



Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church
www.trinitylutheran.ca

January 19, 2025
2nd Sunday in Epiphany

Announcements

Juice boxes are still needed at Street Help Shelter. The Welcome Centre Shelter for Women needs granola bars, fruit rollup-type items and another snack item for snack packs for children at the centre. Please leave donated items on the table in the Narthex.

Coming Up

RIC Sunday – is January 26. Each year, on the last Sunday in January, we celebrate what it means to live a theology of reconciliation and our ongoing work of welcome, inclusion, celebration, and advocacy for 2SLGBTQIA+ people in the life of the church.

Annual Congregational Meeting - Trinity's Annual Congregational Meeting will be February 9. The meeting will follow the worship service and will include a potluck meal. The Annual Report will be available at the end of January. While all are welcome to attend the meeting, only active members can vote on any matters.

We Remember in our Prayers

In Residence: Cordelle

Members: Bunny, Donna, Ed, Edda, Joan, Susan, Connie, Lorraine, Brenda

Friends & Family: Anna, Asdis, Audrey, Dot, Jean, Mary, Randy, Roger, Rose, Frank, Tanya, Nash, Jeff

Thames Area Clergy: Bishop Carla Blakely and Eastern Synod support staff

Introduction to the day

The Sundays after Epiphany continue to celebrate the revelation of God's glory to us as it was made known to the magi and to those on Jordan's banks at Jesus' baptism—today using wedding imagery. Our God rejoices over God's people as those being married rejoice over one another. By the power of the Spirit there are gifts galore for everyone. In Christ Jesus the best wine is saved for last. Taste and see.

Hymns

WOV #788 Glory to God

ELW #310 Songs of thankfulness and praise

ELW #488 Soul, adorn yourself with gladness

ELW #576 We all are in one mission

Prayer of the day

Lord God, source of every blessing, you showed forth your glory and led many to faith by the works of your Son, who brought gladness and salvation to his people. Transform us by the Spirit of his love, that we may find our life together in him, Jesus Christ, our Saviour and Lord.

AMEN

First reading Isaiah 62:1-5

¹For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest,
until her vindication shines out like the dawn,
and her salvation like a burning torch.

²The nations shall see your vindication,
and all the kings your glory;
and you shall be called by a new name

that the mouth of the Lord will give.

³You shall be a crown of beauty in the hand of the Lord,
and a royal diadem in the hand of your God.

⁴You shall no more be termed Forsaken,
and your land shall no more be termed Desolate;
but you shall be called My Delight Is in Her,
and your land Married;
for the Lord delights in you,
and your land shall be married.
⁵For as a young man marries a young woman,
so shall your builder marry you,
and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,
so shall your God rejoice over you.

Psalm: 36:5-10

⁵Your love, O Lord, reaches ^l to the heavens,
and your faithfulness ^l to the clouds.

⁶**Your righteousness is like the strong mountains, your justice like ^l the great deep;
you save humankind and ani- ^l mals, O Lord.**

⁷How priceless is your ^l love, O God!
All people take refuge under the shadow ^l of your wings.

⁸**They feast upon the abundance ^l of your house;
you give them drink from the river of ^l your delights.**

⁹For with you is the ^l well of life,
and in your light ^l we see light.

¹⁰**Continue your lovingkindness to ^l those who know you,
and your favour to those who are ^l true of heart.**

Second reading: 1 Corinthians 12:1-11

¹ Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers and sisters, I do not want you to be uninformed. ² You know that when you were pagans, you were enticed and led astray to idols that could not speak. ³ Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says "Let Jesus be cursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except by the Holy Spirit.

⁴ Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; ⁵ and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; ⁶ and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. ⁷ To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. ⁸ To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit, ⁹ to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, ¹⁰ to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another the discernment of spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. ¹¹ All these are activated by one and the same Spirit, who allots to each one individually just as the Spirit chooses.

Gospel: John 2: 1-11

¹ On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of



Jesus was there. ² Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. ³ When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." ⁴ And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." ⁵ His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." ⁶ Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. ⁷ Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. ⁸ He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. ⁹ When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom ¹⁰ and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." ¹¹

Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

Sermon

Love notices

We all know the story of Moses leading the freed slaves from Egypt to the promised land.

We know how, as the chariots of the Pharaoh's army bore down on the slaves standing on the shores of the sea, Moses climbs up on a large rock ... as only Charlton Heston could ... spreads his arms wide and calls on God to deliver the people. The sea parts and the people escape into freedom.

According to the Midrash, among the throng of people were Reuven and Shimon.

The two are not happy as they move forward with the crowd ... even though they are leaving a life of slavery behind them and walking into freedom.

Reuven and Shimon complain ... and complain ... and complain ... about the mud. With each step, it seems, their displeasure grows as the mud cakes on their feet. The pair compare the mud to the slime pits they worked in Egypt.

Shimon asks, "What is the difference?"

"Mud here ... mud there ... it is all the same."

