

# twelvebaskets

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## **EPIPHANY 2C**

19th January 2025

A short act of worship and daily devotions

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## Opening Prayers

I am here – let me notice that you are here too.

I am here to worship you,

I am here to listen to you,

I am here, just as I am,

Come into this space, in peace, and love,

Motivate, challenge and inspire me to travel with you this week.

I am here – help me to notice that you are too, O God.

Come, by your Spirit.

Amen.

**You may now wish to say the Lord's Prayer in a version or translation with which you are familiar.**

**Reading:** John 2:1-11 – [Click for reading](#)

## Responding to the readings

January can be a difficult month, can't it? Lots of recovery and coming 'down' after the 'up' of Christmas. Lots of worries about money. Long, dark, cold evenings. Perhaps a sense of foreboding about the year to come. Despite all that, this season is full of sparkle and promise and so is today's reading from John's gospel.

Epiphany means 'shining out' and for these weeks which follow the Feast of Epiphany we are given examples of the light of Christ shining out – something we may be glad of in these dark, cold winter days and something which can re-energise us in the first few weeks of a new year. There is much here about new beginnings and starting again. In our Gospel passage we heard how Jesus transformed a wedding in a very non-Methodist way, and brought joy and celebration to those who were there.

Perhaps as you read it today, the very first few words grabbed your attention – 'On the third day', making a connection with the Resurrection of Jesus, which took place 'on the third day' and so perhaps sending us another message too, that this is going to be a story about a new order, a new start, a new kind of life?

Moving on into the story, we discover that Jesus and his mother are both guests at a wedding – we don't know whose. At some point disaster occurs – at least, in a culture which holds generous hospitality in very high regard, it's a disaster – the wine runs out. This is going to mean embarrassment and shame for the families involved and the happy day of celebration looks like turning into a day of grumbling and discontent. Until Mary, the mother of Jesus, decides that this is something Jesus can help with!

Jesus doesn't sound thrilled at being brought in to help – 'No mother, it's not my time yet.' His mother disregards his protests and tells the servants to do whatever he tells them to do. Unable to escape from the situation, Jesus tells them to fill some extremely large jars with water and then, without any song or dance or incantation or ceremony, the water becomes wine. Not just a few bottles, but more than 120 gallons. The party is rescued. The chief steward is completely amazed, not, it appears at the quantity of the wine, but at its quality.

Why, he asks the bridegroom, have you kept back this superior wine until the end? I imagine the bridegroom has no idea how to answer that!

John goes on to describe this as the first of a series of 'signs' which Jesus performed. A sign of what?

- John suggests it was a sign of glory, the glory of God demonstrated in human form in a remarkable way.
- John also tells us that as a result of these signs, the disciples believed in him, so it was a sign that Jesus was worth following, worth believing in.
- Was it also a sign that whatever God does is of the highest quality imaginable? That God is not content with mediocrity or expediency, but always demonstrates capacious grace, abundant joy, overflowing life?

But it was done without fanfares or announcements – I imagine that most of the guests went home not even knowing where the wine had come from. For those who knew what was going on, however, this was a true Epiphany, a shining out of the light of Christ in a way which brought sparkle and life to a situation which was potentially flat and shameful. For them it was a sign of God's glory breaking out in a man they knew.

Could that happen today for us? Not the sudden transformation of gallons of water into wine, but the shining out of God's glory to a world which knows more about shame and dullness? Could we be part of that?

- Could some of the flat and lifeless situations in which we may find ourselves be transformed because Jesus is present – in you and in those around you?
- Could any depression or dullness which you may feel in the long weeks of winter be infused with glimmers of hope and light because Jesus is present – in you and in those around you?
- Could the church in your community, which may seem dull and unappetising to so many who live near, offer joy, celebration, community and hope because Jesus is present – in you and in those around you?

On this second Sunday after Epiphany, may the light of God shine into you and out from you wherever you may go this week.

Thanks be to God, Amen.

### **Hymn:**

440 STF – Amazing grace – how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me – [YouTube](#)

### **Blessing**

May you go with the courage of Christ in your heart.

May you go with the fierce energy of the Spirit in your body.

May you go with the God of love streaming through you and out into the world.

Go in peace, and serve the Lord.

Amen.

# Prayers and Prayer Pointers

## Monday 20<sup>th</sup> January

- God of all grace,  
Today is a day where I can learn more of you and your ways,  
An opportunity to be challenged, changed and inspired by you and your love for me.  
Come, show me what is mine to do, I pray.  
Amen.

## Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> January

- Around the world, there are many people actively working for peace and justice – humanitarian workers, campaigners, politicians, community organisers, fundraisers, religious leaders, and many many more.
- Today, take a moment to pray for them, to seek wisdom from God on what it might be that you can do to help seek peace in the world, in Jesus' name.

## Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January

- What would finding a moment of stillness look like for you this day? A moment when you can turn aside from your routine and intentionally listen to God's voice.
- Come, Lord Jesus, into the stillness of my day. Amen.

## Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January

- Today, take a moment to notice the light. In these dark, winter days it is easy to miss the light shining. Whether its sunlight (what are the chances!?), a glimpse of the moon, a candle, a lamp, or similar...take it as a moment to celebrate and give thanks.

## Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January

- Living, loving God,  
Today we pray for all those involved in church leadership,  
All who set strategy, design programs, lead churches, chair meetings,  
All who seek to make space for grace in the midst of the working of the institution.  
May your Spirit guide and lead them today, we pray. Amen.

## Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> January

- You might simply like to use the mantra 'God is love' as you go about your day, today. Notice that God is present, always, and closer than you maybe often realise.