

Order of Service Sunday 16th January 2022

Welcome to our Service this morning, in line with updated Covid regulations please remain wearing your masks in Church this morning. I will replace my mask when we sing.

Let us pray

Come, Lord of light and love, change us and we shall be changed. Fill us with your peace and with your power that we may rejoice in your presence and live to your glory.

We join together saying,

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.

Amen.

1st Hymn 153 Great is thy faithfulness

1st Reading Psalm Ch 36 v 5 - 10

Your love, Lord, reaches to the heavens,
your faithfulness to the skies.

Your righteousness is like the highest mountains,
your justice like the great deep.

You, Lord, preserve both people and animals.

How priceless is your unfailing love, O God!

People take refuge in the shadow of your wings.

They feast on the abundance of your house;
you give them drink from your river of delights.

For with you is the fountain of life;
in your light we see light.

Continue your love to those who know you,
your righteousness to the upright in heart.

2nd Hymn 336 Christ is our light

2nd Reading John Ch 2 v 1 - 11

On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus' mother was there, and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother said to him, "They have no more wine."

"Woman, why do you involve me?" Jesus replied. "My hour has not yet come."

His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you."

Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.

Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars with water"; so they filled them to the brim. Then he told them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet." They did so, and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realise where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside and said, "Everyone brings out the choice wine first and then the cheaper wine after the guests have had too much to drink; but you have saved the best till now."

What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

During Epiphany Jesus is revealed to the world as someone special. To the wise men he was revealed as the 'king of the Jews', a title used by Herod but kept by the Jews for the Messiah and through the quoting of Isaiah 42 and 53 Jesus is also revealed as the suffering servant. With Jesus, the Cross and Crown go together.

This week is the third part of manifestations and that is through signs of power – what we usually call miracles. Miracles are wonderful events that defy full explanation- if they can be explained, then they are not miracles. Miracles point to Jesus as God's agent – as God himself – at work on earth.

Today's setting for the miracle is a wonderfully ordinary event, a wedding. Cana is a village near Nazareth and here a young couple are celebrating. It is good to know that Jesus together with his mother and his disciples, is there and enjoying the wedding. For Jewish celebration, wine was essential. There was a saying of the Rabbis: 'Without wine there is no joy.' For the wine to run out was a disaster for the couple. The joy and the celebrations would drain away: the party would be over.

Into this situation Mary invites Jesus to do something. Jesus looked at the six water jars that were used for washing. Each jar held between 20 and 30 gallons. Jesus asked the servants to fill the jars and they did so. Now they were to carry them. When the Steward tasted the water it had become good wine. A miracle! The steward did not know it was a miracle; only the servants knew. The steward congratulated the bridegroom on keeping the best wine till last.

Jesus could take ordinary water from the well and through his power it would become wine. He seems to be the sort of person a lot of people would like to follow. But we must not lose sight of the sign. The miracle points to Jesus doing only what God can do. This miracle and all miracles point to Jesus as the Son of God.

An Illustration

The car was running well there was nothing wrong with the engine or the electrics but it came to a halt. It had juddered for a while and then came to a standstill. There was no way it would start again for it had run out of fuel.

The driver had to sit there on a lonely country road hoping for help. Fortunately there came a farmer on a tractor and he offered to give the car a tow. The owner was not keen as this was a quite a new car. When the farmer looked he realised the car had run out of petrol. He had a full can of petrol on the farm, so he went away but soon returned and

poured the petrol in to the tank. He gave the petrol to the driver as a gift and said as he saw him off, 'None of us can run on an empty tank.'

There are times in life when our human resources run out. Then the harder we try, the worse it gets. There are, many people who are drained or running near empty; now and again we all need our batteries recharged.

Listen to these words:

'Those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength' (Isaiah 40:31); or these words of Jesus: 'Come to me, all who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest.'

Amen.

Hymn 320 Joy to the world, the Lord has come

Prayers of Intercession

Lord, we pray for the Church, your body and ambassadors, to which you have committed the ministry of reconciling people to you.

Grant us grace to live as light and salt in Your world that we may effective witnesses for you in our towns and villages, our neighbourhoods and our cities.

Help us to commit ourselves to pray earnestly that your kingdom may come in our community, nation and the world. We pray that your Church will stand firmly in your word. We pray for our ministers and spiritual leaders for wisdom and grace to proclaim your truth without fear.

The winter period is particularly challenging for the poor in our nation. Thank you for our social support system that is in operation, for the NHS and our care system. May we continue to be an extension of your love to those who are in dire need.

Comfort those who have lost their loved ones. Grant healing to the sick. May we all have the assurance of your ever abiding presence.

We thank you because you will abundantly exceed all that we ask or think. Be glorified in your church and in our life.

Amen.

Our closing Hymn this morning is Hymn 626
Holy Spirit, truth divine

Blessing

May the grace of Christ, which daily renews us,
And the love of God, which enables us to love all, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, which unites us in one body, make us eager to obey the will of God until we meet again.
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.