**Salendine Nook Baptist Church – Church Together**

**Sunday 2nd January 2022 – Jesus Can Make All The Difference**

**Welcome**

Welcome to **Church Together.**

**No matter wherever you are, whatever you do, whoever you are, together we can grow as Church Together.**

Our flexible Sunday worship patterns blend together on - line services, home deliveries and E - mailed copies of Church Together.

Today’s Service for this first Sunday in 2022 will be looking at: **John 2 v. 1 - 12**

The theme for today’s service is: **Jesus Can Make All The Difference!**

Today’s service that is set out in this edition of **Church Together** also includes **Communion.** We hope that you will be able to engage with what has been produced for our **First Sunday Service in this New Year Of 2022** and that you would indeed **Know That Jesus Can Make All The Difference In Your Life If You Will Allow Him.**

**Call To Worship**

**Psalm 18 v. 1 - 3 NLT**

I love you, Lord; you are my strength.

The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my

Saviour;

My God is my rock, in whom I find

protection.

He is my shield, the strength of my

Salvation, and my stronghold.

I will call on the Lord, who is worthy of praise, for he saves me from my enemies.

**Opening Prayer**

Glory to God in the Highest, and peace to God’s people on earth. Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father, we worship and give you praise this day, we give you thanks with all of our hearts, and we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, Lord God, Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us this day we pray. You are seated at the right hand of the Father; receive our praise and worship this day.

For you alone are the Holy One, you alone are the Lord, you alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father, we pray these things.

**Amen**

**Song Suggestion**

At The Name Of Jesus

**Jesus’s First Miracle**

Jesus and Mary were at a wedding  
In Cana of Galilee  
The celebratory wine had gone  
And so Mary did make a plea

She said to the Lord Jesus Christ:  
“Please see, oh son of mine,  
I think that something should be done,  
For these guests have no more wine”

Jesus was not ready yet  
Then this is what he said:  
“Fill some pots with water;  
That they have liquid with their bread”

The servants did as Jesus asked  
And filled 6 pots with haste  
120 gallons or so  
“Let the organiser have first taste”

The wedding organiser marvelled  
At the quality of the wine  
Poor quality was usually served this late  
But instead, this tasted fine

Jesus’s followers were also there  
Amazed in Holy Trinity  
The servants also came to believe  
In Jesus Christ’s divinity

This one great story of Jesus Christ:  
How he changed water into wine  
Is one great story of many to come  
But ‘twas a miracle still most divine

**Communion**

Today is a Sunday when we would normally share communion together. We come together today remembering the love and sacrifice that Jesus made on the Cross for our sins and for our forgiveness. We gather together here in Church or at home as the body of Christ in order to share the bread and the cup together.

We are able do this by getting a small glass of red juice (*fruit juice, squash etc*.) and a small piece of bread and ‘sharing these elements’ at a time that is convenient to you.

(*Normally as a church we will do this during the service at about 11.30am.*)

Our normal practice is to say these words:

For I received from the Lord what I pass on to you: The Lord Jesus, on the night he was betrayed, took bread, and when he had given thanks, (*you might like to pray at this point*) he broke it and said, ‘This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me.’ (*this is the time to eat the bread*). In the same way, after supper he took the cup, saying, ‘This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me.’ (*now is the time to drink the cup*). For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

*1 Corinthians 11 v. 22 - 26*

If you would like to do this today with us, if you are at home, then please do so, and may the Lord’s richest blessings be with you today.

**Song Suggestion**

Name Of All Majesty, Fathomless Mystery

**Moment Of Reflection**

The same Jesus Who turned water into wine can transform your home, your life, your family, and your future. He is still in the miracle-working business, and His business is the business of transformation.

**Bible Reading**

**John 2 v. 1 – 12 NIV**

**Jesus Changes Water Into Wine**

**2**On the third day a wedding took place at Cana in Galilee. Jesus’ mother was there, 2and Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. 3When the wine was gone, Jesus’ mother said to him, “They have no more wine.”

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

5His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”

6Nearby stood six stone water jars, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing, each holding from twenty to thirty gallons.

7Jesus said to the servants, “Fill the jars with water”; so they filled them to the brim.

8Then he told them, “Now draw some out and take it to the master of the banquet.”

They did so, 9and the master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside 10and 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.”

11What 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.

12After this he went down to Capernaum with his mother and brothers and his disciples. There they stayed for a few days.

**Church Motto 2022**

**Isaiah 43 v. 19**

For I am about to do a

brand - new thing.

See, I have already begun!

