

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.

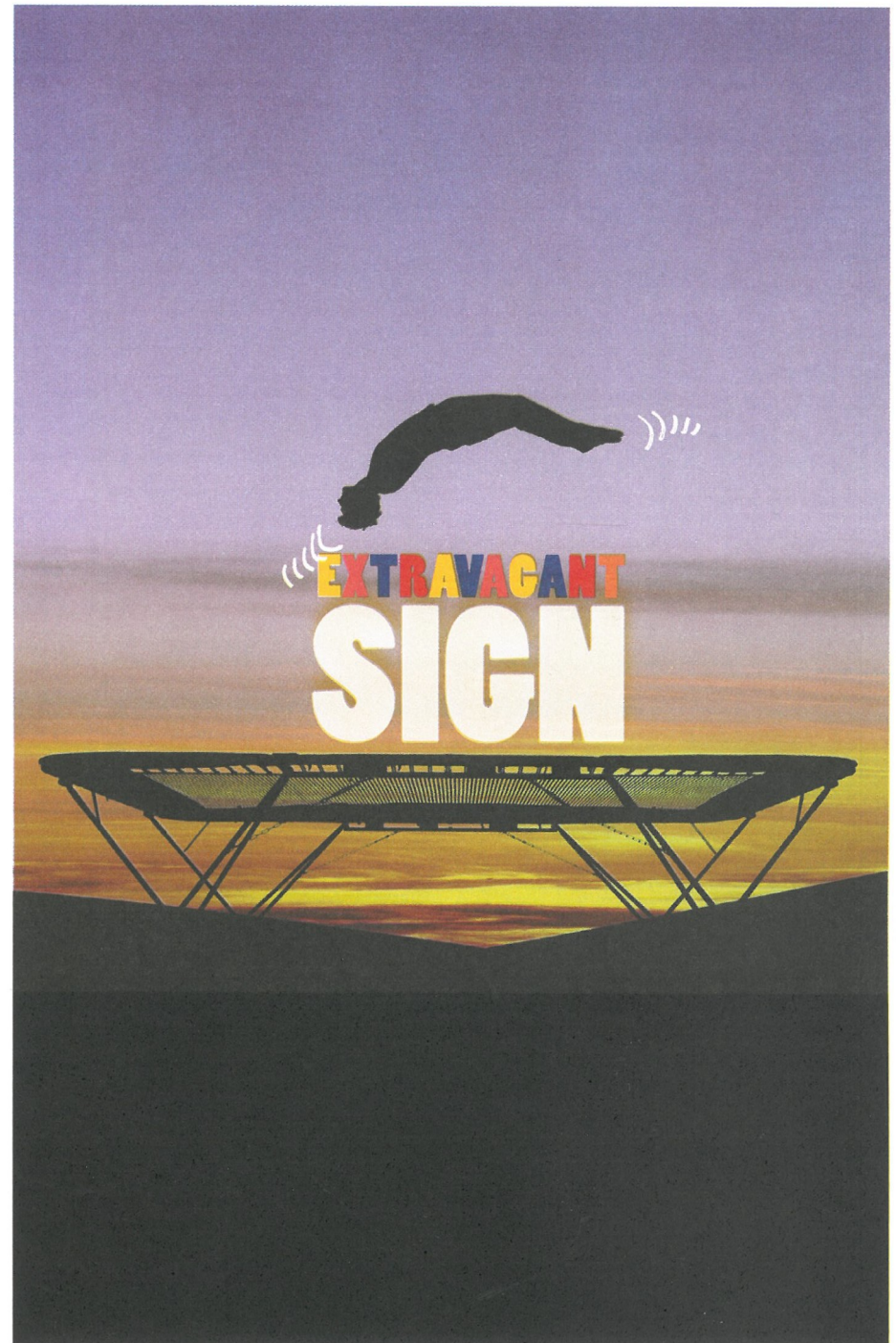
There's more. The water in those jars were not meant for drinking, but rather for ceremonial washing. It was customary for Jews to wash their hands and say a blessing before any meal that included bread. It would be considered disgusting to drink from those six jars.

