

Australian Evangelical Lutheran Church  
BETHLEHEM TOOWOOMBA, OUR SAVIOUR LOWOOD, ST JOHN'S AUBIGNY,  
ST PAUL'S GREENWOOD, TRINITY MARBURG, TRINITY OAKEY  
19<sup>th</sup> January    Second Sunday after Epiphany

**HYMNS:**    40   45   47   84   840   509

**INTROIT:**    Psalm 128

Blessed is everyone who fears the LORD, who walks in His Ways!  
You will certainly eat what your own hands have worked for. You  
will be blessed, and it will be well with you.

Your wife will be like a fruitful vine inside your house. Your  
children will be like olive shoots around your table.

This is how the man who fears the LORD will be blessed.

May the LORD bless you from Zion, that you may see the  
prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life!

May you see your children's children! **Peace be on Israel!**

**COLLECT:**    Almighty and everlasting God, because You govern  
all things in heaven and on earth, mercifully hear the prayers of  
Your people, and grant us Your peace through all our days;  
through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns  
with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

**READINGS:**    Isaiah 62:1-5    The nations will see Your righteousness.  
1 Corinthians 12:1-11    Spiritual gifts are given to individuals.  
John 2:1-11    Jesus' first miraculous sign in Galilee.

*Welcome to all worshipping with us today!*

Pastor Peter Ziebell, Phone 0407583922.

Email him at [paziebell@gmail.com](mailto:paziebell@gmail.com) or to the church office at [ddaalc@gmail.com](mailto:ddaalc@gmail.com).

**Please notify pastor of anyone who is unwell or in need of a visit.**

## **Isaiah 62:1-5**

<sup>1</sup> For Zion's sake I shall not keep silent and for Jerusalem's sake I shall not remain quiet until her righteousness goes forth like a bright light and her salvation burns brightly like a torch. <sup>2</sup> The nations will see your righteousness, and all the kings your glory. You will be called by **a new name**, which the mouth of the LORD will designate. <sup>3</sup> Then you will be a splendid crown in the hand of the LORD and a royal headband in the palm of your God. <sup>4</sup> You will not be called "Deserted" any longer, and your land will not be called "Desolation" any longer but you will be named "Hephzibah," and your land will be named "Beulah." For the LORD delights in you, and your land will be married. <sup>5</sup> For, as a young man marries a maiden, so your sons will marry you, and your God will rejoice over you as a bridegroom rejoices over his bride.

## **1 Corinthians 12:1-11**

<sup>1</sup> Now concerning spiritual gifts, fellow-Christians, I do not want you to be ignorant. <sup>2</sup> You know that you were Gentiles and were drawn away to dumb idols, however you happened to be led. <sup>3</sup> Therefore, I tell you that no one who is speaking by God's Spirit says, "Cursed be Jesus," and no one can say, "Jesus is the Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.

<sup>4</sup> There are different kinds of charismatic gifts but the same Spirit. <sup>5</sup> There are differing ways of serving but the same Lord. <sup>6</sup> There are different kinds of activities but the same God, who works everything in all of them.

<sup>7</sup> Now the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the common good.

<sup>8</sup> For to one there is given through the Spirit the Word of wisdom, to another the Word of knowledge through the same Spirit, <sup>9</sup> to another faith by the same Spirit, to another charismatic gifts of healing by the one Spirit, <sup>10</sup> to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues and to another the interpretation of tongues. <sup>11</sup> One and the same Spirit works all these things and distributes them to each one individually, as He determines.

## **John 2:1-11**

<sup>1</sup> On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. <sup>2</sup> Jesus and His disciples had also been invited to the wedding.

<sup>3</sup> When the wine was gone, Jesus' mother told Him, "They have no more wine."

<sup>4</sup> Jesus said to her, "Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me?"

My hour has not yet come.”

<sup>5</sup> His mother told the servants, “**Do whatever He tells you!**”

<sup>6</sup> Six stone water-jars were standing there, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing. Each jar held between eighty and one hundred and eighteen litres. <sup>7</sup> Jesus told the servants, “Fill the water-pots with water!”

They filled them up to the top. <sup>8</sup> Then He told them, “Now dip some of it out and take it to the manager of the dinner!”

