LO: I can explain at least one parable and describe what Jesus says the kingdom of God is like.

The Feast: Luke 14:12–24. Explore the following parable, sharing your comments, feelings, ideas and questions. Consider possible meanings: who was the audience for the story, and how might they have responded? Who do you think should be at the feast, and who does Jesus say will be included? How does Jesus want his followers then, and now to behave?

Jesus said ... “There was once a man who was giving a great feast to which he invited many people. When it was time for the feast, he sent his servant to tell his guests, ‘Come, everything is ready!’ But they all began, one after another, to make excuses. The first one told the servant, ‘I have bought a field and must go and look at it; please accept my apologies.’ Another one said, ‘I have bought five pairs of oxen and am on my way to try them out; please accept my apologies.’ Another one said, ‘I have just gotten married, and for that reason I cannot come.’ The servant went back and told all this to his master. The master was furious and said to his servant, ‘Hurry out to the streets and alleys of the town, and bring back the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.’ Soon the servant said, ‘Your order has been carried out, sir, but there is room for more.’ So the master said to the servant, ‘Go out to the country roads and lanes and make people come in, so that my house will be full. I tell you all that none of those who were invited will taste my dinner!’” Luke 14:15–24 (GNT)

Now read some more parables used to describe the kingdom of God. Can you identify what Christians believe the kingdom is like? (See below)

Matthew 25 New International Version (NIV)
The Parable of the Ten Bridesmaids

25 “At that time the kingdom of heaven will be like ten virgins who took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. 2 Five of them were foolish and five were wise. 3 The foolish ones took their lamps but did not take any oil with them. 4 The wise ones, however, took oil in jars along with their lamps. 5 The bridegroom was a long time in coming, and they all became drowsy and fell asleep. 6 “At midnight the cry rang out: ‘Here’s the bridegroom! Come out to meet him!’”
7 “Then all the virgins woke up and trimmed their lamps. 8 The foolish ones said to the wise, ‘Give us some of your oil, our lamps are going out.’ 9 “No,” they replied, ‘there may not be enough for both us and you. Instead, go to those who sell oil and buy some for yourselves.’
10 “But while they were on their way to buy the oil, the bridegroom arrived. The virgins who were ready went in with him to the wedding banquet. And the door was shut. 11 “Later the others also came. ‘Lord, Lord,’ they said, ‘open the door for us!’ 12 “But he replied, ‘Truly I tell you, I don’t know you.’ 13 “Therefore keep watch, because you do not know the day or the hour.
Matthew 20:1-16 New International Version (NIV)
The Parable of the Workers in the Vineyard

20 "For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire workers for his vineyard. 2 He agreed to pay them a denarius[a] for the day and sent them into his vineyard.
3 "About nine in the morning he went out and saw others standing in the marketplace doing nothing. 4 He told them, ‘You also go and work in my vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ 5 So they went.
6 "He went out again about noon and about three in the afternoon and did the same thing. 6 About five in the afternoon he went out and found still others standing around. He asked them, ‘Why have you been standing here all day long doing nothing?’
7 "'Because no one has hired us,' they answered.
8 "He said to them, 'You also go and work in my vineyard.'
9 "When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his foreman, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last ones hired and going on to the first.'
10 "The workers who were hired about five in the afternoon came and each received a denarius. 11 So when those came who were hired first, they expected to receive more. But each one of them also received a denarius. 12 When they received it, they began to grumble against the landowner. 13 'These who were hired last worked only one hour,' they said, 'and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the work and the heat of the day.'
14 "But he answered one of them, 'I am not being unfair to you, friend. Didn't you agree to work for a denarius? 15 Take your pay and go. I want to give the one who was hired last the same as I gave you. 16 Don't I have the right to do what I want with my own money? Or are you envious because I am generous?'
16 "So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”

Matthew 13:44-46 New International Version (NIV)
The Parables of the Hidden Treasure and the Pearl

“The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field. One day a man found the treasure, and then he hid it in the field again. He was so happy that he went and sold everything he owned to buy that field.

“Again, the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant looking for fine pearls. When he found one of great value, he went away and sold everything he had and bought it.

Matthew 13:33
The Parable of the Yeast

Then Jesus told another story: "The kingdom of heaven is like yeast that a woman took and hid in a large tub of flour until it made all the dough rise.”
**So, what is the kingdom like?**

*Look at the nine features of the kingdom of God, as described through the parables. Try to connect each idea with one or more of the parables you have looked at. Give a short explanation of how each parable connects.*

**Why do you think Jesus told stories and didn’t just give a list for people to learn?**

**What it is about stories that make them so effective?**

See below for the list of features. Remember to think about all of the parables read including the Unforgiving Servant which we read in class.