

## SECOND SUNDAY AFTER EPIPHANY

January 19, 2025

John 2:1-11

### Extravagant Sign

Jesus is making his public debut as the Son of God, performing the first of seven recorded miracles in John's Gospel — turning 120 gallons of water into wine at a wedding in Cana of Galilee.

Now it wasn't the place or the time that Jesus had intended to display his divinity, but when your mother asks you to do something, as Mary did, you do it.

Mary's insistence for Jesus to intervene was out of concern for their hosts, as running out of wine was a great embarrassment. It was expected for food and drink to be abundant for the many days of wedding feasting. (Weddings in Jesus' time weren't just a sit-down dinner or a morning brunch. They went on for days.)

John's telling of this miracle, though, is not about saving face — or even revealing the face of God in Jesus.

There's a life-changing lesson for us today that is swishing around the six stone jars of water that are on the premises of the wedding banquet.

To start, John's point of telling us there are six jars is important. Numbers have great significance in Jewish teachings. Seven, for example, represents perfection and completeness. Six, however, symbolizes imperfection. Jesus viewing those six jars as valuable for this miracle moment shows us how God sees all the things we deem unworthy as worthy.

There's more. The water in those jars were not meant for drinking, but rather for ceremonial washing. It was customary for Jews to wash their hands and say a blessing before any meal that included bread. It would be considered disgusting to drink from those six jars.

Jesus, though, does the unthinkable. He disregards Jewish beliefs and traditions, turning the untouchable water into the best wine anyone has ever tasted. Had the guests known the water for ceremonial washing was used for the wine they were sipping; they would have been aghast. Yet those privy to this miracle were getting a preview of what Jesus' mission would be: To dismantle the systems that separate the clean from the unclean, that keep the downtrodden down and the oppressed oppress.

Would we have sipped that wine if we knew where it came from? Would we be willing to bend rules, break traditions, rid ourselves of rituals if it meant experiencing amazing water-into-wine miracles that God has for us?

There's so much God wants to do in our lives, but first we need to let go of our assumptions of how life should be. Are you ready for a boundary-breaking, rule-busting God to turn your water into wine?

*God, forgive us for those times we are so set in our ways that we close our hearts to the new thing You want to do in our lives. Open us this day to all the beautiful and exciting possibilities. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.*



8 1/2" x 14" UCC SUNDAY BULLETIN SERVICE

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BUL0208





St. John's United Church of Christ  
**Baptism of the Lord**  
 January 19, 2025



\* Please stand if it is comfortable to do so. **Bold print** is everyone in unison

**WELCOME, ANNOUNCEMENTS, GREET ONE ANOTHER** (be seated)

CHURCH BELL (the bell invites us to worship)

PRELUDE

**GOD CALLS US TO WORSHIP** (responsively)

Wade into the waters of love;

**Step into the rivers of blessing.**

Here, find the renewing streams of mercy.

**Here, taste the wonder of God's goodness.**

Feel the waters of life;

**Know the joy of baptism;**

See the springs of eternal life;

**Sing of the triumph of God's blessing.**

\***OPENING HYMN** *What Was Your Vow and Vision* #177  
 (melody: *Lead On, O King Eternal*)

\***WE INVITE GOD TO WORSHIP** (unison)

**O God, you create all things. You bear all things, you hope all things, you endure all things. Each of your creatures, all of your children are members of your body. All partake of your promise. Open your heaven and descend like a dove upon the world; make plain your hidden plan, your mysterious purpose for our lives. Standing in the waters of our baptism, we await your presence.**

\***RESPONSE** *I Am the Light of the World* (chorus) #469

**CHILDREN'S MESSAGE** (children please come forward) *Jesus Loves Me*

**OFFERING INVITATION\*\***

Let us give back to God with gratitude for all blessings received.

\***RESPONSE** *Great is Your Faithfulness* (chorus) #86

\***PRAYER OF DEDICATION** (unison)

Gracious Spirit, you have showered us with your gifts, and we embrace you with thanksgiving. May our embrace be arms wide open, ready to share, to serve and to love. Use our spiritual gifts that we may live the spiritual life, moving according to the Spirit's heated touch and bending in the direction of God's holy will.

**WE GATHER IN PRAYER**

Silent Prayers – Pastoral Prayer-The Lord's Prayer (debts/debtors)

Congregational Response: *When I Needed a Neighbor* v. 1

**ANTHEM** *Jesus, What a Wonderful Child* Larsen

**SCRIPTURE:** Old Testament: Psalm 29

New Testament: Matthew 3:13-17

L: The Word of God for the People of God **P: Thanks be to God**

**MESSAGE** *Is Your God too Small?*

**RENEWAL OF BAPTISM VOWS**

\***CLOSING HYMN** *Here I Am, Lord* #452

\***BLESSING** (responsively)

Lord, you clothe the lilies, you feed the birds of the sky, you lead the lambs to pasture, and the deer to flowing waters. Lord, you multiplied loaves and fishes, changed water into wine, and you brought sight to the blind.

**Now, Lord, send us forth strengthened and refreshed. Send us forth filled with hope in the promise of eternal life. Amen.**

\***CONGREGATIONAL RESPONSE** *Go In Peace* #445

**ANNUAL MEETING OF THE CONGREGATION**

\***POSTLUDE**



## ST. JOHN'S UCC STAFF and VOLUNTEERS

<b>Pastor</b>	Rev. Debbie Jo Atkins
<b>Liturgist</b>	John Riggs
<b>Head Usher</b>	Saundra Lange
<b>Organist</b>	DeEtta Welte
<b>Music Director, Pianist</b>	Becky Brockman
<b>Children /Family Ministry Coordinator</b>	Will Meyer
<b>Nursery Attendant</b>	Darcie Bahr
<b>Projection</b>	Saundra Lange
<b>Sound</b>	Lonny Vieck
<b>Church Secretary</b>	Angie Robinson
<b>Church Board President</b>	Jana Vieck
<b>Greeters</b>	Sheri Stodghill



**TODAY! The annual Congregation Meeting is scheduled immediately following Church Please plan to attend.**

\*\*You may place your offering in the plate at the back of the sanctuary or online at myucc.org and clicking on the *contribute* button. Please prayerfully consider setting up regular online donations to continue our outreach into the community.