Then they took it to him. <sup>9</sup> When the manager of the dinner had tasted the water that had been turned into wine and did not know where it had come from, although the servants who had dipped the water out knew, the manager called the bridegroom. <sup>10</sup> He told him, “Everybody else serves his good wine first and, when people have had plenty to drink, then the inferior wine. You have kept the best wine until now.”

<sup>11</sup> Jesus performed this, as the first of His miraculous signs, at Cana in Galilee. He showed His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

## **TURNING WATER INTO WINE**

### **Sermon for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday after the Epiphany 2025**

#### **John 2:1-11**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

The text for our sermon today is our Gospel read before, John 2:1-11: **On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. <sup>2</sup> Jesus and His disciples had also been invited to the wedding. <sup>3</sup> When the wine was gone, Jesus’ mother told Him, “They have no more wine.”**

**<sup>4</sup> Jesus said to her, “Woman, what does your concern have to do with Me? My hour has not yet come.”**

**<sup>5</sup> His mother told the servants, “Do whatever He tells you!”**

**<sup>6</sup> Six stone water-jars were standing there, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing. Each jar held between eighty and one hundred and eighteen litres. <sup>7</sup> Jesus told the servants, “Fill the water-pots with water!”**

**They filled them up to the top. <sup>8</sup> Then He told them, “Now dip some of it out and take it to the manager of the dinner!”**

**Then they took it to him. <sup>9</sup> When the manager of the dinner had tasted the water that had been turned into wine and did not know where it had come**

from, although the servants who had dipped the water out knew, the manager called the bridegroom. <sup>10</sup> He told him, “Everybody else serves his good wine first and, when people have had plenty to drink, then the inferior wine. You have kept the best wine until now.”

<sup>11</sup> Jesus performed this, as the first of His miraculous signs, at Cana in Galilee. He showed His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us through Your truth, Your Word is truth.  
Amen.

Dear friends in Christ,

Three days after He called His first disciples, Jesus went with them to attend a wedding in Cana of Galilee. Jesus’ mother was also at the wedding. We don’t know what connection they had with the wedding except that Jesus’ mother must have been close to the bride and groom to be involved with the serving and to assume some authority over the servants.

While weddings today are usually big events, with festivities going long into the night, according to Jewish custom, the wedding feasts of Jesus’ day typically lasted for a full week. Many guests would abstain from work and share the new family’s joy. You can imagine how much food and drink would be needed for such an event!

At this particular wedding, Mary finds out that they have run out of wine. That’s not good, especially if the wine was to run out early in the festivities. So, she asks her son, Jesus, if He can do anything about this. Of course, she realises that her son has the authority and the power from God to do some pretty amazing things, and she trusts Him to do the right thing in this situation. So, after letting Jesus know what has happened, she tells the servants, “**Do whatever He tells you!**”

That is faith speaking. It shows Mary as a model of faith and a role model for the church. How wonderful it would be if we all had the faith of Mary to say about Jesus, “**Do whatever He tells you!**” And as we know, Jesus turns water into wine. Jesus is no teetotaler. There is nothing inherently wrong or sinful in drinking wine or other alcoholic beverages. It’s not OK to get drunk, but it is OK to drink. The Bible says in Psalm 104 that the Lord gives wine “*to gladden the heart of man*” (v. 15). So wine is a good gift from our Creator to be used and enjoyed, but not to be abused. Proverbs 23:20 warns us to “*not be among drunkards.*”

Jesus turns water into wine, and there you go, no more wine shortage. From this, we see that Jesus *clearly has power from heaven to perform this mighty miracle*. No one else could do this. Jesus, at the very least, is a prophet sent by God. But wait, there's more. Jesus is the very Son of God come in the flesh. A few ago, on Christmas morning, we heard how Jesus is the eternal Son of God, the Second Person of the Trinity, the Word. We heard, "*In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God.*"<sup>2</sup> *He was in the beginning with God.*<sup>3</sup> *Everything was made through Him, and not one thing that was made was made without Him*" (John 1:1-3). So now, as the Word made flesh, the incarnate Son of God has the power of creation at His command, which is demonstrated here in His turning water into wine. But there's more to the story, and it is this: Listen carefully to what John tells us, "**Six stone water-jars were standing there, the kind used by the Jews for ceremonial washing. Each jar held between eighty and one hundred and eighteen litres.**"<sup>7</sup> **Jesus told the servants, "Fill the water-pots with water!"** Then John writes, "**They filled them up to the top.**"

Why did John feel the need to say, "**They filled them up to the top.**" Surely, he didn't have to tell us that much detail. He could have just said, "Now there were some large water jars there, and Jesus turned the water in them into wine." But we're told more than that. There were six of these stone water-jars, each of them holding "**between eighty and one hundred and eighteen litres,**" and Jesus had the servants fill each one of them "**up to the top.**" This filling to the top emphasises how super-abundant the gift is that Jesus is going to give. That's how Jesus does things. Jesus is rich in glory. We acknowledge this in the words of Psalm 145, "*The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their food in due season. You open Your hand; You satisfy the desire of every living thing*" (v. 15-16).

