



# BE OUR GUEST

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## *Lent / Easter Grow Guide*

The North Carroll Cooperative Parish

Pastors: Rev. Dr. Melissa Rudolph and Rev. John Rudolph

### Join us for Worship

Grace: 4618 Black Rock Road, Upperco; Sundays 10:30 a.m.

Greenmount: 2001 Hanover Pike, Hampstead; Sundays 9:45 a.m.

St. John's: 1205 N Main Street, Hampstead; Sundays 9 & 11 a.m.

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## March 5

“Be Our Guest”

### **SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 10:25-37**

A legal expert stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to gain eternal life?”

Jesus replied, “What is written in the Law? How do you interpret it?”

He responded, “You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your being, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and love your neighbor as yourself.”

Jesus said to him, “You have answered correctly. Do this and you will live.”

But the legal expert wanted to prove that he was right, so he said to Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?”

Jesus replied, “A man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He encountered thieves, who stripped him naked, beat him up, and left him near death. Now it just so happened that a priest was also going down the same road. When he saw the injured man, he crossed over to the other side of the road and went on his way. Likewise, a Levite came by that spot, saw the injured man, and crossed over to the other side of the road and went on his way. A

Samaritan, who was on a journey, came to where the man was. But when he saw him, he was moved with compassion. The Samaritan went to him and bandaged his wounds, tending them with oil and wine. Then he placed the wounded man on his own donkey, took him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day, he took two full days' worth of wages and gave them to the innkeeper. He said, 'Take care of him, and when I return, I will pay you back for any additional costs.' What do you think? Which one of these three was a neighbor to the man who encountered thieves?"

Then the legal expert said, "The one who demonstrated mercy toward him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

**PRAYER:**

Savior, you come to us through acts of love and care. We represent you when we go to the other side of the road and assist the wounded stranger. Scripture will bear witness to acts of mercy and Holy Communion will bring us to the feast You set. In this time of worship, may we be prepared to “go and do likewise.” Amen.

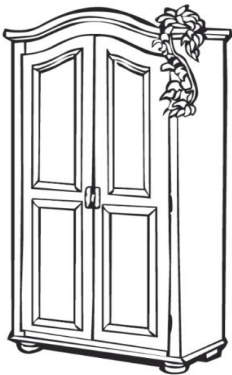
**HYMNS:**

“God of the Sparrow, God of the Whale”

UMH 122

“They’ll Know We Are Christians by Our Love”

TFWS 2223

**Be Our Guest Statement:**

Christ emptied himself on the cross so that we would no longer live for ourselves. The empty cupboard reminds us that to be hospitable is to give all of ourselves to our neighbor without fear.

## Grow Questions:

The question of whether we will use the God-given revelation of love and grace as a way of boosting our own sense of isolated security and purity, or whether we will see it as a call and challenge to extend that love and grace to the whole world. What barriers exist between your faith community and others? What is one way, large or small, that you could break through this barrier and begin to dismantle the isolated security of your faith community?

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## March 12

### “Be Our Guest”

#### **SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 15:1-10**

All the tax collectors and sinners were gathering around Jesus to listen to him. The Pharisees and legal experts were grumbling, saying, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

Jesus told them this parable: “Suppose someone among you had one hundred sheep and lost one of them. Wouldn’t he leave the other ninety-nine in the pasture and search for the lost one until he finds it? And when he finds it, he is thrilled and places it on his shoulders. When he arrives home, he calls together his friends and neighbors, saying to them, ‘Celebrate with me because I’ve found my lost sheep.’ In the same way, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who changes both heart and life than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need to change their hearts and lives.

“Or what woman, if she owns ten silver coins and loses one of them, won’t light a lamp and sweep the house, searching her home carefully until she finds it? When she finds it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Celebrate with me because I’ve found my lost coin.’ In the same way, I tell you, joy

breaks out in the presence of God's angels over one sinner who changes both heart and life."

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#### PRAYER:

It is easy, O Lord, for us to go about our work and give up searching for the one that is missing. Help us to seek tirelessly until the moment of rejoicing when the lost has been found. Glory to God, Amen.

#### HYMNS:

"We Are the Church"	UMH 558
"You Are the Seed"	UMH 583
"In Christ There Is No East or West"	UMH 548

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#### **Be Our Guest Statement:**

The angels in heaven dance when just one lost soul comes home to God. Mrs. Potts (teapot) reminds us of the joy of being welcomed as one of the family no matter what.