Do you not see it?

I will make a pathway through the

wilderness for my people to come home.

I will create rivers for them in the desert!

**Offerings**

No matter wherever you are, whatever you do, whoever you are, together we can grow as Church Together here at Salendine Nook.

Now that we find ourselves once again holding services in Church, we are able to give of our finances to the work of the Lord when we are in church.

If you feel that your are able to, then please keep on giving with a cheerful and grateful heart, praising God for all that he has given to you and share in the finances of the church.

**Church Together Thought**

The wedding feast is under way and the bride and groom are the centre of attention.

Weddings take many different forms. Ina traditional British wedding for example, there is often a ‘top table’ with the bride and groom in the centre, flanked by their parents and the best man and bridesmaids. In New Testament times, there was perhaps just one long table, with the wedding party at the head of the table, followed by the most important guests, and the least significant at the far end. This is certainly the impression given in **Luke 14 v. 8 - 10**.

Suchwedding celebrations went on for longer than a modern reception, sometimes for as long as a week!

**Water into wine!**

The financial responsibility for the wedding lay with the groom, and to run out of wine would have been highly embarrassing.

As we look at **John 2 v. 1 – 3**, what we have is a wedding in which the mother of Jesus, Jesus, and his disciples were a part. Mary the mother of Jesus, for some reason or another (*possibly because this is the wedding of family members or close friends*) comes to Jesus with a problem. The wine had run out. At this point we have to ask ourselves 2 questions. Firstly, what is the big deal about the wine running out? And secondly, who’s responsibility is it to provide enough wine for the ceremony?

**John 2 v. 10** gives us some insight into the answer to both questions. We are told that at other weddings the good wine is served first and then the bad wine is served last. This tells us that it is normal for weddings to have plenty of wine. It is not then the custom of the day to run out of wine.

As we have already noted, a wedding celebration could last maybe as long as a week, and the financial responsibility lay with the groom. To run out of supplies would be a dreadful embarrassment; there is some evidence it could also lay the groom open to a lawsuit from aggrieved relatives of the bride. So, running out of wine is quite the big deal. The responsibility of providing enough refreshments lay at the feet of the bridegroom. This is not how this bridegroom wants to start his life with his bride.

What do you think this would have communicated to the families of everyone involved? The wine running out means the bridegroom is unprepared, immature, possibly poor, and should be ashamed! He is failing at his job!

When the wine ran out, it was Jesus’ mother, Mary who asked him to help. She realized that no one, least of all a bridegroom at his own wedding feast, would want to be perceived as an ungenerous host.

In today’s society it is common for the bride to take care of mostly everything on the wedding day. She wants everything to be perfect and the way she always dreamed. If she hands over responsibilities to her husband to be she expects that he will do what is requested. Well, the groom in the passage from **John 2** is the kind of groom who fails at his delegated task. Simply put, he is unprepared.

The passage that we have read shows us that the bridegroom does nothing. In **John 2 v. 6** nothing. In **v. 7** nothing. In **v. 8** nothing. In **v. 9** nothing. However, in **v. 10** all he does is get credit. The passage records the bridegroom as doing nothing to solve the problem that he created. It would appear that he is careless and apparently does not care.

Jesus initial response was enigmatic and may have appeared rather abrupt, but Mary’s instructions to the servants seem to indicate that she expected her son, with the resourcefulness and generosity of God himself, to solve the problem.

He does so, turning up to 180 gallons of water into an equal quantity of first - class wine. Jesus does a lot with water in the Bible. He walks on water and commands water to be still. In **John 2 v. 9** we see that Jesus can turn about 180 gallons of water into wine. You and I may be able to do a trick with food colouring, but when people taste water with food colouring in it, then it would not be mistaken for wine.

As if making 180 gallons of wine was not enough, Jesus makes good wine. Now what makes wine good? Age. Good wine takes time to age. After the aging process of wine, what becomes difficult is preserving wine in a way that it remains wine and does not turn into vinegar. What takes us years of time and great care takes Jesus only a millisecond. How incredible is to think that Jesus is in charge of all things, even time! It is not just this second that He has authority over, but Jesus has all authority now and forever more!

The jars mentioned were made of stone — hard stone, unlike earthenware, does not attract dirt and other impurities. They would have been used for ceremonial washing, and this purpose provides a clue to one of the meanings of the story: the water represents the old order of Jewish law and custom, which Jesus was to replace with something much better. It has been suggested that the great quantity they contained reflected the fullness of Christ’s grace, in contrast to the limitations of the old covenant (see **John 1 v. 16, 17**).