So that's one thing that this mention of the six water-jars tells us. But John gives us even another detail. He says that these six water-jars were used "**by the Jews for ceremonial washing.**"

Why did John mention this? Jesus chooses to use, and John chooses to tell us, that these are water-jars that the Jews use for *ceremonial washing*. For purification, the Jews washed their hands before and after eating and washed the cups, pitchers, and kettles for dinner.<sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Mark 7:3-4

And these are the vessels that Jesus is filling to the top. And then He replaces them with different content, the new wine in old wineskins if you will. Or, in this case, the new wine in old water-jars. Do you get the point? Those old Jewish rites of ceremonial washing are passing away. They pointed ahead to the new and only way of washing through what Jesus provides. Jesus fulfils what the old covenant pointed ahead toward. He brings in the new wine of the new covenant.

Here is our purification: It is in what Jesus provides. It is in what Jesus gives. And what does He give? Jesus gives His own body into death for our purification. Jesus sheds His own blood for our forgiveness. This is how we are made clean. This is how we are forgiven: through Jesus giving Himself for us to be our purification.

Notice how Jesus says at this point, early on in His ministry, “**My hour has not yet come.**” Not now, not yet, not at Cana, but His hour will come. For that is why Jesus has come. He has come to accomplish our cleansing, to accomplish our purification, at the cross. Later in this same gospel, toward the conclusion of His ministry, Jesus will say, “*I have come to this hour. Father, glorify Your name!*” ... *Now My soul is troubled, and what am I to say? ‘Father, save Me from this hour!’? No! For this reason, I have come to this hour... I, if I am lifted up from the earth, shall also draw all people to Myself.”* And then John adds, “*He said this to indicate the kind of death that He was going to die*” (John 12:27-33). In other words, Jesus is about to be lifted up on the cross, and this is why He came, and this is how He will be glorified, and this is therefore His “hour.” It wasn’t yet at Cana, but it will be at the cross, and Cana is a sign pointing us to the cross, where Jesus will provide all the purification the world will ever need, in super-abundance, through His holy blood.

Dear friends, we need the purification that only Jesus can provide. Our sins would condemn us, and we cannot wash them off on our own. The Pharisees tried that, and it didn’t work. Pilate tried that, and it didn’t work. The only cleansing that does work is the purification that comes through Jesus’ blood. In his 1<sup>st</sup> Letter, John writes, “*The blood of Jesus, (God’s) Son, cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us*” (1:7-8). Therefore, we confess our sins and are forgiven and cleansed from all unrighteousness.

What is the result of this cleansing, forgiveness, and purification that only Jesus can provide? The answer is *life and joy*. Think about it. Where do life and joy come together most beautifully in human experience? At a wedding.

Here are two lives joined into one. And a wedding is about the most joyous kind of celebration we have in our experience. It's a great party. There is wine to gladden the heart. And in biblical weddings, the joy and the feasting and the celebrating goes on for days. It's no wonder that Jesus so often in His teaching compares the kingdom of heaven to a wedding feast, a wedding banquet.

And so it is that Jesus chooses to do this miracle of turning water into wine at a wedding. It's a sign. It's the perfect setting for demonstrating the life and the joy that Jesus is bringing through His death and resurrection. Notice that John mentions, "**On the third day, there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee.**" There will come another "third day" when Jesus will rise from the dead, and the celebrating will begin! The celebration continues to this day, and it will never end. Death cannot stop it. Life is the outcome, the life that Jesus bestows on us in super-abundance.

So come to the party! You are invited. It's the wedding feast of the Lamb in His kingdom, which will have no end. This party will go on not just for a week but for an eternity. Jesus saves the best wine for last, and He gives it free of charge, always more than we can measure. Amen.