**DON'T FORGET THE YOUTH SOUP SALE!** Pick up in Memorial Hall.

**MESSY CHURCH** will be held on February 5<sup>th</sup> from 5:30-7:00 pm. The theme is *There's Snow-body Like You*. Lots of activities, Boomwhackers, with a Taco Bar and Nanchos for dinner. Join us!

**ADULT BIBLE STUDY** on *The Gnostic Gospels* will be held at 10:30 & 6:30 on Tuesdays, January 21, 28, & February 4, 11. The Gnostic Gospels are 52 texts discovered in 1945 in Nag Hammadi, Egypt. They include 'secret' gospels poems and myths attributing to Jesus sayings and beliefs which are very different from the New Testament. We will be focusing on the *Gospel of Thomas* and the *Gospel of Phillip*.



Virtual Worship Service is still available on the church website, myucc.org. Worship Services are also "Live Streamed" on the Church's FACEBOOK page



### **THIS WEEK in the Life of St. John's**

#### **SUNDAY, January 19**

Adult Sunday School 9:15 am  
Worship 10:30 am  
Children's Church

Annual Congregational Meeting Following Service  
CFM Soup Sale

#### **MONDAY, January 20**

Martin Luther King Jr. Day Office Closed  
BABE Store 12-5:30 pm  
Worship 6 pm  
Church Board 7 pm

#### **TUESDAY, January 21**

Bible Study 10:30 am & 6:30 pm

#### **WEDNESDAY, January 22**

Choir 4:30 pm

#### **THURSDAY, January 23**

Dinner at Texas Roadhouse 6 pm

#### **SATURDAY, January 25**

CFM Family Night 5-7:30 pm

### **LOOKING AHEAD**

#### **SUNDAY, January 26**

Adult Sunday School 9:15 am  
Worship 10:30 am  
Children's Church

#### **MONDAY, January 27**

BABE Store 12-5:30 pm

#### **TUESDAY, January 28**

Bible Study 10:30 am & 6:30 pm

#### **WEDNESDAY, January 29**

Choir 4:30 pm

Laundry Love 6-8 pm

#### **THURSDAY, January 30**

Dinner at Ponderosa 6 pm



## ANNOUNCEMENTS, JOYS AND CONCERNS

**Continuing Prayer Requests:** Laura Sanders, Bruce Deckard, Gary Meyer, Don Osborne, Jr., the families of Carole Klein and Franklyn Schroeder, plus Norma Phegley.

- **Vern Houchins** is scheduled for surgery on January 27. Please continue praying for Vern and Marilyn.
- **Norma Meyer**, Gary Meyer's mother, is undergoing rehab at GentleCare following her recent fall and subsequent surgery. Cards may be sent to Norma at GentleCare, Room 8, 1202 S. 16th, Vincennes IN 47591.
- Please pray for Bob and Janis Turner and family upon the death of their nephew, **Dr. Baron Brocksmith**.
- **Cindi Gilmore** is feeling better. She has a procedure scheduled for February. Please pray for resolutions to this health challenge.
- Welcome, **Crew Alan Goodman**, born January 10, to Paul and Allison Goodman! Proud grandparents include Terry and Janet Goodman. Well-wishes may be sent to Paul, Allison and Crew 9823 Clippinger, Evansville, IN 47725
- Please pray for **Donna Gerhardt's brother , Mike**, as he recovers at Barnes Orthopedic from injuries sustained through a recent fall.

### Addresses for Shut-ins and Others

**Norma Meyer**, Gentle Care ,- Room 8, 1202 S 16th, Vincennes, IN 47591  
**Susie Milligan**, Colonial Assisted Living,- Room 118, 1622 S Hart Street Road, Vincennes, IN 47591  
**Leona Conway**, Aperion Care ,- C Wing Room 3, 3801 Old Bruceville Rd , Vincennes, IN 47591  
**Marge Beamon**, The Villages at Oak Ridge, - Room 303, 1694 Troy Rd. Washington, IN 47501

Home  
**Bruce Deckard**  
**Gary Meyer**  
**Michael Lankford**  
**Gayle Huffer**  
**Ellen Riggs**



Starting in February, our St. John's United Church of Christ newsletter will be emailed in digital copies. We don't want you to miss it! Please make sure the office has your correct email on file. Several hard copies of the newsletter will be available on the first Sunday of the month in the sanctuary. If you would still like a copy mailed to you, please let Angie, the office secretary, know, and we will send one to you. [stjohnsuccoffice@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnsuccoffice@gmail.com), text 812-887-2002, office 812-882-2720.



2025 Offering envelopes are available to pick up in the front lobby. Make sure and get yours. If you want to sign up for auto withdrawals, there are forms at the back of the sanctuary. Fill one out, include a voided check, and put it in the offering plate. We will get your transaction set up. You may also go online to donate [myucc.org](http://myucc.org); scroll down on the left side of the page, and you will see "Click HERE to contribute to the ministries of St. John's"



The 2024 giving statements will be sent out next week. Look for them in your mail.



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