

Bulletin for Sunday 16 January 2022

Good morning, friends. January can be a cold, dark and depressing month... but this week we've seen some crisp, bright mornings and wonderful deep colours in the sunsets. There are green shoots appearing despite the frosts and signs of life in many places...

Let's pause as we prepare to worship..... and then praise God as we sing:

Hymn: Let all the world in every corner sing (R&S 114)

Prayer: God of all the world,

we praise you for the glimpses of your glory
that we see in the world around us:
for vivid orange flowers on gorse bushes
and for birds that sing as dawn breaks, we thank you;
for old friends, and memories that make us smile,
for constant love, and for unexpected laughter,
we offer our heart-felt thanks.
We ask your blessing on everything we do,
and on everything we give in your service,
today and every day. In Jesus 'name. Amen

followed by The Lord's Prayer

Reading: John 2: 1-11

Reflection: Weddings are community occasions - times to bring people together; times to celebrate, to love and to party; times to be remembered, perhaps for a lifetime. So it has been sad when weddings were postponed or reduced, these past couple of years.

The wedding at Cana seems to have been quite a large, affluent affair, with multiple servants and a 'chief steward'. There were also enough guests to drink the party dry! It could have been a disaster... but Jesus was persuaded to intervene.

This was the first of Jesus' miracles and, like those which followed, it wasn't really a conjuring trick, but a way to proclaim God's abundant, overflowing love for us in a practical way, in the middle of our ordinary lives. So the wedding wasn't just put back on an even keel with a bit more ordinary wine - it was transformed to something wonderfully better by gallons and gallons of the best wine - far better than the wine they had started with! In the ordinary circumstances of a local wedding, God was revealed, transforming the ordinary into the extraordinary! Where do we see God doing extraordinary things in our everyday ordinary lives today?

Hymn: Teach me, my God and King (R&S 538)

Prayer: Loving God, may we indeed see you in everything.
We pray that the transforming power of your love
will heal old wounds between people and nations,
reaching into all communities and homes...
We pray that those who live with sickness or disability,
with physical pain, or with crippling anxiety,
may be aware of your transforming love in their lives...
We pray for our neighbours,
for all those we love, and for ourselves...
We hold before you those we know in particular need...
In Jesus 'name we ask all our prayers
including the unspoken prayers of our hearts... Amen

Hymn: Go forth and tell (R&S 574)

Blessing: May we become aware of God's transformation
of the ordinary into the extraordinary.....
and may the blessing of God
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
be with us and with all those we love,
this week, and always. Amen

There will be a ' Sunday at Six 'Zoom at 6pm this Sunday - all welcome.

We all have a part to play in caring for each other and doing what we can to keep everyone safe from Covid - wearing masks, giving people space and having plenty of ventilation. The URC's advice is at

<https://urc.org.uk/covid-plan-b-synod-moderators-updated-guidance/>

Please also let us know if you have a positive Covid test after recently being in church.

It's obviously impossible to make our churches entirely risk-free.

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