The peace of God which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.

## PRAYER FOR THE SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

Almighty and ever-living God, You have given the light of Your truth in Jesus Christ that we may be rescued from the darkness of sin and unbelief, and have life in His name. We thank You that You have made us alive through faith in Him, and lavished on us so many gifts of Your grace. Grant that we may treasure in our hearts the truth that Jesus, Your unique Son, is our revealer of Your will, our sacrificial Lamb, our Messiah, our King, and the Son of Man, who was rejected, crucified, and rose again for us.

Heavenly Father, make us who are Your people shining lights in this world's darkness. Send out preachers and teachers of Your Word, that many more may know Your mercy and love in the gift of Your Son and His Gospel of grace and forgiveness. Strengthen all of us in the fellowship of Your Church to join hands in love and zeal to do the work set before us. We praise you for Your various spiritual gifts. Grant that we may use them for the common good of the members of Christ's body. Make us loyal in serving our Lord, patient in every trouble, and joyful in our promised hope. Make us eager to hold on to what is good, to

help our fellow Christians, and be ready to share with all people in need. Free us from the deceptive designs of Satan and every kind of falsehood, and give us the ability to distinguish false spirits. Grant that we who have been called out of darkness into Christ's marvellous light may in this way proclaim His saving love and power.

Bestow a special measure of Your grace on our homes.

Give stability, peace, and tranquillity to the nations of the earth. Deliver people everywhere from famine, disease, fire, flood, storm, earthquake, and every danger. In every test that You send, help all people to lift up their eyes to You, and to know Your power and care.

We ask Your mercy on all who are in any special need of body or soul. Show them the comfort of Your love; give them hope instead of despair, joy and gladness instead of grief, and a song of praise instead of sorrow.

Save us all from the dangers that surround us. Defend us, in body and soul, until that moment when we see the ascending and descending angels linking earth and heaven permanently, when You call us from this life to live in Your presence for ever. All this we ask in the name of Jesus, Your Son. Amen.

### **Article: What is a Progressive Christian?**

What do you think of the word "progressive." As a Christian, I like to think of myself as progressive. I'm generally in favour of progress. Progressive reminds me of growth, of overcoming obstacles, of being accepting of others despite possible differences. After all, it's being progressive that changed our country from a horse and buggy country to having bitumen roads (even if they have potholes!) and highways with 100-110km/hr speed limits.

But, there is another use of the word progressive that raises some flags! Sometimes, I hear the term "Progressive Christianity." What does this mean? Here is a brief definition: "Progressive Christianity is a recent movement... that focuses strongly on social justice and environmentalism and often includes a revisionist (or non-traditional) view of the Scriptures."

Uh-oh! "Non-traditional view of the Scriptures!" What does that mean? Well, in my research regarding progressive Christianity, it appears that it means exactly what it sounds like it means. Progressive Christianity looks at the Bible



not as an inspired book (2 Timothy 3:16) but as a book loaded with fanciful stories, and (sometimes!) insightful lessons and parables, but it is not inspired or infallible. It merely contains God's Word, but isn't God Word, which in my opinion makes it almost useless, for how do you know God's Word from man's word?

And there's another thing about this definition that bothers me. Now, understand that I am totally in favour of justice. And I have it on good authority that God is also. Psalm 89 describes the Lord this way: "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Your throne. Mercy and truth go before You" (v.14). So, if God is interested in justice, I should also be. And I am. I am interested in taking care of our environment as God is also (Genesis 1:28- 31). I don't throw rubbish in the street and am in favour of protecting endangered species, etc. But something is wrong.

In this definition, where is the Gospel? Where is our concern about saving people from hell and opening the doors of heaven to sinners through the blood of Jesus Christ? It seems to be either missing or on the low priority list of things that "progressive Christianity" is interested in. And that is a BIG problem for me!

St. Paul, in his letter to the Galatians, who were having major problems with false teachers, wrote this: "So now I say again: If anyone is telling you any other gospel than the one that you have received, let him be anathema!" (Gal. 1:9).

I have to say, while I like being "progressive," I am not "progressive" in the manner of modern "Progressive Christianity." Progressive Christianity does not really seem to be particularly Christian. It has a low view of the Scriptures (the Bible contains God's Word, but isn't God's Word in its entirety) and the Gospel (Good News) it proclaims is largely Christless with its focus on temporal justice and environmentalism.

