Sunday 1st November 2026

The Joy of the Kingdom

John2:1-11*, *Psalm 104*, *Ephesians 3

The wedding in Cana shows the joy of God's Kingdom, where Jesus is present, our needs are met, and life is made new.

John takes us somewhere we might not expect, where we discover who Jesus is.

Jesus is not in a palace. Not in a courtroom. Not even in a place of worship.

He is in a wedding.

Guests sat at tables, sharing food, talking, and laughing. Jesus was there with his mother and his disciples.

In our series, ***"How God Became King"***, this picture matters. When Jesus begins to show what God's Kingdom looks like, he does so at a wedding celebration.

But then something went wrong. There was a huge problem.

First of all, the story tells us that…

1. God joined the celebration

Jesus was invited. He accepted the invitation and made time to be there.

Sometimes we think God is interested only in religious or spiritual parts of life: our behaviour or responsibilities. These things matter deeply. But this story reminds us that our happiness matters too.

Friendship matters. Shared meals matter. The moments when people come together and enjoy each other's company matter.

Psalm 104 gives thanks to God for the things that sustain and enrich life: food from the earth, bread that strengthens us, and wine that gladdens the human heart. Later, the psalm describes the whole living world depending on God's generous care.

The God who gives life also gives reasons to enjoy it and moments to celebrate.

But something happened! Imagine the worry behind those few words: *“There is no more wine.”*

A special day meant for happiness was about to become a day remembered for embarrassment.

Mary noticed. She brought the problem to Jesus.

Jesus was invited to a joyful celebration. However, he entered a celebration that had become a nightmare. It shows us that he is present in both life's happiness and its worries.

This story tells us that Jesus wants to join us in at least three moments of life:

- In our worship, prayers, and work;

- In our struggles and suffering as well;

- In our moments of joy, pleasure, and laughter.

And the story tells us that Jesus is present…

2. When what we have is not enough

“They have no more wine.”

People were terrified because the most important thing in the celebration, the wine, had run out. But no, the most important was there: Jesus.

We know what it is to run short.

Our patience runs short. Our energy runs short. Money does not stretch far enough. We keep caring for someone, but wonder how much longer we can manage.

Sometimes even prayer feels difficult. We have said the same words again and again, and we no longer know what else to say. We run out of words.

Mary did not offer Jesus an explanation or a solution. She simply told him what was missing.

We can pray like that.

“Jesus, I am tired.”

“I am worried about my family.”

“I do not know what to do.”

And if we are running out of anything, we must remember that, however important these things are, we have Jesus, and he is with us all the time, and he is powerful.

Jesus’ reply to Mary sounded surprising, even distant. He said that his hour had not yet come. His purpose was greater than anyone at the wedding could understand.

Yet Mary left it to him. She told the servants, *“Do whatever he tells you.”*

Six large stone jars stood nearby, used for washing as part of religious practice. Jesus told the servants to fill them with water.

They filled them to the brim.

Then he told them to take some to the person overseeing the feast.

Somewhere in that simple sequence, the water became wine.

And not merely enough to avoid embarrassment. There was a remarkable abundance, and the wine was good.

We need to be careful here. This story does not promise that every shortage will disappear if we pray. Faithful people still face unpaid bills, illness, loneliness and grief.

But it does show us someone to whom we can bring our need.

In Ephesians 3, Paul prays that people will be strengthened within and come to know the breadth and depth of Christ's love. Then he praises God, who can do far more than we ask or imagine.

Paul's prayer in Ephesians begins with strength and love.

God's generosity is not measured only by changed circumstances. We may discover it in the strength to keep going, unexpected help, or people willing to stay beside us.

And sometimes we become part of that answer for someone else.

I'm sure Jesus' miracle at the celebration blew people's minds. Not only because of the miracle itself, but because it was a revelation outside the temple, with no religious ceremony around it. But there is more to come:

3. This miracle is a sign of what is coming

John calls what happened at Cana a **"sign".**

A sign draws our attention to something beyond itself.

The wine matters. The family's relief matters. But John wants us to see who Jesus is.

Through this act of quiet generosity, Jesus made something of God's greatness visible. His disciples began to trust him.

Long before this wedding, Isaiah described a feast God would prepare for all peoples: rich food and good wine, freely shared.

But the promise goes further. God will destroy death and wipe away tears from every face.

That is the future this wedding points to. A joyful future.

The guests in this celebration probably left the feast and returned to their realities.

But in Jesus, they tasted what God has in store for them and for us: life restored, people welcomed, and joy no longer threatened by loss.

This helps us understand what it means to call Jesus King.

His greatness is revealed in generous care. He notices a need that many guests may never even realise existed.

Following him means learning to notice too.

Who is struggling quietly? Who needs company? Who could we welcome to our table?

We cannot remove every sorrow. But we can share what we have.

At Cana, those great things began quietly: a worried mother, willing servants, jars filled with water, and Jesus among them.

The celebration continued.

And his disciples saw reason to trust him.

Rev. Dráusio Gonçalves minister@dundeenortheastchurch.org.uk