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.



WESTCHESTER COMMUNITY CHURCH
A United Church of Christ
(708) 865-1282

Second Sunday after Epiphany
"No matter who you are, or where you are on life's
journey, YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!!

January 19, 2025 **10:00 a.m.**

Welcome on behalf of our pastoral staff

Rev. Joseph E. Mills, III, Pastor 708/562-0759

Lawrence Underwood, Music Director

Joyce Kelstrom, Bell Choir Director

Pastor Vinod Wesley, Chicago Tamil Church Pastor
& Associate Pastor

Altar Flowers: In Memory of Sue Mika—Happy Birthday!
John Mika

Liturgist: Dorothy Randle

Ushers: Carol Hoppe and Tommy Chapiesky

Westchester Community Church, United Church of Christ
1840 Westchester Boulevard
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**(If you have a prayer request you'd like to share with us,
go to CHAT on your Zoom page and type it in
so we can share it with others)**

****ALSO REMEMBER TO MUTE YOUR ZOOM
SCREEN SO WE CAN HEAR THE PASTOR
UNLESS IT'S A TIME TO SHARE**

*Please remember to sign the Red Booklet at the end of every pew.
If you have any prayer request please put them into the offertory
plates so Pastor Joe can receive them. There are In Touch cards in
the pews if you want to fill them out please put them in the offertory
plates.*

Thank You, Your Parish Fellowship Board

**FOR THOSE ON ZOOM AND
ANYTIME YOU WANT TO MAKE A SPECIAL GIFT**

We truly encourage you to use our online giving tool,
Which you can access through our website.
When you are at home on Zoom, or away on
trips, Our bills here at church don't go away.
We need your help!! Remember to give, and if
it is a special gift, There is a way to make a note
on the Vanco page. Make clear what the
donation is for!!! Thank you!!



Manna news!!! Manna is a program where people order gift cards through the church, we order them through a company that gives us a discount on the cards and we keep the discount. So, you pay the value of the card, you GET WHAT YOU PAY FOR, and WE earn money. It's a win, win. With each order the church pays the tax and shipping fees. Manna forms are available in the narthex and on the table outside the office. Manna orders & payment is due the last Sunday of the month, and are distributed by the 2nd Sunday of the month. Manna is great for gifts, donating for In-reach, and for places you shop. Thank you for your consideration. If you have questions, please see Charlene Dol-nics or Sue Becerra.

The Music Board is selling tickets to the **Family Valentine's Dance** before and after church through February 9th. Please come out and support this event by bringing family members including grandchildren, friends, and neighbors. We are looking for help with the assorted sides that we are serving with dinner. If you can help, we have a sign-up sheet where we are selling tickets. If you eat at a restaurant regularly or frequent the same hair or nail salon, we have a letter asking for donations for our raffle. A donation letter is also available where we are selling tickets. Thanks for your support this event as we raise funds for the Beautification Fund.

There are a few United Church of Christ pieces of **jewelry** that have been donated to the church and can be found in the narthex that are free to anyone that would like one.

Upper Rooms can be found on the right side of the narthex by the restroom or outside the church office.

Our new **Website** is up and running!! You can access it at <https://westchesterucc.org> We hope you find it accessible and helpful!!!

Save the Date: a **Valentine's Family Dinner and Dance** on Saturday, February 15. Music by the Weed Wackers. Sponsored by the Music Board. More details soon!!!



If you are interested in a CPR and AED Class..... please see Chris Stout as soon ASAP

2025 Calendars for us have been donated by Conboys Westchester Funeral Home—they are in the narthex!!! Thank you, Conboys!!

