

Community - The Wedding

Read or listen to John chapter 2: verses 1–11

Community was very important in Jesus' time just as it is now and the story is about Jesus being a wedding guest in Cana of Galilee with Mary his mother and his disciples.

During the wedding, which was a great community gathering, Mary saw that the wine had run out and quietly turned to Jesus and said 'They have no more wine.'

Jesus was not expecting this moment but he turned the water into wine, to save the embarrassment of the wedding family and to prove that marriage and community mattered to him. The people said that it was the best wine ever!

- When were you last at a celebration? A birthday party, a wedding, an anniversary?

It may be a long time ago as unfortunately, because of Covid-19 restrictions, we have not been able to hold many celebrations

- Did anything go wrong at the celebration you were at?

- What would you say to Jesus if he sat next to you at a wedding or birthday party?

• By turning water into wine Jesus showed that he was special. This was a sign from God saying that Jesus is God's son. Jesus gathered a community of disciples around him who believed in God. Today those who believe in God are a 'community'.

Travelling water

You will need: two clear plastic containers or beakers; woolly yarn or string; red food colouring or red juice; tape; water; kitchen sink



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Soak a piece of woolly yarn, approximately 60 cm long, in water. Tape the ends of the woolly yarn inside each container/ beaker. Add half a cup of water to one beaker and put six drops of red food colouring or red juice in the other beaker. Lift the water beaker higher, at around a 45 degree angle, tipping the water carefully so that it trickles down the yarn and into the beaker with food colouring. The yarn forms a channel for the water to flow down. The red food colouring or red juice colours the water as it pours in, turning the 'water into wine.'

Prayer - Dear Jesus, you show me how helping people and being a good neighbour can make a difference. Help me to be there for others in my community in their difficult times. Amen

Community - Candlemas

On February 2nd we are reminded of the time that Mary and Joseph took the baby Jesus to the Temple in Jerusalem to say thank you to God for their son.

Luke chapter 2 v 22-38 says that two people who were in the Temple recognised Jesus. The first was an elderly man called Simeon who loved God and had waited a long time to see Jesus. He said that Jesus would be a light to the nations of the world.

The second person was Anna an old lady who spent all her time in the Temple and when she saw Jesus she went straight away to tell others in her community about him and what good news this was for everyone.

At Candlemas we think of light. When Jesus talked about light (Matthew 5 v 14 -16) he said his followers are like lights for the world, lights that show God's love to everyone. Sometimes it's hard to be a good light all of the time. Sometimes it's easier to turn our lights off and on (like a light switch) when we feel like it. Jesus said don't hide your light.

Think about 'community' - what does 'community' look like?

Who is a light in your community?

Who in your community could be helped by seeing your light?

Torch lights

Take a piece of cling film plastic and stretch it across a plastic tub or similar

Carefully write 'Jesus', on the plastic film with a felt tip pen

With the letters backwards fold the film around your torch. Big torches work well.



When it is dark, shine your torch onto a plain wall or ceiling to be reminded that Jesus is the light in the darkness.

Prayer: Thank you God for sending Jesus to be a light for us all. Help me to be a good light to others in my community. Amen.

Community - Hearts

On February 14th we think of St Valentine

St Valentine lived in Rome in the 3rd Century and people think that he could have been a priest. He was known for looking after people when they were hurt because of their belief in Jesus. He gave small paper hearts to soldiers going to war to remind them of God's love for them. He also gave sight to a girl who could not see.



Heart

Draw around a small heart template on red paper (or use white paper and colour in) and cut out the shape. Put your heart in your pocket, or in your shoe or slipper. Put your shoe or slipper back on your foot.

Talk with someone about whatever we look like on the outside, God knows what we are like on the inside, including our good bits and not so good bits! How close is your paper heart to you now? God is even closer to you than your paper heart!

Can you feel your heart beat? Try and find it. Or perhaps take your radial pulse by placing your two fingers at the side of your wrist. It is said that God's heartbeat beats in time with ours. Think about that for a minute. What does that mean to you?

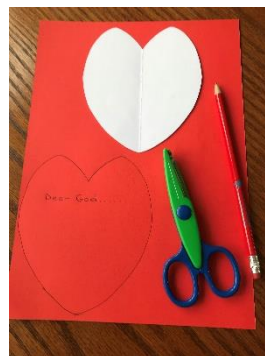
Jesus said that whatever comes out of a person's heart is what matters most. (Matthew chapter 12 v 34) People need good hearts and to put others needs before their own. Think about your heart and the good things that come from it.

Think about Community - decide what your community is. Some ideas: your family, friends, school, neighbours, church, street or road, village, town, club, etc. Ask God to help you to help your community. Make a list of things you can do.

Prayer heart

You will need: a heart template, paper or card, pencil, scissors, colouring pens

Draw around a heart template on paper or card and cut out the shape. Write a prayer asking God to help your community. Decorate around your prayer. Put it in a place where you can look at it and say it often.



Community - Food

When Communities meet together food is always important. Think of a community event you have been at where food was served. What kind of community was it?

Talk with someone about the importance of food at celebrations such as birthdays and weddings. Think of the kind of foods Jesus would have eaten.

For example: baked sardines, endive salads, olives and clementines, dried apricots and pomegranates, stuffed grapevine leaves, roast duck with mulberries and horseradish, racks of lamb, mamool (fruity or nutty cookies), challah bread, platters of melon, raisins, dates and candied Jordan almonds.

What would you choose to eat at a birthday or wedding party? What is your favourite food?

Are there people in your community struggling to provide food for themselves or their families? What could you do to help them? Is there a local Food Bank you could support?

Decorate some cakes or biscuits: You will need: small cakes; butter cream; plain biscuits, icing sugar, fruit to decorate



Swirl butter or glaze icing on cakes or biscuits and decorate. You may have some sweets or fruit you can use. Can you share these treats?

Prayer

Thank you God for our food. Please look after those in my community who do not have enough to eat. Show me ways in which I can help them. Amen.