Jesus always does all things well and offers the best — in this instance, first class wine and lots of it.

A sign of God’s transforming power; John describes this as the first of Jesus’ miraculous signs. They are *‘signs’* of the Coming of God’s kingdom (see **Matthew 6 v. 10; 12 v. 28**). He wants to expose their deeper meaning. It is a sign of God’s transforming generosity, power and grace. Jesus wants to transform us into the best that we can be. Just as he did not produce second class wine, so he wishes that we be more than we are. If God’s transforming power is seen in us, we will point to the power of Jesus Christ, the real thing, the man who is God.

I believe that there are lessons that we can learn from this wonderful miracle that help us move into 2022:

**JESUS WAS INVITED & A DISASTER WAS AVOIDED (John 2 v. 1 – 3)**

There is nothing worse than running short on a big occasion. On this occasion it was the drink that ran out. Considering wine was used almost exclusively for every celebration, this was disastrous. Yet even at this practical level, the presence of Jesus made all the difference.

There are always problems over wedding invitations — who to invite, who to leave out. This family decided they would not leave out Jesus. Our Christian faith is not to be confined to church, prayer meetings or Bible study. Jesus can and should be celebrated in every aspect of our life.

**JESUS SHOWED HIS AUTHORITY AND BROUGHT RELIEF (John 2 v. 3 – 8)**

Jesus had hinted at his unique authority as a youngster in the Temple when his parents questioned his actions (**Luke 2**). Now as an adult he reminds his mother of his independent authority. He is not a ‘genie’ acting on our whim. He will act when the time is right.

These weren’t the days of superstores or off - licenses that might have been called on in an emergency. Yet there was and is someone who can be called on.

Jesus actually provided more wine – miraculously! We must never overlook the miracle - working power of Christ for our situation. Yet neither must we assume it as a right.

**JESUS GAVE HIS BEST AND PROVIDED ABUNDANTLY (John 2 v. 9 – 10)**

When Jesus does act, he acts dramatically. The amount of wine provided was excessive, yet it represents the quality of life Jesus offers. It is the very best (**v. 10**), it is abundant (**John 10 v. 10**), and it is also new life (**see also the parable of the wineskins in Matthew 9 v. 14 - 17**).

Against all the odds, the disaster turned into a blessing, for it provided Jesus with the opportunity to offer his help and demonstrate his power. God can take our disaster and turn even that into something good — if we have invited Him into the situation to begin with.

**Song Suggestion**

Abba Father, Let Me Be

Spirit Of The Living God

Soften My Heart, Lord

**Prayers Of Intercession**

God our Creator, Father and Friend, we give thanks today for the wonderful gift of life, with all its joys and responsibilities, its experiences and its opportunities. We praise you for good health and daily food, for the shelter and care of our homes, and the love and loyalty of our friends.

We bless you for work honestly done, for games well played, and for all the truth we have learned and the good we have been able to achieve. We thank you for the teaching and example of our Lord Jesus Christ, for the forgiveness and salvation we have received through him, for his presence with us always and for the service into which he has called us. Help us to express our thanks not only in our praises and prayers, but also through the lives we lead.

Loving Lord Jesus, we pray for our families and friends. Lord we all face the normal ups and downs of life in many different ways. We thank you that Jesus knows our every situation. Help us today we pray to face the different situations we face with dignity and love. Give us peace in our hearts and minds when we have not been able to see or be with our families or friends for a long time.

We continue to pray for those who are unwell, both at home and in hospital, or hospice. We think of the elderly, the housebound and those in care homes. We pray for all those who care for their needs, both professionally and in the family. So again, as we share a moment of silence together, we bring before you those known only to ourselves and name them before you, Lord Jesus, in our hearts.

And finally, Lord we pray for ourselves. Help us Lord to follow your example in all that we do and say as we journey with you. We place ourselves, this Church and all your people into your loving care. Please accept these our prayers, in Jesus name.

**Amen**

**The 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.

Lead us not into temptation

But deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, the power

And the glory, forever and ever.

**Amen**

**Song Suggestion**

Restore O Lord, The Honour Of Your Name!

**Blessing**

We have gathered here today,

Lord God as your people to offer you  
our sacrifice of prayer and worship.

We have fed on your Word, been refreshed through your living sacrifice for us,

felt the encircling of your Spirit around this

fellowship and around individual lives.

As we go from this place may we continue to know your presence and power in the very

different lives that we lead,

to your praise and glory.

**Amen**