

## Bible Study for June 28th, 2026

### Fifth Sunday After Pentecost: Matthew 10:40-42

*[Jesus said to the twelve:] 40 "Whoever welcomes you welcomes me, and whoever welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me. 41 Whoever welcomes a prophet in the name of a prophet will receive a prophet's reward, and whoever welcomes a righteous person in the name of a righteous person will receive the reward of the righteous, 42 and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward."*

A friend's family took me in when I was in my twenties. Not formally, not with announcement, but quietly, the way families sometimes do when they decide that someone belongs. They didn't make a ceremony of it. They included me. Sent me on grocery runs. Handed me a cloth for dusting. Asked me to fill the car with gas. Small things. Ordinary things. The kinds of things you only ask of someone when you've stopped thinking of them as a guest.

That moment mattered. The moment when my role became something else. When I realized I wasn't being hosted anymore. I was just home. Woven, gently, into the fabric of an ordinary life.

This is what Jesus is describing.

*"Whoever welcomes you welcomes me."*

Jesus sends the disciples out vulnerable and dependent on the kindness and courage of strangers. Hospitality here is not abstract niceness. It is survival. It is dignity. It is whether someone will make room for you as you are.

**The deeper question this Gospel asks:** It is not limited to all ARE welcome. Instead, HOW is that welcome lived out?

- In our homes? At our tables?
- In how we speak to and about people?
- In whether someone feels safe enough to just be?

*"and whoever gives even a cup of cold water to one of these little ones in the name of a disciple—truly I tell you, none of these will lose their reward."*

This is not limited to children; it also includes those easily overlooked. Those without 'status'. Those vulnerable to rejection.

What is offered to them? Not wealth. Not grandeur. *A cup of cold water*. Simple. Ordinary. Necessary. Jesus does not dismiss small acts of care; he honors them. Water in scripture is grace: baptism, renewal, life itself.

At the end of Pride Month, queer people know the difference between being tolerated and being truly received. This text invites a move beyond symbolic welcome into embodied care.

### **Preacher:**

*Be generous with your community here.* Name what is already true, the places where real welcome already lives in this particular context. The small, faithful acts of care that may go unnoticed but are not unseen by God. Let the community hear what they are already doing well.

And then, gently, offer the invitation: *Where might we go deeper?* Not as an accusation, but as a possibility. Not as guilt, but as grace. Because a community that already knows how to welcome is a community capable of more: more room, more tenderness, more of the ordinary, embodied love this Gospel asks of us.

The question is not only *Who do we welcome?* But *what kind of community does our welcome create?* We already know that, in the Gospel, welcome is not only a sign on the door. It becomes water for someone who has been thirsting for a very long time.

### **Bible study and Reflection**

1. **Receiving as an act of Faith:** Think of a time you were the one who needed to be received. What made that welcome genuine rather than merely polite? What does it mean that Jesus identifies himself with those who arrive needing care?
2. **The Theology of Small Things:** Jesus honors a cup of cold water, not a grand gesture. Where have you seen a small, ordinary act of care turn out to matter so deeply? What does that say about who God is?
3. **From Statements to Practice:** What's the difference between a stated welcome and a lived one? What habits or practices help someone move from feeling like a guest to truly belonging?
4. **Who Are the Little Ones:?** Think of your own context. Who is most vulnerable to being overlooked? Is your community's welcome the kind that costs something, or the kind that stays comfortable?