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## Grow Questions:

What problem do the Pharisees and the teachers of the law have with what Jesus had been doing (vv. 1-2)? What might Christians do today that would make people ask in surprise, "Why in the world are you doing that?" just as the Pharisees asked about Jesus' parties?

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## March 19

### “Be Our Guest”

#### **SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 15:11-32**

Jesus said, “A certain man had two sons. The younger son said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the inheritance.’ Then the father divided his estate between them. Soon afterward, the younger son gathered everything together and took a trip to a land far away. There, he wasted his wealth through extravagant living.

“When he had used up his resources, a severe food shortage arose in that country and he began to be in need. He hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him into his fields to feed pigs. He longed to eat his fill from what the pigs ate, but no one gave him anything. When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired hands have more than enough food, but I’m starving to death! I will get up and go to my father, and say to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son. Take me on as one of your hired hands.”’ So he got up and went to his father.

“While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was moved with compassion. His father ran to him, hugged him, and kissed him. Then his son said, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I no longer deserve to be called your son.’ But the father said to his servants, ‘Quickly, bring out the best robe and put it on him! Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet! Fetch the fattened calf and slaughter it. We must celebrate with feasting because this son of mine was dead and has come back to life! He was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate.

“Now his older son was in the field. Coming in from the field, he approached the house and heard music and dancing. He called one of the servants and asked what was going on. The servant replied, ‘Your brother has arrived, and your father has slaughtered the fattened calf because he received his son back safe and sound.’ Then the older son was furious and didn’t want to enter in, but his father came out and begged him. He answered his father, ‘Look, I’ve served you all these years, and I never disobeyed your instruction. Yet you’ve never given me as much as a young goat so I could celebrate with my friends. But when this son of yours returned, after gobbling up your estate on prostitutes, you slaughtered the fattened calf for him.’ Then his father said, ‘Son, you are always with me, and everything I have

is yours. But we had to celebrate and be glad because this brother of yours was dead and is alive. He was lost and is found.”

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#### PRAYER:

How wasteful we are, O God, with all with which you have blessed us. How arrogant we are, Holy Father, to believe we the faithful have more claim to your mercy than those who have wandered. May this time of worship enliven us to the welcome you offer to all. Amen.

#### HYMNS:

“Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling”

UMH 348

“People Need the Lord”

TFWS 2244

“Coming Home”

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#### **Be Our Guest Statement:**



We are not shunned when we return, but the God that has believed in us all along enthusiastically accepts us. Chip (teacup) reminds us of the energy and joy we should exhibit when reminding people of God’s grace and welcoming nature.

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## Grow Questions:

Which role in the parable do you and your church find comes most naturally to you, and why? How can we celebrate the party of God's love in such a way as to welcome not only the younger brothers who have come back from the dead but also the older brothers who thought there was nothing wrong with them?

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## March 26

### “Be Our Guest”

#### **SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 16:19-31**

“There was a certain rich man who clothed himself in purple and fine linen, and who feasted luxuriously every day. At his gate lay a certain poor man named Lazarus who was covered with sores. Lazarus longed to eat the crumbs that fell from the rich man’s table. Instead, dogs would come and lick his sores.

“The poor man died and was carried by angels to Abraham’s side. The rich man also died and was buried. While being tormented in the place of the dead, he looked up and saw Abraham at a distance with Lazarus at his side. He shouted, ‘Father Abraham, have mercy on me. Send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I’m suffering in this flame.’ But Abraham said, ‘Child, remember that during your lifetime you received good things, whereas Lazarus received terrible things. Now Lazarus is being comforted and you are in great pain. Moreover, a great crevasse has been fixed between us and you. Those who wish to cross over from here to you cannot. Neither can anyone cross from there to us.’

“The rich man said, ‘Then I beg you, Father, send Lazarus to my father’s house. I have five brothers. He needs to warn them so that they don’t come to this place of agony.’ Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets. They must listen to them.’ The rich man said, ‘No, Father Abraham! But if someone from the dead goes to them, they will change their hearts and lives.’ Abraham said, ‘If they don’t listen to Moses and the Prophets, then neither will they be persuaded if someone rises from the dead.’”

**PRAYER:**

Lord, expose our hearts and lives, that we may live for you here and now. The law and prophets have spoken to us. May we listen to your Word and be transformed.

Amen.

