

January 8, 2023
Baptism of Jesus

We Gather In God's Presence

Lighting the Christ Candle

Gathering In Song VU 79 "Arise, Your Light Is Come" vs 4

Arise, your light is come!
The mountains burst in song!
Rise up like eagles on the wing;
God's power will make us strong.

Birthdays, Celebrations, and Life and Work of the Congregation – see last page ...

Call to Worship

All who thirst, come to the water
and drink deeply of these living streams.

**We come, we who are weary;
we come, we who yearn for forgiveness.**

As the waters of the Jordan washed over Jesus,
so the Holy Spirit washed over you and me.

**Our gracious God beckons and blesses us.
Let us give praise for new life in Christ.**

Hymn VU 81 "As with Gladness Men of Old"

As with gladness men of old
did the guiding star behold,
as with joy they hailed its light,
leading onward, beaming bright,
so, most gracious Lord, may we
evermore your splendour see.

As with joyful steps they sped,
to that lowly manger bed,
there to bend the knee before
Christ, whom heaven and earth adore;
so may we with eager pace
ever seek your throne of grace.

As they offered gifts most rare
at that manger crude and bare,
so may we with holy joy,
pure and free from sin's alloy,
all our costliest treasures bring,
Christ, to you, our heavenly King.

Holy Jesus, every day
keep us in the narrow way;
and, when earthly things are past,
bring our ransomed souls at last
where they need no star to guide,
where no clouds your glory hide.

In the heavenly country bright
none shall need created light;
you its light, its joy, its crown,
you its sun which goes not down;
there for ever may we sing
hallelujah to our King.

Opening Prayer *(unison)*

All that is Holy, you descended like a dove, alighting on Jesus as he rose from the waters of the Jordan. You proclaimed him your Son, and sent him to seek and save those who are broken, lost, in bondage. Since we rose from the waters of our baptism Your Spirit has rested upon us, and Jesus' mission has become our mission: to seek and save the broken, the lost, the bound. Yet all too often, instead of looking for the lost, we are preoccupied with ourselves; we cling firmly to the past; we find new ways of dividing ourselves from others; we cling to destructive habits; we hoard our wealth, offering only the leftovers to you and to those in need. Forgive us, Ever Creating and Re-Creating God. Remind us of the promises You made to heal, restore, forgive, free, and transform us through those living waters. Remind us of the promises we made to love and serve you, and our neighbours as you love us; unconditionally. May we, and all people rise to new life, and learn to live together in grace. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

We Are Blessed By God

Anthem

The Sacrament of Baptism

On behalf of the congregation of Union United Church, I present Sullivan James Maunu for initiation into the Body of Christ through the Sacrament of Baptism:
[Parents and children stand as their names are read]

They were bringing children to Jesus that Jesus might touch them; and the disciples rebuked them. But when Jesus saw it, Jesus was indignant, and said to them:

Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such belongs the Realm of God. Truly I say to you, whoever does not receive the Realm of God like a child shall not enter it.

And Jesus took them in his arms and blessed them, laying his hands upon them.

The Sacrament of Baptism is an outward and visible sign of the grace of God. Inasmuch as the promise of the gospel is not only to us but also to our children, baptism with water and the Holy Spirit is the mark of their acceptance into the care of Christ's church, the sign and seal of their participation in God's forgiveness, and the beginning of their growth into full Christian faith and discipleship.

This is the water of baptism. Out of this water we rise with new life, one in Christ, and members of Christ's body.

Questions of the Parents/Guardians

Do you desire to have Sully baptized into the faith and the family of Jesus Christ?

I/we do.

Will you encourage him to renounce the powers of evil and to receive the freedom of new life in Christ?

I/we will, with the help of God.

Will you teach him that he may be led to profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour?

I/we will, with the help of God.

Do you promise, by the grace of God, to be Christ's disciple(s), to follow in the way of our Saviour, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best as you are able?

I/we do, with the help of God.

Do you promise, according to the grace given you, to grow with Sully in the Christian faith, to help him to be a faithful member of the Church of Jesus Christ, by celebrating Christ's presence, by furthering Christ's mission in all the world, and by offering the nurture of the Christian church so that he may affirm his baptism?

I/we do, with the help of God.

Congregational Assent

Jesus Christ calls us to make disciples of all nations and to offer them the gift of grace in baptism.

Do you, who witness and celebrate this sacrament promise your love, support and care to Sully about to be baptized, as he lives and grows in Christ?

We promise our love, support and care.

Affirmation of Faith

We are not alone,
we live in God's world.

We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:
to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.

In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.

We are not alone.
Thanks be to God.

Prayer over the Water of Baptism

Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

We thank you, God, for the gift of creation called forth by your saving Word. Before the world had shape and form, your Spirit moved over the waters. Out of the waters of the deep, you formed the firmament and brought forth the earth to sustain all life. In the time of Noah, you washed the earth with the waters of the flood, and your ark of salvation bore a new beginning. In the time of Moses, your people Israel passed through the waters of the Red Sea from slavery to freedom, and crossed the waters of the Jordan to enter the promised land. In the fullness of time, you sent Jesus Christ, who was nurtured in the water of Mary's womb. Jesus was baptized by John in the water of the Jordan, became living water to the woman at the well, washed the feet of the disciples, and sent them forth to baptize all nations by water and the Holy Spirit.

