

Second Sunday after the Epiphany
January 19, 2025

Prelude Christopher A. McCroskey
(As the Prelude begins, prayerfully prepare your hearts and minds for worship.)

Greetings, Announcements & Prayer

*Call To Worship
Look for miracles!
Jesus walks on the water.
Look for miracles!
Jesus turns the water into wine.
Look to Jesus!
Rivers of living water will flow from his heart.

*Opening Hymn *"Gather Us In"* TFWS 2236

*Opening Prayer
**God of wonder and possibility,
We seek your grace. We long for your miracles. Help us to believe. Help us to be your children,
trusting always in your healing love, even when we feel alone, afraid and unworthy. Give us the
courage to use our gifts for your purpose, to do your will and work in this world; for we pray in
the name of the One who is the Savior of the world, the One who calms the sea, Jesus the Christ,
Amen.**

*Psalter Reading Psalm 36:5-10 771

*Affirmation of Faith *"The Nicene Creed"* 880

*Gloria Patri 70
**Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now and
ever shall be, world without end. Amen. Amen.**

Passing of the Peace: *Let us greet one another with words of love and peace.*

"Let the Children Come!"
(Those 3 years of age through 8 years of age may go to Children's Church.)

Anthem *"Softly and Tenderly"* Choir

Scripture Lessons Isaiah 62:1-5 Page 656 (O.T.)
1 Corinthians 12:1-11 Page 164 (N.T.)

*Gospel Reading John 2:1-11 Page 90 (N.T.)

Homily *"Signs and Miracles"* Rev. Darlene L. Kelley

*Hymn *"Blessed Assurance"* 369

Pastoral Prayer
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. And
lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the
power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.**

Presentation of Tithes & Offerings

Offertory Christopher A. McCroskey

*Doxology 95

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him all creatures here below; praise him
above ye heavenly host; praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

*Closing Hymn *"There's Something About That Name"* 171

*Dismissal With Benediction

*Benediction Response *"May the Lord, Mighty God, Bless and Keep You"* Choir

*Please Stand As You Are Able

Leading in Worship Today

Pastor: Rev. Darlene L. Kelley AV Director: Marie Stiles
Music Director: Christopher A. McCroskey AV Assistant: Chris Derrick
Liturgist: Dan Greshel Time Together: Joyce Robinson; Slone Taylor

VISITORS ARE WELCOME in the service of worship! Please make use of the visitor's tags (located in the pew backs) to help us better welcome you as a visitor to Trinity this morning.

Today's Lovely Flowers are given to the Glory of God.

“AS MEMBERS OF THIS CONGREGATION, WE WILL FAITHFULLY PARTICIPATE IN ITS MINISTRIES BY OUR PRAYERS...

Hilda Edwards	Patsy Shuler	Marilyn Lloyd	Tom Lloyd	Ruth Frady	Christopher McCroskey
Kathy Aiello	Diane Muszynski	Latson Lewis	English Pearcy	Ray Frady	Hannah Glanz
Kaye Floyd	Libby Strickland				

Shut-Ins: Gillett Hipp; Linda Maloch; Jean Raynor

Family and Friends: **James Leonard** (previous coworker of Mark Lewis); **Kathleen Varnadore** (Ted & Ruth Frady’s neighbor); **Paul Frenzel** (friend of Chris Derrick); **Sissy Henry** (former member of Trinity), **Sean & Tucker Smith** (cousins of Darlene Kelley); **Sonny Hardee** (brother of Lynn Martin); **Colby Martin** (son of Donna Muszynski); **Sonya & Wayne Dooley** (daughter and son-in-law of Joyce Robinson); **Lynne Powell** (friend of the Ballentines and Branhams); **Bobby Johnson** (friend of Billy Pearson); **Rev. Donna Eidson** (former pastor of Trinity); **Ima Thibodeaux** (friend of Christopher McCroskey); **Keith Jordan** (nephew of John & Kay Jordan); **Deanne Summer** (partner of Martha Cooke); **Ann Cullum** (friend of Bob Strickland); **Malcolm Skipper** (grandfather of Matthew Skipper); **Bryan Collard** (brother-in-law of Mary Sue Lewis); ; **Charlyn McNeill, Michael McNeill** (sister & brother of Mary Sue Lewis); **Missy Abrams** (stepdaughter of Lissa Abrams); **Mary Davis** (daughter of Bob & Libby Strickland); **Chuck Hardee** (cousin of Lynn Martin); **Bruce Beatty, Sandra Hornsby, Gloria Erd** (friends of Lynn Martin); **Pearl Geddens** (mother of Tom Geddens); **Ross Deal** (grandson of Mary Kamoroff); **Nancy Wilson** (friend of Jeanette Hornsby); **David Turner** (brother of Pam Turner); **Ernie & Betsey Hendrix, Chip Mixon** (friends of Tommy Gleaton); **Ron & Janet Walker** (friends of Tommy & Chris Gleaton); **Merit Takach** (friend of Joyce and Brent Robinson); **James Boggs** (father of Claire Boggs); **Bill Areheart** (friend of Bonnie Ramsey); **Robert Bradley** (Business Associate of Simon Ross); **Monnie Tiller** (friend of Chris Derrick); **Adrin & Linda Hargett** (stepfather and stepmom of Christopher McCroskey); **Haidee Baehr** (friends of Ruth Frady); **Denise Paul, Scott & Karen Nelson** (cousins of Gale Frady); **Dan Conner, Max Johnson** (friends of Gale Frady); **Janet Beck** (friend of Jo Ann Heiting); **Adam Lavender** (son of Phil Lavender)