**HYMNS:**

“When the Poor Ones”	UMH 434
“Come, Ye Sinners, Poor and Needy”	UMH 340
“Turn Your Eyes upon Jesus”	UMH 349

**Be Our Guest Statement:**

Hospitality can mean the difference in how time is spent here and now and for eternity. Cogsworth (clock) reminds us that now is the time to share life with others.

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## April 2

### “Be Our Guest”

#### **SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 19:1-10**

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through town. A man there named Zacchaeus, a ruler among tax collectors, was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but, being a short man, he couldn't because of the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed up a sycamore tree so he could see Jesus, who was about to pass that way. When Jesus came to that spot, he looked up and said, “Zacchaeus, come down at once. I must stay in your home today.” So Zacchaeus came down at once, happy to welcome Jesus. Everyone who saw this grumbled, saying, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.”

Zacchaeus stopped and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord, I give half of my possessions to the poor. And if I have cheated anyone, I repay them four times as much.”

Jesus said to him, “Today, salvation has come to this household because he too is a son of Abraham. The Human One came to seek and save the lost.”

**PRAYER:**

Lord, we climb higher to see you. We are sinners in need of your redemption. But you call us to come down and join us for a meal, where all are welcome at your table. Thanks be to God, Amen.

**HYMNS:**

“Zacchaeus Was a Wee Little Man”

“Come to the Table”

TFWS 2264

**Be Our Guest Statement:**

Darkness prevents us from seeing God at work in our lives. Lumiere (candelabra) reminds us that Christ is the light of the world and we need to let it shine.

## Grow Questions:

Why would everyone in Jericho have disliked Zacchaeus? Here Jesus doesn't tell a parable as he has been doing, like that of the prodigal son. Rather the tax collector himself speaks to Jesus in public. In what ways does Zacchaeus give evidence of his extravagant repentance in this story?

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## April 9

### “Be Our Guest”

#### **SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 19:29-40**

As Jesus came to Bethphage and Bethany on the Mount of Olives, he gave two disciples a task. He said, “Go into the village over there. When you enter it, you will find tied up there a colt that no one has ever ridden. Untie it and bring it here. If someone asks, ‘Why are you untying it?’ just say, ‘Its master needs it.’” Those who had been sent found it exactly as he had said.

As they were untying the colt, its owners said to them, “Why are you untying the colt?”

They replied, “Its master needs it.” They brought it to Jesus, threw their clothes on the colt, and lifted Jesus onto it. As Jesus rode along, they spread their clothes on the road.

As Jesus approached the road leading down from the Mount of Olives, the whole throng of his disciples began rejoicing. They praised God with a loud voice because of all the mighty things they had seen. They said, “Blessings on the king who comes in the name of the Lord. Peace in heaven and glory in the highest heavens.” Some of the Pharisees from the crowd said to Jesus, “Teacher, scold your disciples! Tell them to stop!” He answered, “I

tell you, if they were silent, the stones would shout.” As Jesus came to the city and observed it, he wept over it. He said, “If only you knew on this of all days the things that lead to peace. But now they are hidden from your eyes. The time will come when your enemies will build fortifications around you, encircle you, and attack you from all sides. They will crush you completely, you and the people within you. They won’t leave one stone on top of another within you, because you didn’t recognize the time of your gracious visit from God.”

**PRAYER:**

Lord, prepare our hearts and homes for your triumphal entry. May we clean off the dust and make a pathway for you to enter as King. Our lives are a tribute to your great sacrifice. You are our Messiah. Hosanna! Amen.

**HYMNS:**

“Hosanna, Loud Hosanna”	UMH 278
“Tell Me the Stories of Jesus”	UMH 277
“All Glory, Laud, and Honor”	UMH 280



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**Be Our Guest Statement:**

Christ had his disciples make preparations prior to his entry to Jerusalem. Fifi (feather-duster) reminds us of the need to clean up and prepare for hospitality.

## Grow Questions:

The crowds cheer for Jesus and sing his praises, but if they had understood his own Passover action on the cross that was coming, they would have been puzzled and distressed, as indeed they soon will be. Are we only willing to follow Jesus when he does what we want, or are we willing to follow him into trouble, controversy, trial and death? What does it mean for us today to follow in times of such difficulty?

