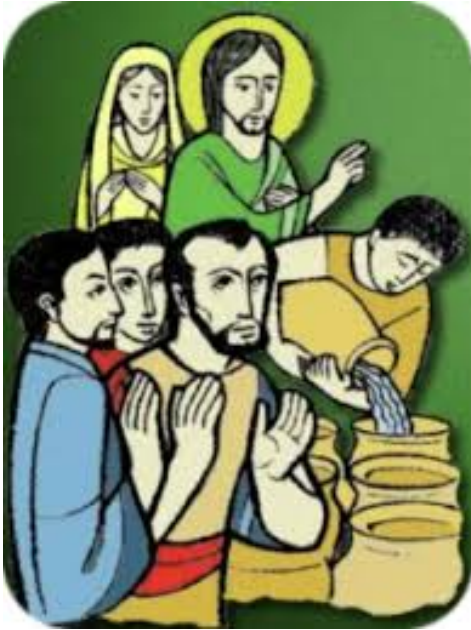




Church of the Epiphany

FROM THE MOUNTAIN TOP

Epiphany 2 • Cloudcroft, New Mexico • January 19, 2025



Collect for Epiphany 2

Almighty God, whose Son our Savior Jesus Christ is the light of the world: Grant that your people, illumined by your Word and Sacraments, may shine with the radiance of Christ's glory, that he may be known, worshiped, and obeyed to the ends of the earth; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

Readings for the Epiphany 2

Isaiah 62:1-5
Psalm 96
1 Corinthians 12:1-11
John 2;1-11

We need to do a bit of shifting around in the life of Jesus to get into the atmosphere of today's gospel. We have been absorbed by the Advent of the birth and then the celebration of that Birth. Then we had the adoration of the shepherds and the wise men and the baptism of Jesus. Now in his adult life we have the curious beginning of the ministry of Jesus and his disciples.

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we pray that this story of marriage in the early Jewish life of a couple will be the guide to us as we eventually become the bride of Jesus and his church. May the events of the story of the marriage in Cana be a valuable lesson to us in our present position in the Church.

Bless us Lord Jesus

Amen.

An invitation to a marriage is part of every life. It is so now and was in the time of Jesus. Do we RSVP and go or send a set of steak knives? In the gospel of John, we have the story and the details of the celebration as the first of the signs of Jesus and his ministry.

Let us look at each of the twists and turns of this delightful story and then apply it to our lives.

The gospel begins with "On the third day" referring to three days after the baptism. John the Baptist is recalling his reference to Jesus as the Lamb of God. We would say "two days later" Jesus and his disciples are invited to a wedding feast. Jesus was well liked and a good guy to have at your party and in the Jewish culture of the day a wedding feast was the best of parties.

For our history as the bride of Christ it is important to look at the sequence of a Jewish

wedding. First was the selection of the proper bride by the groom. This was accomplished by the groom's family and the signing of a contract. The bride price was paid, and the betrothal was announced. The wedding was likely a year off, but the couple was considered married. The wedding was not yet consummated. Finally, the preparation of a suitable home for the couple was completed and the groom then could come for his bride. Remember the story of the vestal virgins. Then there was the marriage ceremony with family and friends and the consummation of the marriage. The last and glorious step was the wedding feast. This was the responsibility of the groom's family and lasted seven nights with lots of food, desserts, dancing, and wine for the invited guests. In this wedding feast in the gospel reading, the couple is running out of wine and that would be major social mistake. Mary knows and sees the disaster coming and tell Jesus that they are running out of wine. This was unforgivable in that day in a small community. Wine was the symbol of joy and to run out would be a regrettable social lost to the beginning of this couple's life and family.

Mary somehow senses this tragedy coming on and tells Jesus about the shortage. This is the first time in the Gospel of John that Mary is mentioned. Her invitation to the feast may have resulted in the invitation to Jesus and to his disciples. We don't hear from them until verse 11. This could have swelled the invitation list to more than planned. His reply was, "What has this to do with me?" We can see by this exchange between Mary and Jesus that a new understanding of the purpose of Jesus was this new ministry. Mary is simply moving it to the front

Jesus then after perhaps a prayer to the Father instructs the servants to fill the ritual purification water jars with water. This may be just Jesus using what is at hand for his needs or it may indeed be an indication of the inclusion of the ritual of the Law. These servants are now in a unique place for the blessings of this miracle. They did not do the miracle but clearly, they do get to share in the miracle. The jars are filled to the brim

because Jesus did not intend to add something to the water but transform all of it into wine. These six jars that hold maybe thirty gallons each would provide 180 gallons wine quite enough for the party. The servants must have been full of desires to share their knowledge of the events that took place behind the scenes with their colleagues.

We can take this plan as a fulfillment in our lives. Jesus fills us to the brim when we are brought to the point to believe. We then love him to the brim. We are full of the joy to serve him up to the brim.

These instructions took some courage on the part of the servants. They had filled the jars with clear water. Now it appeared to be fine red wine. These they took to the master of the feast. He is mightily impressed with the quality.

Jewish wine making was a simple process of stomping the grapes in a vat with your feet and drawing off the juice. The skins and seed and remains were put through the wine press to collect the remainder. The mixture may have been altered a bit with a little yeast to start the fermenting process. After three days, you had a rough but drinkable wine. Custom was also to dilute wine to two parts wine to three parts water to reduce the alcoholic content. This is not grape juice. Not this wine. By the simple will of Jesus this miracle was done.

Our supply of good wine into the world has not stopped. Our good wine of fellowship with Jesus, the Spirit and with God has not stopped. The best wine is yet to come.