If you have a friend or family member on the Prayer List, we ask you to please keep us updated. If no word is received, we will trust that our prayers have been answered and remove the name. To update us, please call the office or e-mail us at trinityumcwc@sc.rr.com.

OUR PRESENCE ...

In-Person Attendance 01/12 SS: 11 Worship: 33

OUR GIFTS ...

General Fund 01/12 \$ 9,865.33

OUR SERVICE ...

OUR WITNESS.”

Upcoming Events

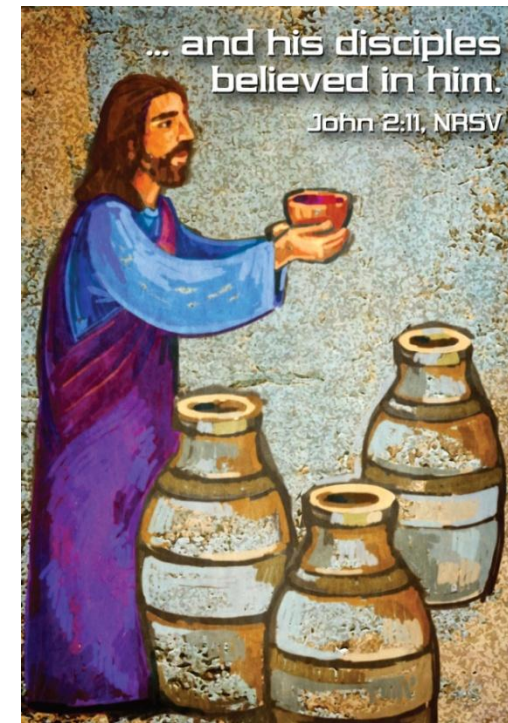
- 01/20** Exercise Class, 10:30 a.m.
Hot Topics & Cold Beer, 7 p.m.
- 01/22** Choir, 6 p.m.
T.a.G., 7 p.m.
- 01/23** Exercise, 10:30 a.m.
GLIA Articles Due
- 01/24** Office Closed
- 01/25** FH Reserved, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.



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HOT TOPICS COLD BEER

Monday, January 20

The group will meet at WECO on Monday, January 20, at 7 p.m. If you have any questions, please see Slone Taylor or Patsy Boggs. If you are interested in attending and would like email or text message updates, please email Slone Taylor at Slonetaylor21@yahoo.com or text her your cell phone number to (803) 397-7294 and she will add you to her list.



Sunday, January 26

Taste of Trinity, our church-wide covered dish luncheon, will be held on **Sunday, January 26**. Don't miss this wonderful opportunity to share great food and fellowship!

Please Note: The Ministry Team will meet immediately following Taste of Trinity.



**Safe Sanctuary Training
Sunday, February 16
Following Worship**

**Valentine's Party at The Pines
Saturday, February 22
2 p.m.**

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Trinity UMC
January 19, 2025
Rev. Darlene L. Kelley

Signs and Miracles

The secular New Year started at the beginning of the month on January 1st. The Christian year started at the beginning of Advent on December 1st, and this Advent we began Year C, Luke's Year.

Yet, this morning the lectionary makes an exception, and we're reading from John's Gospel. Poor John doesn't rate his own lectionary year. Matthew has Year A. Mark gets Year B. Next week, the pattern for Year C picks up again with Luke, and for the most part, we spend the rest of the year with him. John comes and goes, making cameo appearances and important points throughout, as our Christian year unfolds, but John doesn't get his own year. Truth be told, John's been a bit of a black sheep in the Gospel family since the beginning.

Straight off, you may notice that John stands alone. Often called "the Fourth Gospel", John isn't part of the trio, like triplets dressed alike, or good brothers backing one another up in a fight, the three Synoptic Gospels—Matthew, Mark and Luke—all view the world through the same lens. Indeed, the word "synoptic" is a Greek word meaning "syn"—together and "optic" meaning sight or view, so Matthew, Mark and Luke all have the *same view*.

Because he marches to the beat of a different drummer, John was dismissed by some of the early Church Fathers as too different to be included in the canon. Yet, the Gospel was saved by an early Bishop and leading theologian, Irenaeus, who associated the Gospel with the Apostle John, son of Zebedee, one of the original Twelve, the Apostle Jesus loved, and so sealed the Gospel's apostolic authority and thus its authority in general.