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**April 16****“Be Our Guest”****SCRIPTURE READING: Luke 24:1-12**

Very early in the morning on the first day of the week, the women went to the tomb, bringing the fragrant spices they had prepared. They found the stone rolled away from the tomb, but when they went in, they didn't find the body of the Lord Jesus. They didn't know what to make of this. Suddenly, two men were standing beside them in gleaming bright clothing. The women were frightened and bowed their faces toward the ground, but the men said to them, "Why do you look for the living among the dead? He isn't here, but has been raised. Remember what he told you while he was still in Galilee, that the Human One must be handed over to sinners, be crucified, and on the third day rise again." Then they remembered his words. When they returned from the tomb, they reported all these things to the eleven and all the others. It was Mary Magdalene, Joanna, Mary the mother of James, and the other women with them who told these things to the apostles. Their words struck the apostles as nonsense, and they didn't believe the women. But Peter ran to the tomb. When

he bent over to look inside, he saw only the linen cloth. Then he returned home, wondering what had happened.

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### PRAYER:

Easter people, join in wonder! Christ has risen and we question what that means. In this time of worship, may the Lord give us a word of life and resurrection. May we find signs of the living all around us. Glory to the Lord, our God. Hallelujah!

Amen!

### HYMNS:

“Easter People, Raise Your Voices”

UMH 304

“In the Garden”

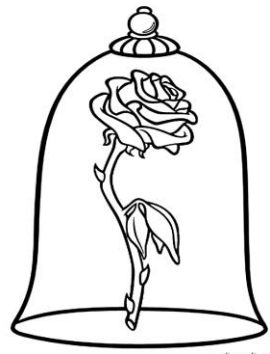
UMH 314

“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming”

UMH 216

“He Rose”

UMH 316





## **Be Our Guest Challenge**

We learn from the movie Beauty and The Beast, that Belle loves books! We challenge everyone in the parish (kids, youth and adults) to read at least one book from the Bible between now and Easter.

## **Be Our Guest Mission**

Join us as we fill a wall with books in Mr. William Michael Wisniewski's classroom at High Point High School in MD. He has been trying to collect enough books to fill a wall in his classroom that the kids can, at any time, take to read. Most (about 90%) do not have books in their homes or money for books, and libraries are hard to get to. Our parish is going to try to bless these kids with a windfall of books! You and your family are invited to help by can bringing gift cards to Sunday School or church anytime between now and Easter. Good suggestions are Barnes and Noble, Target, Thrift-Books and Amazon.

## **Save the Dates...**

School of The Arts Camp - June 19-22

Camp Harmison - June 25 - 30

Sports Camp - July 10-14

Daytime VBS - July 17-21

Evening VBS July 30 - Aug 3

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## "Be Our Guest" by David Cavey

Ma che'r Mademoiselle  
It is with deepest pride  
And greatest pleasure  
That we welcome you this morning  
And now, we invite you to relax  
Let us find you a pew  
As the congregation proudly presents  
Worship!

Be our guest, Be our guest  
Put NCCP to the test  
Grace or Greenmount or St Johns, Cherie  
And we'll provide the rest

Children Message  
Friendly faces  
Why, we only live to serve  
Try Bible Study  
It's delightful  
Don't believe me?  
Ask the people

We can sing, We can pray  
After all it's Sunday  
And the praises here are never second best  
Go on, unfold your bulletin  
Take a glance and then  
You'll be our guest  
Be our guest, Be our guest

Pastor John or Melissa  
So insightful either way  
They'll prepare and serve with care  
A spirit filled cabaret

If you're alone, if you're scared  
Our parish is all prepared  
No one's gloomy or complaining  
And it's spiritually entertaining

He'll tell jokes, she'll do tricks  
And without politics  
And it's all in perfect taste that you can bet

Come on lift your hands up  
You've won your own free pass  
To be our guest  
If you're stressed  
It's worship we suggest  
Be our guest...Be our guest...Be our guest

Life is so unnerving  
For a servant who's not serving  
He's not whole without a soul to wait upon  
As Jesus tells us to be useful  
Not to let his ministry be gone  
Many churches have been rusting  
Needing so much more than dusting  
Needing exercise, a chance to show his love!

Our parish has so much to offer  
Yoga, YAK, it's crazy  
You walked in and oops-a-daisy  
It's a guest, it's a guest  
Don't matter how you're dressed

Wines been served and thank the Lord  
The communion table has been blessed  
Stand up straight  
Take a knee and my dear  
That's fine with me  
Ushers do their soft-shoe'n  
With no bumbling  
Or no stewing  
We'll get loud, really loud  
Heavens sakes, oh, what a crowd  
Sing it up! We want the Lord to know were blessed

We've got a lot to do  
And we want to help you  
For you're our guest  
She's our guest  
He's our guest  
You're our guest

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