This is the beginning of the signs of Jesus. And it is the first of seven signs. This one demonstrated the conversion of the old way of the law and purification to the new life with Jesus. We can note that in this story water was the relationship with God under the Old Covenant and the wine is the relationship with God under the New Covenant with Jesus.

The last words of this reading are that the disciples "believed in him." They must have had some degree of belief before but now their

belief was deepened. Here they saw the glory of his love on this "third day." The third day will come again later to their belief.

This faith of the disciples was significant change to the faith to others who were there. The master of the feast was relieved with the saving of the festival with more wine. The bride and groom did not even know of the miracle. The servants of the feast knew who was responsible for the new wine. But it is the disciples who believed in him.

In this story we have parallels between the Old Testament wedding and the marriage of the Lord Jesus and his Church. Jesus is the groom who purchased his bride. He paid the Father with his blood. This Church is not exactly the untouched virgin but rather the body of sinners to whom he lavished his mercy and grace. We wait for his return to complete this marriage by bringing us under his one roof of the Kingdom

The final sign in John's gospel; is the resurrection of Jesus. the Good News is that God will raise us from the dead. In the meantime, God provides the necessary fruitful lives we need.

Let us bless the Lord for his many mercies.

We believe in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Pastor Fred



Prayer List - 1/19/25

Anglican Church of the Good Shepherd,
San Angelo
Rev. Hal Scott,
For the residents of Los Angeles and for fire
fighters and first responders

Bishop Steven and Tricia

Those who need your healing care and strength:

Frank & Carolyn Wilson
Ellie
Donya Conine
Wayne Conine Jr.
Rev. Shelby Moon
Deacon Dwight Harp
David Brinkley
Cheeta Mc Murray
Rev. Elias Rosales Mendes
Mary Espinosa
Linda Seyffert
Chip & Alyssa Taylor and baby
Julius

Those in the Armed Forces:

Dominick Rankin, US Army, Ft. Bliss, TX
Gabriella Murley, Ft. Bliss, TX
Mason Gregg, Camp Courtney, Okinawa
Creed Napier, US Air Force,
J.W. Grove, US Navy
Nicholas Tran, Joint Base Lewis-McChord
Shawn Zima, Hong Kong
Wyatt Green, US Navy

We pray for our Epiphany family:

Matthew Flores,
Walter and Carolyn Ford
Esther & Joel Fyock
Cynthia and Steve Vanlandingham
Larry and Jennifer Williams, Jessica and
James
Bob and Shirley Williamson

Lessons for Epiphany 2

January 19, 2025

Anglican Lectionary

year C

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 62:1-5

62/1 For Zion's sake I will not keep silent,
and for Jerusalem's sake I will not be quiet,
until her righteousness goes forth as brightness,
and her salvation as a burning torch.

2 The nations shall see your righteousness,
and all the kings your glory,
and you shall be called by a new name
that the mouth of the Lord will give.

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

4 You 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.

5 For as a young man marries a young woman,
so shall your sons marry you,
and as the bridegroom rejoices over the bride,
so shall your God rejoice over you.

Psalm 96

1 O sing unto the LORD a new song; *
sing unto the LORD, all the whole earth.

2 Sing unto the LORD and praise his Name; *
tell of his salvation from day to day.

3 Declare his honor to the nations, *
and his wonders to all peoples.

4 For the LORD is great, and highly to be
praised; *
he is more to be feared than all gods.

5 As for all the gods of the nations, they are
but idols; *
but it is the LORD who made the heavens.

6 Glory and majesty are before him; *
power and honor are in his sanctuary.

7 Ascribe unto the LORD, O you families of
the peoples, *
ascribe unto the LORD worship and power.

8 Ascribe unto the LORD the honor due unto
his Name; *
bring offerings and come into his courts.

9 O worship the LORD in the beauty of
holiness; *
let the whole earth stand in awe of him.

10 Tell it out among the nations, "the LORD is
King; *
it is he who has made the world so firm that
it cannot be moved; he shall judge the
peoples righteously."

11 Let the heavens rejoice, and let the earth
be glad; *
let the sea make a noise, and all that is
therein.

12 Let the field be joyful, and all that is in it; *
then shall all the trees of the wood rejoice
before the LORD.

13 For he comes, for he comes to judge the
earth, *
and with righteousness to judge the world,
and the peoples with his truth.

New Testament Reading

1 Corinthians 12:1-11

12 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brothers, I do not want you to be uninformed. **2** You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led. **3** Therefore I want you to understand that no one speaking in the Spirit of God ever says "Jesus is accursed!" and no one can say "Jesus is Lord" except in the Holy Spirit.

4 Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; **5** and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; **6** and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who empowers them all in everyone. **7** To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. **8** For 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 ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues. **11** All these are empowered by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.

The Holy Gospel

John 2:1-11

2/1 On the third day there was a wedding at Cana in Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there.

2 Jesus also was invited to the wedding with his disciples. **3** When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." **4** And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does this have to do with me? My hour has not yet come." **5** His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." **6** Now there were six stone water jars there for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. **7** Jesus said to the servants, "Fill the jars

with water." And they filled them up to the brim.

8 And he said to them, "Now draw some out and take it to the master of the feast." So they took it. **9** When the master of the feast tasted the water now become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the master of the feast called the bridegroom **10** and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and when people have drunk freely, then the poor wine. But you have kept the good wine until now."

11 This, the first of his signs, Jesus did at Cana in Galilee, and manifested his glory. And his disciples believed in him.

