Dear friends
Sorry this is a bit early – I'm a bit tied up over the next couple of days. I'm most grateful to Judith for completing this week's virtual service so promptly.

We look forward greatly to welcoming Guy Martin-Scott, who will be licensed as our new Rector on Monday 17th. Please hold him and his family in your prayers.

As an opening hymn, Judith has suggested 'Immortal love, forever full'. Here it is sung to Bishopthorpe (with soaring descants) by the choir of Trinity College, Cambridge, directed by Richard Marlow. Lyrics provided:
https://youtu.be/eMLvVYFxCT0

The beginning of the passage from 1 Corinthians is echoed in 'Come Holy Spirit, let the fire fall', performed by Greybeard33:
https://youtu.be/Z9IDLqeLYsc

A gentle setting of 'Peace on earth' by the versatile black composer Errollyn Wallen, sung by WDR radio choir, conducted by Simon Halsey:
https://youtu.be/Vfey01VtPDU

Reflecting on spiritual gifts, there is a time for child-like simplicity in expressing our faith, which I think is the theme of the Shaker song 'Tis the gift to be simple':
https://youtu.be/4RPUjuraS5U

Good wine is the subject of Orlando Lassus' 8-part motet 'Vinum bonum', here sung by Ex Cathedra under Jeffrey Skidmore, with a rolling score for singers. It has to be said, the motet text celebrates the physical delights of wine as well as its spiritual significance!
https://youtu.be/I_TZXb7yWe0

Finally, a splendidly uplifting contribution from Martin (make sure you do the actions!), 'Our God Is a Great Big God', performed by Sutton Coldfield Baptist Church children, in lockdown, with actions. Sweet!
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8Hi8jW1qYsw

With every blessing
Chris

Service sheet for Sunday 16th January -
The second Sunday of Epiphany

Gracious God, whose gate of mercy stands open to those who seek you and whose presence is forever the reward of those who find you; grant us light on the path that leads to you and grace never to turn aside from you; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.
(Gelasian Sacramentary, 8th Century)

CONFESSION
God of grace, when we have lost hope in your word, transform our despair; when we have lost faith in your love, transform our doubt; when we have lost our way, transform our confusion. God of grace, may we know your love and experience your healing and forgiveness. *(Michaela Youngson)*
How precious is your steadfast love, O God! All people may take refuge in the shadow of your wings…you give them drink from the river of your delights; for with you is the fountain of life; in your light we see light. (Psalm 36:7-9)

COLLECT
Almighty God, in Christ you make all things new: transform the poverty of our nature by the riches of your grace, and in the renewal of our lives make known your heavenly glory; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who is alive and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen.

READINGS
Isaiah 62:1-5; Psalm 36:5-10; 1 Corinthians 12:1-11; John 2:1-11

REFLECTION John, in his gospel, written some sixty or so years after the end of Jesus's earthly life, presents us with an answer to the question, 'Who is this man?' From the start, John is intent on convincing his readers of both the humanity and the divinity of Christ. The theologian Andrew Lincoln writes, of today's gospel reading, 'The account of Jesus's first major deed or sign is designed to have a special impact on readers, to signal to them what this main character is all about, and to set the tone for the rest of the narrative.' The story is all about generosity; the amount of wine produced is far in excess of what would be required at even the most lavish of Jewish weddings. The guests, who have already drunk what was provided, are now presented with the equivalent of 900-1000 of our little 75cl wine bottles! The image of wine recurs over and over again in the Old Testament narrative, depicting the salvation of God in the 'end time'. We have a God who wants to shower goodness upon his people. Mary had faith in her son, without having the faintest idea of what he would do. He responded with a miracle. God's grace is freely available; all we have to do is ask.

PRAYERS
Loving Lord, may we learn from Mary's words, 'They have no wine', to lay our worries and problems, and those of others for whom we are concerned, into your hands, certain that you have the power to make changes.
We pray today for all who worship, love and trust in you; for all who guide and encourage us, for our church leaders, and especially we pray for Guy Martin-Scott, to be licensed as our Rector tomorrow.
We pray for the world; for all troubled people and places; for all problems which appear to have no immediate solution. May we place these into your hands, and remember that there are times when we are called to be your hands and feet in this world. Help us to be ready to do your will for others.
We pray for the sick and suffering, for the bereaved, and for those who have died. In a quiet moment, we pray for those we know and love……
In darkness, come as light, in sadness, come as joy, in troubles, come as peace. (David Adam)

We say THE LORD'S PRAYER

We share THE GRACE

A FINAL PRAYER

May we see your glory, O God, in all your works. May we feel your presence in all circumstances and may we hold to you through times of good and ill; through Christ our Lord. Amen.
(George Ridding, 1828-1904)



The Marriage at Cana, Mattia Preti c.1655