

## Welcome to written worship for January 16<sup>th</sup> 2022



As you prepare for worship, find a comfortable, still place and pause; recognising God's presence with us.

### **Hymn: Now thank we all our God StF 81, HP 566, MP 486**

And so we pray...

Abundant Creator,  
you are a wonderful God,  
loving and kind,  
open-handed and generous  
beyond all expectation.  
When we call,  
you listen and respond with love.  
Lord Jesus,  
when you walked on earth,  
you reflected that love and generosity.  
As you saw need or pain,  
you responded  
beyond all expectation.  
When we call,  
you listen and respond with love.  
Holy Spirit,  
you are here now with us,  
giving each one of us gifts and skills;  
nudging and inspiring us  
to use what we have generously,  
beyond all expectation.  
When we call,  
you listen and respond with love.  
Amen.

Lord, you are so generous to us,  
but we do not always reflect your generosity to others.  
For the times we have been self-centred and mean-minded, we are sorry.  
For the times we have placed ourselves above others, we are sorry.  
For the times we have not been witnesses of your abundant generosity, we are  
sorry.....

Because of the generosity of a loving God,  
and the willingness of a loving Son,  
our sins are forgiven.  
Amen. Thanks be to God.

Lord, you took ordinary water and changed it into wine.  
As you did so, you revealed your glory.  
We are ordinary people.  
Take our ordinary lives:  
Change them so that they reveal your glory.  
Take our ordinary actions:  
Change them so that they reveal your glory.  
Take our ordinary words:  
Change them so that they reveal your glory.  
We are ordinary people.  
Take us and change us so that we reveal your glory. Amen.

Tables are laden with good things,  
O taste the peace and joy he brings.  
He'll fill you up with love divine,  
He'll turn your water into wine.

The hungry heart He satisfies,  
Offers the poor His paradise.  
Now hear all heaven and earth applaud  
The amazing goodness of the Lord.

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Bible reading: Psalm 36: 5 – 10

Light and water are constant images of new life in the stories of Jesus, and in the psalms. Here they are used to show the extremes of God's generosity, priceless love as great as the skies, justice that goes deeper than anyone can see.

**Hymn: Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven StF 83, H&P 13, MP 560**

Bible reading: John 2: 1 – 11 Jesus turns water into wine

Background information

The idea of honour in Jesus' time was very different from today. If the wine ran out at a wedding, it was a real disaster. If the family were unable to meet their obligations of hospitality, they would have been publicly shamed, their standing in the community permanently affected.

Here we see Jesus demonstrating compassion for the family's social and emotional well-being. In response to his mother's request, he performs his first miracle, turning water into wine and revealing his glory. This shows Jesus'

concern for the details of people's everyday lives. It also offers an interesting glimpse into Jesus' relationship with his mother.

The servants noticed that something extraordinary had happened, as the water was transformed into wine. But the steward who tasted the wine did not notice who was responsible for it.

'On the third day' (John 2.1) hints at the resurrection. From the water jars comes the new wine of the kingdom. Jesus' miracle brings joy, enhances the celebration, and anticipates the heavenly banquet.

## Reflection

This reading prompts questions about transformation, both in our own lives and our communities. Where do we see God doing extraordinary things in our everyday ordinary lives? Where are the everyday miracles and how is God transforming us into something beautiful?

Our prayers of intercession select verses from our bible readings to guide us into our prayers for others.

Let us pray:

*"Your love, O Lord, reaches to the heavens, your faithfulness to the skies" Psalm 36:5*

Lord, we ask that our places of worship and our own homes may evidence your love and demonstrate your faithfulness to others. We pray that, through us as individuals and as worshipping communities, the generosity of your love and the constancy of your faithfulness will be celebrated and shared with others who are not yet aware of your greatness. We thank you that your love is not confined to any groups of people but is freely available to all.

*"For with you is the fountain of life: in your light we see light" Psalm 36:9*

Lord, we ask that where there are situations in the world of darkness, your light will shine. Where there is war and suffering, famine and the ravages of fire and flood, that you will bring light to darkened minds and hearts and hope to those in despair. We pray for those engaged in peace making or rescue operations, today. That they may be enabled to bring light out of the darkness, peace out of conflict and relief to those who suffer.

*"His mother said to the servants, 'Do whatever He tells you'." John 2:5*

Lord we ask that we will be ready to serve you. We ask that you grant wisdom to those in leadership to identify the projects, campaigns and causes which can make a difference and demonstrate your love and faithfulness in the world.

We ask that you grant wisdom to us, as your disciples, to identify individuals who need our help and what is the best way to demonstrate your generous love.

*“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’.*

*John 2:10*

Lord, as we consider your limitless love and amazing faithfulness, we bring to you the concerns that are upon our hearts, knowing that we come to one who wants only our good.

We come in the silence of our own hearts and lift to you our concerns as we think about:

What we hear and read in the news .....

Our country .....

Our city .....

Our community .....

Our church family .....

Our family and friends .....

We ask all these prayers and the prayers through your son Jesus Christ.  
Amen.

We pray the Lord’s Prayer, in whatever language and version comes most naturally to us.

Our Father...

**Hymn: StF 239 Sent by the Lord am I**

God of glory,  
You speak to us through your written word,  
And share our lives through your living Word.  
Send us out so that our lives and words speak of your glory  
In all that we do and say this week.  
Amen.