

WELCOME TO...

The Presbyterian Church of  
Saint David  
January 17, 2016

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# ABUNDANCE

## IN THE BACKGROUND

**Gathering:** *God of grace upon grace, you give us in an abundance the means of grace whereby we might come to you – a word to guide us, a prayer to strengthen us, a sacrament to full us. We thank you for every gift in abundance. Fill us now so we might have an extravagance to offer to others. We ask this in the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns for ever and ever. Amen.*

Hymn: You that know the Lord is gracious

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Prayer of Confession: *With joy draw waters from the well of salvation! Forgiveness is real! Trust it and share it; forgive as you have been forgiven. Jesus said: "There is joy in heaven over one sinner who repents." Truly, God is our salvation we shall trust and not be afraid! The peace of our Saviour Jesus Christ be with you all. And also with you (we continue in prayer)*

**John 2:1-11** On the third day there was a wedding in Cana of Galilee, and the mother of Jesus was there. Jesus and his disciples had also been invited to the wedding. When the wine gave out, the mother of Jesus said to him, "They have no wine." And Jesus said to her, "Woman, what concern is that to you and to me? My hour has not yet come." His mother said to the servants, "Do whatever he tells you." Now standing there were six stone water jars for the Jewish rites of purification, each holding twenty or thirty gallons. Jesus said to them, "Fill the jars with water." And they filled them up to the brim. He said to them, "Now draw some out, and take it to the chief steward." So they took it. When the steward tasted the water that had become wine, and did not know where it came from (though the servants who had drawn the water knew), the steward called the bridegroom and said to him, "Everyone serves the good wine first, and then the inferior wine after the guests have become drunk. But you have kept the good wine until now." Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee, and revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him.

**Continuing the Conversation:** Kate Huey

*Abundance is quietly in the background of this scene, in the overflowing gift of six stone jars of wine when just one might have been enough. The jars themselves are "special," because they hold the water used in the religious purification rituals; they're large, too, each one holding 15-25 gallons, and they're "filled to the brim," Ann M. Svennungsen writes. "And from these big and special and brim-filled jars came the best-tasting wine served at the wedding." This wine, like overflowing grain and oil, are "signs of a golden age," highlighting the importance of timing, and the guests, Svennungsen says, know something important is happening when such wonderful wine flows at the end, not the beginning, of the celebration. But she also observes that the real*

*human thirst, like our deepest hunger, is for the life God offers us, the close, living relationship with the One who loves us. It often seems that we are so spiritually hungry and thirsty that we fill our lives with material "stuff" in a futile attempt to satisfy those needs, and we even shape a distorted gospel, a prosperity gospel, that says that God actually wants us to have lots of stuff. Over-consumption is not the kind of abundance that Jesus shares, or the kind that God gave us at creation, and it invariably and ironically leaves us sitting hungry in the midst of excess, longing for the abundance of God, thirsting for God's grace. It makes sense, then, that Ernest Hess sees "drunkenness" as more than just a temporary state of having drunk too much wine, but "as a metaphor for all the ways we dull our physical and spiritual perceptions." There are myriad forms of "wine" in our world, and they all hold the power to hinder us on our spiritual path.*

Shining a light on Mary's role in this story, what do you read between the lines about her words and actions in Cana? What hidden abundance lies within our sacred traditions, ready to be transformed, in this hour, like the water in the great stone jars?

Hymn: May God's love (1and 4) 582

***A Creed*** We believe in the God of Christ Jesus the Source of abundance, full of grace and truth. We believe in the extravagant God who turns the other cheek, goes the second mile, turns water into the best wine, brings healing with his every touch, and who welcomes a woman's gift of love as she fills the house with unforgettable fragrance. We believe in the faith-full God of Jesus Christ, who sweated blood in an Olive Grove, and kept the faith to the very end. We believe in the God of Jesus Christ, the Source of abundance wherever we turn and no matter what we do. Amen ~ *adapted from Bruce Prever*

Hymn: I'm gonna live (1-2) 647

**Invitation:** This is the table, not of the Church, but of God. It is to be made ready for those who love God and who want to love God more. So, come, you who have much faith and you who have little, you who have been here often and you who have not been for a long time, you who have tried to follow and you who

have failed. Come, not because I invite you: it is God, and it is God's will that you who want God should meet God here.

Hymn: I come with Joy (1-3) 530

Prayer of Thanksgiving: *Rejoice in the Lord always. Shout out his name. For God is with us. Our God is with us. The God of our salvation in whom alone we trust. Rejoice in the Lord always Shout out his name* (we continue in prayer) *Pour out your Spirit upon the gifts of remembrance and the people who come from the four corners of life. Every time we eat the bread, we are strengthened to take the gifts from your garden of plenty, to share with all who hunger. Every time we take a sip of the wine of hope, our eyes are opened and we see the marginalized in the shadows and go out to gather them up and bring them to your table.*

Hymn: I come with Joy (4-5) 530

## Communion

**Prayer following communion** (together)  
Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your spirit to give ourselves for others. In the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

Hymn: Lord, dismiss us 468

May the one who turned water into wine turn our life into a celebration of love. May we find abundance wherever we go enabling us to share with all. May we find strength in the journey and joy in the struggle, through the grace of God, Amen.

## Week of Prayer for Christian Unity Services – 12:15-12:45 pm

**TUESDAY** January 19, St. Matthews, Rev. Paul Friesen (preacher)

**WEDNESDAY** January 20, St. David's, Archbishop Anthony Mancini (preacher)

**THURSDAY** January 21, First Baptist, Rev. Kenn Stright (preacher)