Ben Linville's fiancé Meaghan will be in the Magical Starlight Theater's Production of **Cinderella**, January 10-12 and January 17-19 at the Naperville Central High School Auditorium. Tickets are \$20 (\$23 at the door) and are now on sale through the Naperville Park district at napervilleparks.org/magicalstarlighttheater.

Any questions you can contact Mary Linville at 630-710-0358.

Our United Church of Christ asks that we support **The Christmas Fund/Veterans of the Cross**. Many active clergy are severely underpaid that one crisis puts them in financial crisis. Many retired clergy were underpaid for years, and never had retirement funds. What you give literally brings hope to those who have served Christ and us. You can make out a check to our church, and mark it "**Veterans of the Cross**".

Please continue to support our **In-Reach Fund**. This money helps our own members in medical emergencies, or rent, or just to make it possible to breathe. Please make out a check or on-line gift, and mark it "**In-Reach**".

Please bring food for our local Food Pantry – they empty out just before Christmas. We were able to raise several hundred dollars for the pantry, and there was a gigantic carload of food for them. And, as with every year, please bring in **2025 calendars** and **Personal Care and Hygiene Products** for **Hines Veterans Hospital**.

The **Altar Flower** calendar is on the bulletin board in the narthex. If you would like to buy flowers for any occasion in remembrance of a love please sign up. Thank you, Deacon Board

WORSHIP SERVICE

"You are a child of God. Your playing small does not serve the world. There is nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure about you. We were born to manifest the glory of God that is within us." —Marianne Williamson

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS Dorothy Randle

OPENING ANNOUNCEMENTS Pastor Mills

*HE MOVES BEYOND THE MANGER #237

"The Hands That First Held Mary's Child," vv 3 & 4

*CALL TO WORSHIP Dorothy Randle

Leader: He is born!! He is here!! He is our Lord, and we come to praise Him.

People: But we do not come to hold onto Him. We come to live in His loving embrace, and to follow Him, because He must leave the manger.

Leader: What He must do is difficult for Him.

People: What He must do is the most important thing that can ever happen to us.

Leader: It is His choice; His hour. And this is why we worship Him—not simply because He is of God, but because He chooses to follow God completely.

**ALL: O COME, LET US ADORE HIM,
O COME, LET US ADORE HIM,
O COME, LET US ADORE HIM,
CHRIST THE LORD!!**

A Reading from God's Holy Word

From the Gospel: John 2:1-11

Dorothy Randle

p. 71, NT, Pew Bible

p. 113, NT, Large Print

*A GLORIA PATRI

#734

"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."

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM Pastor Mills
 The Questions for the Families & Godparents
 The Congregational Assent
 We Share In a Witness to Faith and Support
**(We will read together the Apostle's Creed, found
 in the inside front of your Hymnals)**
 The Pouring of the Waters of Baptism
 The Prayer of Baptism
 The Acts of Baptism
 The Act of Thanksgiving
 The Prayer for the Baptized and the Church

WE PRAY TO THE LORD #244

"O Love, How Deep, How Broad," vv 3 & 6

PASTORAL PRAYER Pastor Mills
 THE LORDS PRAYER (Please Use Debts/Debtors)

THE MORNING OFFERING Dorothy Randle

AN OFFERTORY
**(THOSE AT HOME, PLEASE SEND IN GIFTS BY CHECK
 OR USE OUR ON-LINE GIVING)**

*THE DOXOLOGY #34

***"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."***

*A PRAYER OF DEDICATION (In Unison) Dorothy Randle

**Let us keep nothing back. Let us give of our
 best, and let us help You with the best energy we can
 muster. Receive the goodness of our hands and our
 thoughts, and bless these gifts together that they
 would do far more than we could imagine in this
 moment. Through Jesus, Your Christ Child and our
 Lord we pray. Amen.**

THE MEDITATION—"In a Minute??" Pastor Mills

*HIS CALL AND OURS IS NOW #231

"Arise, Your Light Is Come!"

