let alone think he has any time for them.

3. Read through the attached excerpt from the vision document. What excites you about it? What worries you?

4. Jesus' parables often included a surprise for his listeners. What would have been the surprise(s) in this parable?

5. How would you sum up God's heart for the lost in this parable?

Spend some time praying:

- That we would have God's heart for the lost, and that our evangelism would flow out of our love for Jesus.
- For our High Street plans, specifically that people would come forward to join the Café Management Committee with Amy, and that our continued discussions with the diocese would go well about future funding.
- For one or two other areas from the vision paper excerpt.
- For some specific friends or relatives of yours who aren't yet Christians.