So, what is a Progressive Christian? It seems to me that such people see Christ primarily as a social activist and environmentalist, not the One who died for the sins of the world and, through His Word and Sacraments, brings forgiveness and eternal life to all who believe in Him.

Call yourself a Progressive Christian if you wish, but stay faithful to God's Word and the importance of Christ, not just temporal issues. "Dearly loved people, although I have been very eager to keep writing to you about our common salvation, I have found it necessary to write to you and urge you to contend for the faith that has once for all been delivered to God's holy people" (Jude 1:3).

## Children's Message:

Picture in your mind a desert and a playground. Where would you rather be? I would much rather be in the playground. The desert has nothing in it to play with, but the playground has everything. Things like swings and a slide. Again, picture in your mind an empty toy box and a box full of toys. Which would you rather have? Of course, you would rather have a box full of toys. What good is a toy box with nothing in it?

Today's First Bible Reading from Isaiah gives us a picture of what our lives are like because of our sin. Sin is the bad things we do. Sin goes against the very good life that God gave us. In fact, sin separates us from God, messes up our world and our relationships, and leaves us with nothing good. Isaiah says it's as if our life is desolate, like this desert with nothing in it, and forsaken, which means we're all alone and forgotten. But Isaiah gives us hope! He points us to Jesus, our Saviour.

We know that Jesus came to die on the cross to take the punishment for our sins so we can be forgiven. That means that instead of having nothing and being nothing, in Jesus, we have everything! We have God's love and a very good relationship with Him again. We are everything to Him.



With Jesus, we have everything we need for a beautiful life now, but he's saving the best for last. When we get to heaven, everything will be perfect, with no more sin or tears or pain. Does that sound like a place you'd like to be? Me too!

*Thank you, Jesus, for turning our nothing into everything good. Amen.*

## WEEKLY ANNOUNCEMENTS

<b>26 January 3 Epiphany</b>	<b>2 February 4 Epiphany</b>	<b>9 February 5 Epiphany</b>
8.30am OAK LR 9.00am TMBA LR 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am MARBURG HC	8.30am OAK LR <b>9.00am TMBA HC</b> 9.00am GRN LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am LOWOOD LR	<b>9.00am OAK HC</b> (GRN to attend OAK) 9.00am TMBA LR 9.30am AUB LR 9.00am LOWOOD LR
<b>Sunday, 19 January</b>		
READINGS: Isaiah 62:1-5;                      1 Corinthians 12:1-11;                      John 2:1-11		
HYMNS: 40 45 47 (84 840) 509                      OAKEY: 276 45 47 84 840 509		
<b>Sunday, 26 January</b>		
READINGS: Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10;                      1 Corinthians 12:12-31a;                      Luke 4:16-30		
HYMNS: 272 217 785 (84 364) 267		

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGES IN FEBRUARY TO ACCOMMODATE CONFIRMATION DAY SERVICES:

### **Sunday 2 February**

8.30am OAK LR  
9.00am TMBA HC Confirmation  
9.00am GRN LR  
9.30am AUB LR  
9.00am LOWOOD LR

### **Sunday 9 February**

9.00am OAK HC Confirmation  
(GRN to attend OAK)  
9.00am TMBA LR  
9.30am AUB LR  
9.00am LOWOOD LR

### **Sunday 16 February**

8.30am OAK LR  
9.00am TMBA LR  
9.00am GRN LR  
9.30am AUB LR  
9.00am MARBURG HC  
Confirmation (TBC)

### **Sunday 23 February**

8.30am OAK LR  
9.00am TMBA LR  
9.00am GRN LR  
9.00am AUB HC Confirmation  
9.0am MARBURG LR

## **BIBLE STUDIES for JANUARY**

Wednesday the 22<sup>nd</sup>, 7.30pm Greenwood.

Thursday the 23<sup>rd</sup>, 10.00am Lowood.

Sunday the 26<sup>th</sup>, after service at Marburg.

Friday the 31<sup>st</sup>, 7.30pm Oak/Aub at Aubigny.

Due to the confirmation service, TMBA's Bible Study will held on 23 February.

## **CONGREGATIONAL AGM'S:**

Sunday, 9 February, 10.45am AUB

Sunday, 16 Febuary, 2.00pm TMBA (TBC)

Sunday, 23 February, 10.45 am GRN