[Water is poured]

Bless, by your Holy Spirit, gracious God, this water, that it may be the sign and promise of new life, not only for those who will be baptized, but indeed for all who have passed through the waters of baptism. Glory to you, eternal God, the one who was, who is, and who ever shall be, world without end.

Amen.

Act of Baptism

By what name will your child be called?

Sullivan James Maunu

Sully, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Sully, with the sign of the cross, you are marked as Christ's forever.

[Parents, grandparents, chair of Unified Board, and minister shall rest their hands on the child's head]

May the Holy Spirit be upon you Sully child of God, disciple of Christ, member of the Church.

Declaration

In the name of Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, I declare that Sullivan James Maunu has now been received into the Holy Christian Church. May God bless you and keep you and give you peace.

Amen.

[A candle is lit from the Christ candle and given to the parent(s)]

Remember the lighting of this candle and remind Sully of it. This candle signifies that by our baptism we pass from darkness to light; from death to life. It is with great joy that we also present you with this Bible for Sully, and his baptismal certificate.

[presentation of baptismal certificate and Bible]

[Introduction to congregation]

Prayer for the Baptized

Let us pray for Sully, baptized today.

Gracious God, you have filled the world with joy by giving us the gift of Jesus. Bless Sully. May he be filled with joy; may he never be ashamed to confess a personal faith in you. Bless Sully's parents. May they always show their gratitude for the life you have given by loving and caring for Sully. Bless these, your faithful people. Unite them in the peace of Christ and the company of the Holy Spirit. Finally we ask your continued blessings on those children whom we baptized in the past: Chloe Douglas, and Audrey Gillard. All this we pray in the name of our baptized and baptizing saviour, Jesus, the Christ.

Amen.

Hymn VU 453 “Out of Deep, Unordered Water”

Out of deep, unordered water

God created land and life;

world of bird and beast, and later,

twosome people, husband, wife.

There is water in the river

bringing life to tree and plant.

Let creation praise its giver:

there is water in the font.

Water on the human forehead,

birthmark of the love of God,

is the sign of death and rising;

through the sea there runs a road.

There is water in the river

bringing life to tree and plant.

Let creation praise its giver:

there is water in the font.

Standing round the font reminds us
of the Hebrews' climb ashore.

Life is hallowed by the knowledge:

God has been this way before.

There is water in the river

bringing life to tree and plant.

Let creation praise its giver:

there is water in the font.

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

In his first letter, Peter writes, “Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have.” Today we witnessed an act of hope and faith, the baptism of Sully Maunu. Your tithes and offerings helped make that possible. Your tithes and offerings help make possible things like Sunday School, and the community of faith that will support Sully and his family to learn and grow in the Christian faith. Our tithes and offerings will be received.

Offertory Hymn VU 55 “In the Bleak Midwinter” vs. 4

What can I give him, poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;

if I were a wise man, I would do my part;

yet what I can I give him - give my heart.

Offering Prayer

Receive our gifts, O God. May they be used to produce justice that would roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream. We ask this in the name of the Living Water, Jesus the Christ. Amen.

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession & The Lord's Prayer

God eternal, our times are held within your hands, our lives are shaped by your design from before our birth. You take hold of what has happened and nurture within it what you wish to be. Like a wise mother, you give us both freedom and guidance. How wise and caring you are, most blessed God; we praise you and thank you.

Holy One, fountain of loving care, wellspring of blessing and source of our hope: help us to break through the dry surface of our parched lives to find the love that flows beneath, quietly, deeply, cool with refreshment – that living water for our souls which is the Spirit of Christ your Son. We ask for these your gifts:

for your church, spiritual renewal; especially we pray for First – St. Andrew's United Church in London, and their minister, the Rev. Joshua Lawrence.

for all in hospital or nursing home, healing and encouragement;

for all who are lonely, some human contact;

for all who are anxious about their job, or who are looking for work, fortitude;

for all who are wondering what path in life to take,

a sense of being able to trust that you, God, will guide them.

for all who mourn, ease of heart; especially we think of the friends and family of Teresa Zellas, Jim Simpson, Glenda McMillan, Harry Gillard, and Marje Lanning.

for all who are ill or dying, all awaiting medical intervention, all recovering from medical treatment, patience and endurance; especially we remember ...

and their loved ones and their caregivers and those known only in the silence of our own hearts.....

for our neighbours in Iran, Iraq, and Syria,

Finally, we think of our own individual lives.

We give you thanks for the blessings you have given us, and to ask for the needs that weigh most upon us.

God of mercy, eternal source of life renewed and abundant, rise up and flood with loving care every withered life and every heart that thirsts for you. This we pray in the name of the One who taught us to pray, saying,

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come,

your will be done

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our sins,

as we forgive those

who sin against us;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For yours is the kingdom,

the power, and the glory,

forever and ever.