THE COMMISSION AND BENEDICTION Pastor Mills

+++++

Arise, Your Light Is Come! 231

1 A - rise, your light is come! The Spir - it's call o - bey; show
 2 A - rise, your light is come! Fling wide the pris - on door; pro -
 3 A - rise, your light is come! All you in sor - row born, bind
 4 A - rise, your light is come! The moun-tains burst in song! Rise

forth the glo - ry of your God which shines on you to - day.
 claim the cap-tive's lib - er - ty, good ti - dings to the poor.
 up the bro - ken-heart - ed ones and com - fort those who mourn.
 up like ea - gles on the wing, God's power will make us strong.

WORDS: Ruth Duck (1947-)
 MUSIC: William H. Walter (1825-1893)
 Words © 1992 GIA Publications

FESTAL SONG
 S.M.



We grieve with the Zellman Family in the death of Sarah Zellman. Please keep the families in your thoughts and prayers. Services for her will be in the New Year.

O Love, How Deep, How Broad 244

1 O Love, how deep, how broad, how high, how pass - ing
 2 For us bap - tized, for us he bore his ho - ly
 3 For us he prayed, for us he taught, for us his
 4 For us to e - vil power be - trayed, scourged, mocked, in
 5 For us he rose from death a - gain; for us he
 6 All glo - ry to our Lord and God for love so

thought and fan - ta - sy: that God, the Son of
 fast and hun - gered sore; for us tempt - ta - tions
 dai - ly works he wrought, by words and signs and
 pur - ple robe ar - rayed, he bore the shame - ful
 went on high to reign; for us he sent his
 deep, so high, so broad— the Trin - i - ty whom

God, should take our mor - tal form for mor - tals' sake.
 sharp he knew, for us the tempt - er o - ver - threw.
 ac - tions, thus still seek - ing not him - self, but us.
 cross and death, for us gave up his dy - ing breath.
 Spir - it here to guide, to com - fort, and to cheer.
 we a - dore for - ev - er and for - ev - er - more.

WORDS: Latin hymn, 15th c.; tr. Benjamin Webb (1819-1885), alt.
 MUSIC: Trier manuscript, 15th c.; adapt. Michael Praetorius (1571-1621);
 harm. George R. Woodward (1848-1934)

PUER NOBIS
 L.M.

CALENDAR

TODAY

Worship 10 am

Chicago Tamil UCC Worship, 12:30 pm

MONDAY

Pastor at Economic Dev Mtg. 4:30 pm

WEDNESDAY

Zoom Bible Study, 9:30 a.m.

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/961336622>

Confirmation 4:30 p.m.

NEXT SUNDAY

10:00 a.m. Worship

Annual Meeting—Sanctuary after church

Noon - Chicago Tamil Worship

BIRTHDAYS THRU 1/26/25

1/19 Herman Goodloe

1/22 Gabi Craver, Christina More

1/23 George Long

1/24 Brooke Blomeke

1/25 John Mika

1/27 Shane McLain

ANNIVERSARIES THRU 1/26/25

1/20 James and Gale Mikos 57 yrs

1/22 Chuck and Lynn Yeiser 53 yrs

THINKING AHEAD...

Sassy Stitches—3rd Tuesday of the month from 1pm to 3pm**Women's Book Club**— Meets on January 27th at Panera in Westchester. The book we are reading is "The Rescuer", by Jason Sautel. Call Barb Mills if you would like to join us.**Annual Reports** are due on January 6th. Please have them in by this date!**Annual Meeting** is on January 26th**Valentine's Dance** is on February 15th. Tickets are on sale NOW through February 9th**Card Making** is Friday, February 21st at 9:30am—2:00pm in the South Basement**Scrapbooking Dates:** February 20—22, March 20—22, April 3—5, and May 1—3. Please come join us!