Nevertheless, though he made it in the Bible, Brother John, brilliant but certainly different, doesn't get as much attention as those other three, but he does shine throughout the year on days like today. Today John introduces us to the first miracle Jesus performs (that we hear about) turning the water into wine at the wedding of Cana.

This first miracle is one of seven big miracles or "signs" Jesus performs in John's Gospel, and it's one of the reasons John's Gospel is often called *The Book of Signs*.

According to the New Testament scholar, Mark Strauss:

The miracles are called signs because they not only demonstrate Jesus' power, but also point to who Jesus is and provoke faith in him. The signs are often linked in some way to Jesus' teaching. For example, Jesus feeds the multitude with loaves and fish, and then teaches that he is the true manna from heaven, the bread of life.

The first sign, turning water into wine at Cana of Galilee illustrates their purpose. The miracle, occurring as it does at a wedding celebration, carries symbolic significance. In the Old Testament, God's salvation is described as a great party—the “messianic banquet” that God will throw for all people. It will be “a banquet of aged wine—the best of meats and the finest of wines,” symbolizing God's final salvation, when “he will destroy the shroud [of death] that enfolds all peoples” and will “swallow up death forever”.

Professor Strauss concludes: By turning water into wine, Jesus indicates that God's final salvation is arriving through his words and deeds. At the end of the episode, the author identifies this as “the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory; and his disciples believed in him”. The purpose of the sign is to reveal Jesus' glory and to provoke faith in him. ¹

As this morning's lesson explains: John 2:11: “ Jesus did this, the first of his signs, in Cana of Galilee and revealed his glory, and his disciples believed in him.”

The Book of Signs, John's Gospel

And what a nice first miracle to start the Gospel—turning water into wine. And not just any wine. John 2:10 *“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.”*

John 2:5 *His mother said to the servants, “Do whatever he tells you.”*

Now standing there were six stone water jars...

According to my trusty New Interpreter's Bible commentary:

The jars from which the new wine is drawn were filled to the brim. Since each jar had a large capacity (NRSV 20 to 30 gallons), Jesus turned an astonishing quantity of water into wine. It works against the story to try to explain away the magnitude of the transformation because its extravagance is at the heart of the miracle. The extravagant proportions here anticipate the extravagant proportions of the feeding of the five thousand (John 6:1-4) (another “sign” or miracle in John's Gospel). In both instances, the reader is shown the superabundance of gifts available through Jesus. ²

Say that quietly to yourself until it sinks in...the *superabundance of gifts available through Jesus....* Expect Miracles...big ones....

¹Mark L. Strauss, “John, The Gospel of the Eternal Son Who Reveals the Father: The Maverick Gospel, Sept. 23, 2017; bibleproject.com.

² The New Interpreter's Bible Commentary, Vol. IX, page 538.

God's grace is everywhere.

My trusted commentary continues: *The transformation of water into wine is significant because, in showing for the unprecedented grace of Jesus, it reveals the glory of Jesus and anticipates his ultimate moment of glorification, his death, resurrection and ascension.*

The extravagance of Jesus' act, the superabundance of the wine, suggests the unlimited gifts that Jesus makes available. Jesus' ministry begins with an extraordinary act of grace, a first glimpse of the "greater things" (Jesus mentions in the first chapter of the Gospel 1:50-51). This story invites the reader to share in the wonder of this miracle, to enter into the joyous celebration made possible by Jesus' gift. The story invites the reader to see what the disciples see, that in the abundance and graciousness of Jesus' gift, one catches a glimpse of the identity and character of God. It is no wonder, the commentary concludes, that the early Christian community confessed "from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace."(1:16) ³

In the abundance and graciousness of Jesus' gift, one catches a glimpse of the identity and character of God....from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.

Trust in God's grace. Expect miracles, for we have seen the *superabundance of gifts available through Jesus.*

I want to end this morning by sharing with you the deep gratitude I feel for the superabundance of grace I've received.

Perhaps, my recent long train rides gave me time for reflection, but I want to testify this morning—God has been good to me. The times have not always been good, but God has always been good, and God has been good to me.

I've seen God's grace in the most unexpected places and in the most unexplained ways, some big, earth-shaking ways, and some ways as slight as the smile on the face of a stranger, but God's grace is everywhere.

And I have been privileged, very privileged throughout my life to feel that grace, to see and taste and hear that grace. The fact that I am here is a testimony to that grace.

So, look for it. You will see it. It's there. It's everywhere. God's grace, God's love, superabundant. Expect miracles, for we have a *superabundance of gifts available through Jesus and from his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace.*

Amen.

Will you pray with me?

God of amazing grace,

Help us to see your grace, to trust in your love, and to live into the fullness and bounty you promise, for we pray in the name of the Word became flesh,
Jesus the Christ. Amen.