The Midrash is an ancient text used by Jewish scholars and rabbis to unpack and better understand and explain Scripture.

The two men are so engrossed in their complaining and the mud on their sandals, that they fail to notice the miracle that the water is being held back ... that they are walking on the bottom of the sea. All they see is the mud.

This morning, Jesus' mother notices that the wine has run out during a wedding celebration in Cana.

Jesus, his mother and the disciples have travelled to the town for the celebration. During Jesus' time, weddings were week-long events that welcomed entire communities into the family's home.

The host family was expected to have an adequate supply of food and refreshments to last the entire week ... and that included the wine ... especially the wine.

The hosts would bring out the best wine at the beginning of the celebration and then ... as people got drunker and drunker ... the cheaper wine would be brought out.

But this morning ... even the stuff that is barely better than vinegar is gone. There are still days of celebrating left to go.

This is a disaster of epic proportions.

If word gets out, the family will be shamed before the whole of Cana. But Jesus' mother notices the problem and goes to her son to get him to help the wedding party avoid embarrassment and ridicule.

Even though Jesus seems hesitant, she tells the servants to do whatever he instructs them to do.

They fill six large stone jars with water.

Once the jars were filled, a sample was taken and proclaimed to be the good wine ... the very best wine.

All because Mary noticed that something was wrong and acted ... all because love was set in motion.

To John, what happens to the water is a sign, it points to Jesus' nature ... and that's where we are called during the season of Epiphany to discern Jesus' nature and what it means for us and the world.

Jesus' actions points us toward abundance ... toward abundant love and an abundant life.

Eliseo Perez-Alvarez, who writes about the liberating nature of the gospels, once wrote that the story of the wedding in Cana reveals that Jesus is "a Nazarene who attends wedding, who celebrates togetherness.

"Jesus is showing us God's glory, God's sense of humour, God's nearness, mingling," Perez-Alvarez wrote. "Jesus is not an absentee landlord, the metaphysical god of philosophers, the never-present father. No, Jesus will never say we are too close for comfort."

It's interesting that Jesus doesn't lay hands upon the jars ... or says a prayer ... or call upon the Father. Jesus simply instructs the servants and the miraculous happens. Jesus calls ... Jesus involves others in this act of abundant love ... and by doing so, gives the disciples and the servants ... and us, as well, ... a sign.

A sign toward the joy ... the sense of community ... of family ... that is made possible through God's love is in action. We're told the sign cemented the disciples' belief in Jesus through faith, but what about the servants ... the ones who fetched the water and filled the six stone jars.

They knew what had been accomplished ... and their role in the changing of water to wine so that the ... the wedding ... a celebration of life could continue. Even though they did not have the faith needed to recognize Jesus' glory, did their participation change their lives ... their way of viewing the world ... did they begin to see an abundance where there was perceived scarcity? Did it eventually lead them to a life of faith?

Did they begin to notice wrongs in the world ... and then act to address those wrongs? Did their relationship with the world and with one another change?

In short, did they look up and around?

That where today's sign points us ... to look up and notice the world around us ... to embrace a ministry that comforts ... feeds ... heals ... and loves. To look up from the mud on our sandals and to see the challenges others face ... and the miracles that God makes known in the world each moment.

In Cana, the servants' muscles and perseverance were needed to fill the jars with water so life's celebrations can continue, but our ministry can involve more than having the muscles to lug 180 gallons of water or to move jars around.

Paul says as much this morning.

He tells the Corinthians that a community has many gifts that should act in unity with one another.

Paul informs listeners that we have an abundance of gifts that are activated by God through the Spirit ... the same Spirit that guides us in our relationships with the world. That same abundant Spirit leads us to notice the gifts within and around us ... to notice the God's presence in the world and where it needs to be made known.

Jesus shows grace as an overflowing abundance in this morning's scene from Cana.

Like those stone containers at the wedding, we are each filled with God's grace – a fine vintage that is wasted if it's not shared.

We ... like the servants in Cana ... are called to follow Mary's instruction to "Do whatever he tells you" and ... if we are fortunate ... we get to witness what wondrous things happen ... we get to see grace shared in abundance.

But this means that we need to look up and around ... to stop focusing on the mud at our feet ... to look around see God at work in the world ... AND ... when injustice or hunger or suffering is noticed ... to allow the Spirit ... the love ... to flow through us to those in need.

... to keep the jars full ... and carry them outwards.

When people draw grace from the jars ... they are sustained ... nourished ... transformed ... just as life in Cana was transformed by the servant's.

When we share God's unconditional love with others we may never know its

full effect, but that doesn't matter because we can still joyously celebrate that life is much better when such a fine vintage is made known.

AMEN

Lord's Prayer

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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power and the glory, forever and ever.

AMEN

Blessing

The God of steadfastness and encouragement
grant you to live in harmony with one another,
in accordance with Christ Jesus.
The God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing,
so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.
The God of all grace ✝ bless you now and forever.

AMEN