PRAYER REQUESTS:

PEOPLE AT THEIR HOMES:

Allen Meskan, Lou Bender, Virginia Hodina, Caroline Long, Char Schwass, Jimmy Marczuk, Paul Barnes, Melanie Miller, Bettyann Richeson, Betty Koenig, Isabella Brumwell, Doris Blomberg, Jim Barker, Wayne Scharlach, Allan Boyd, John Mika, Lorraine Feeney, Cindy Cox, Ed Monahan, Karen Hart, Bill & Maggie Smith, George Long, Mary Kay Baca, Donna Hansen, Chuck Yeiser, Linda Belice, Dave Vrablic, Emil Poprawski, Benny Locigno, Ellie Merritt, Barb Sweazey, James Hixon, Aldona Kitt, Judy Frandsen, Don Smith, Mark Henning, Serena Ivers & Chris, Elayne Dalheim, Patricia Ladner, Michael Kelstrom, Patrick McCarthy

FRIENDS IN PRAYERS:

Joyce Barbee, Andee Brown-Roth, Clover, (16 mo. old girl with leukemia), Bill and Kimble Compton, Bob and Jean, Sherri Cozzi, Drake Dennis/Family, Bill Ernst, Father Neil Fackler, Ashley Feeney, Nancy Fiala-Zinn, Ann Franz, Herman Goodloe, Kyle Hall, Karen and Bob; Karen Hekr, Helen Hicks, Frank Kriz, Mary Ann, Larry, Julie McGee, Julie McLean (mom to Nancy McLean), Frieda McKinnon, Jane McNamee, Amy Morlier, Betty Moticka, Eric Odelson, Pat (cousin to Linda Belice), Connie Petrik, Diana & Larry Ridener, Scott Rouse, Gary Schultz, John Symiakos, Anthony Taylor, Patricia Traylor, Ron Tulke, Lawrence Underwood Jr., Gwendolyn and Bob Westlund, Monica Wojdziak, Charles Woodman, Adam Zellman

OUR MILITARY: Samantha Brown (overseas), Tyler Kimbler is deployed; Jay & Bri Mills (Ft. Bliss, Texas), Malik Taylor—Norfolk, VA, Anthony Taylor—Ft. Hood, TX; Nick Weeks—Peace Corp. South Africa

HOSPITALIZED/Long-Term: Marilyn Sinda – Elmhurst; Jeanie Rowe—Michigan; Dave Else—the Pearl, Hinsdale; Frank Kriz (on Palliative Care); Jim Craver (our Jim’s father)—Nursing Facility, Sara Zellman—the Pearl, Hinsdale; Joseph Mills Jr.—rehab in Tacoma; Lil Klippel - The Radcliffe; Steve Tomporowski – Wisconsin; Rosemarie Kosik (Terra Vista, OakBrook Terrace)



The Hands That First Held Mary’s Child 237

1 The hands that first held Ma - ry’s child were hard from work - ing wood,
2 When Jo - seph mar - veled at the size of that small breath - ing frame,
3 “This child shall be Em - man - u - el, not God up - on the throne,
4 The tools that Jo - seph laid a - side a mob would lat - er lift

from boards they sawed and planed and filed and splin - ters they with - stood.
and gazed up - on those bright new eyes and spoke the in - fant’s name,
but God with us, Em - man - u - el, as close as blood and bone.”
and use with an - ger, fear, and pride to cru - ci - fy God’s gift.

This day they gripped no tool of steel, they drove no i - ron nail,
the an - gel’s words he once had dreamed poured down from heav - en’s height,
The ti - ny form in Jo - seph’s palms con - firmed what he had heard,
Let us, O Lord, not on - ly hold the child who’s born to - day,

but cra - dled from the head to heel our Lord, new - born and frail.
and like the host of stars that beamed blessed earth with wel - come light.
and from his heart rose hymns and psalms for heav - en’s hu - man word.
but charged with faith may we be bold to fol - low in his way.

WORDS: Thomas H. Troeger (1945-)
MUSIC: English melody; arr. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872-1958), alt.
Words © 1985 Oxford University Press