

WEEKLY DEVOTION – Tuesday, January 23, 2024
Pastor Bruce Kischnick, Grace Lutheran Church, New Albany, IN

“Reservations Confirmed”

READING: Revelation 19:5-9 – Then a voice came from the throne, saying: “Praise our God, all you his servants, you who fear him, both small and great!” Then I heard what sounded like a great multitude, like the roar of rushing waters and like loud peals of thunder, shouting: “Hallelujah! For our Lord God Almighty reigns. Let us rejoice and be glad and give him glory! For the wedding of the Lamb has come, and his bride has made herself ready. Fine linen, bright and clean, was given her to wear.” (Fine linen stands for the righteous acts of the saints.) Then the angel said to me, “Write: ‘Blessed are those who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lamb!’” And he added, “These are the true words of God.”

Last week my sister Sally and my brother-in-law Mike came to visit us. They were on their way to Florida and stopped by to see us. We decided we would take them out to a new restaurant we had only recently found and very much enjoyed. So I Googled the restaurant on my computer. There I found “click-on bar” called “Open Table”. It allows you to make reservations online. It’s a simple process: you indicate how many in the party, what date and time you’d like to reserve, and it tells you if a reservation is available. If it is, it asks for your name, a telephone number, and your email address. Then it sends your confirmation right to your email. Once you have it, your reservation is confirmed and there will be a table waiting for you no matter how many people may be standing at the door waiting to get a seat. It worked like a charm!

There’s a banquet table awaiting us that we all want to be invited to. We want to be in attendance at the “Wedding Supper of the Lamb and His Bride.” That banquet will mark the completion of all God’s plan for the salvation of his beloved bride, the Church. Jesus, the Bride Groom, will gather the Church unto himself in the place he has already prepared for her in the splendor and glory of his Father’s house. In that house there will be no more mourning, nor pain; no more death nor crying; no more trials, no more temptations, no more sin. And it will all commence with a table laden with “a feast of rich food for all peoples, a banquet of aged wine – the best of meats and the finest of wines.” (Is.25:6) We don’t want to miss it. We don’t want to be outside the wedding hall knocking and pleading, “Open the door to us!” For the Master will only speak through the door, “Away with you. I don’t know you!”

So how do we make reservations for that supper? How do we make sure our names are on the Guest List, our placard at our seat, and our wedding clothes hanging where we can find them? You can’t do it with “Open Table”. You can’t do it by calling ahead. And you dare not wait until the call goes out, “Here is the Bride Groom. Follow him into the Wedding Hall!” No, we want a reservation now. We want to know that our place is reserved, and we want the confirmation in our possession. We want to know. We want to be certain.

Lately there’s been an advertisement on TV that asks, “Are you going to heaven when you die?” And then it adds, “You can know for sure.” I haven’t called the 800 number to find out what their answer is, but if it isn’t, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved – you and your household...” (Acts 16:31), then I don’t want to hear it. That was exactly the answer that St. Paul gave to the jailer in Philippi when he asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?” Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and his family. After that they baptized the whole bunch into Jesus. “Believe and be baptized to wash away your sins.” That’s the ticket! That’s the way! That’s your reservation for the Lamb’s Wedding Feast. “...if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” (Romans 10:9) That’s your reservation to that great banquet. Jesus, Jesus, always Jesus!

So, if you want to make a reservation at a restaurant and you want it confirmed, I highly recommend “Open Table”. It’s easy, it’s quick, and it’s efficient. But if it’s the “Feast of the Lamb in His Kingdom” you want to attend, your reservation comes in your baptism and the faith that has grown from it. Whatever else comes your way, whatever else you might be dealing with, trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Confess his name, repent of your sins, worship him, engage his Word and Sacraments – and then know: your place at that great banquet is reserved. Reservation Confirmed! Amen.

PRAYER:

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

1) **CAMP COCONUTS** for children grades 4 and younger, along with their parents, is a family event offered by our Family Life Minister, Mitzi, this Friday, January 26 through the morning of the 27th. It’s an indoor camping event. Families can bring pop-up tents and actually put them up in classrooms and youth rooms around the building. There will be a variety of activities throughout the evening. After a late movie, everyone climbs into a sleeping bag, tired but happy. And, in the morning there will be breakfast donated by McDonald’s. Then everybody can then go home.

2) **“PREPARING FOR THE JOURNEY HOME”** is a symposium being presented by the Discipleship Team this Saturday, January 27, 9:00-2:00. A variety of speakers will address legal, financial, and practical issues facing people as they age and enter their final years here on earth. Look for details on our Website and Facebook page. Sign up at or with the office.