Amen.

Responsive Reading: Psalm 29

Ascribe to God, you powers of the heaven,
ascribe to God all glory and strength!

**Ascribe due honour to God's holy name,
and worship in the beauty of holiness.**

Refrain: Glory, glory, glory to our God.

God's voice is over the waters -

God's glory thundering across the great waters.

God's voice is power, God's voice is full of majesty.

God's voice shatters the cedars,
splinters the cedars of Lebanon.

**God's voice makes Lebanon skip like a calf,
Mount Hermon stampede like a wild young bull.**

God's voice forks into tongues of fire,

God's voice shakes the wilderness,

sets trembling the wilderness of Kadesh.

**God's voice causes the oaks to whirl,
stripping the forest bare;
and in the temple all cry: Glory!**

Refrain: Glory, glory, glory to our God.

God sits enthroned above the waters,

God is enthroned as sovereign forever.

You give strength to your people, O God.

Now give to your people the blessing of peace.

Refrain: Glory, glory, glory to our God.

Scripture: Isaiah 42:1-9

The Servant, a Light to the Nations

Here is my servant, whom I uphold,

my chosen, in whom my soul delights;

I have put my spirit upon him;

he will bring forth justice to the nations.

He will not cry out or lift up his voice

or make it heard in the street;

a bruised reed he will not break,

and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;

he will faithfully bring forth justice.

He will not grow faint or be crushed

until he has established justice in the earth,

and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

Thus says God, the LORD,

who created the heavens and stretched them out,

who spread out the earth and what comes from it,

who gives breath to the people upon it

and spirit to those who walk in it:

I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness;

I have taken you by the hand and kept you;
I have given you as a covenant to the people,
a light to the nations,
to open the eyes that are blind,
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,
from the prison those who sit in darkness.
I am the LORD; that is my name;
my glory I give to no other,
nor my praise to idols.
See, the former things have come to pass,
and new things I now declare;
before they spring forth,
I tell you of them.

*The other readings for this week are: **Acts 10:34-43, Matthew 3:13-17***

Hymn VU 99 “Christ, When for Us You Were Baptized” *to the tune Winchester Old (VU 75)*

Christ, when for us you were baptized,
God's Spirit on you came,
as peaceful as a dove and yet
as urgent as a flame.

God called you, 'My beloved Son,'
called you, 'My servant true,'
sent you God's kingdom to proclaim,
God's holy will to do.

Straightway and steadfast until death
you then obeyed the call
freely as Son of Man to serve
and give your life for all.

Baptize us with your Spirit now,
your cross on us be signed,
that likewise in God's service we
may perfect freedom find. Called by earth and sky, promise of hope held high.

Meditation: “Outside the Box”

We Go Forth With God's Blessing

Hymn MV 161 “I Have Called You by Your Name”

I have called you by your name, you are mine;
I have gifted you and ask you now to shine.
I will not abandon you; all my promises are
true. You are gifted, called, and chosen; you are mine.

I will help you learn my name as you go;
read it written in my people, help them grow.
Pour the water in my name, speak the word your soul can
claim, offer Jesus' body given long ago.

I know you will need my touch as you go;
feel it pulsing in creation's ebb and flow.
Like the woman reaching out, choosing faith in spite of
doubt, hold the hem of Jesus' robe, then let it go.

I have given you a name, it is mine;
I have given you my Spirit as a sign.
With my wonder in your soul, make my wounded children
whole; go and tell my precious people they are mine.

Commissioning and Benediction

Embrace your call to:

**seek justice and resist evil,
love and serve others, and
live with respect in God's creation.**

Go from this place, living out that calling, and your individual ministries in the world.

**May God, who created the waters of the world,
Christ, the living water,
And the Holy Spirit who hovers over the waters of healing and rebirth,
be with us, this day and always.
Amen.**

Sung Response: VU 454 "May God Who Creates You"

May God who creates you give you light;
may God who sustains you make you wise;
may God who protects you give you joy,
may God who surrounds you give you peace.

ALL:

Rev. Mark will be on vacation Monday, January 16 – Sunday, January 22.

For pastoral emergencies: Dorchester, please contact Mary Dillon at 519-878-7134,
Union, please contact Tom Beecroft at 519-615-0281

UNION:

Thank You! To the congregation of Union United Church for the grocery gift cards. With the rapidly rising cost of food they are most welcome. *Rev. Mark and Barbara*

Thank You! To the UCW for the cookies and other goodies. They were enjoyed by all with whom we shared the holiday season. *Rev. Mark and Barbara*

The deadline for Annual Report submissions is January 25th.

Unified Board meets Wednesday, January 25 at 7 p.m.

DORCHESTER:

Thank You! To the congregation of Dorchester United Church for the restaurant gift cards. For us, they represent the gift of intentional time together (a date), which is much appreciated. *Rev. Mark and Barbara*

Lectionary Readings for next week: (January 15, Second after Epiphany)

Isaiah 49:1-7; Psalm 40:1-11; 1 Corinthians 1:1-9; John 1:29-42