

January 7, 2024
Baptism of Jesus

We Gather In God's Presence

Prelude: "The Friendly Beasts" English traditional carol, arr. by Norman Abbott

Nancy Quinn

Lighting the Christ Candle

Your Word, O God, is a lamp to our feet,
and a light for our path.

Moment of Silent Reflection

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

Call to Worship

At that time, You called the waters together
and called forth dry land from the waters covering the earth,
And You saw that it was good.

At that time, You saw Jesus rise up out of the waters of the Jordan
and Your Spirit descended upon him like a dove,
And You said, "You are my Son, with you I am well pleased."

At this time, on the day we celebrate Jesus' baptism,
**You call us all to be Your sons and daughters,
whom You call Your beloved.**

Hymn: "Down Galilee's Slow Roadways" to tune 519 *Wie Lieblich Ist Der Maien*

Down Galilee's slow roadways a stranger travelled on
from Nazareth to Jordan to be baptised by John.

He went down to the waters like soldier, scribe and slave,
but there within the river the sign was birth and grave.

Arising from the river He saw the heavens torn;
it seemed the sky so open revealed the Spirit's form.

The holy dove descended amid a glorious voice:
"You are my own beloved – my child, my heart, my choice."

We too have found a roadway; it led us to this place.
We all have had to travel in search of hope and grace.
But now beside this water again a voice is heard,
"You are my own, my chosen, beloved of your Lord."

Opening Prayer (unison)

Eternal God, at creation You called light and life into being, yet we seem to prefer the shadows and death of sin; at his baptism, You called Jesus your Son, yet we seem to prefer chasing after other messiahs; at our baptisms, You called us Your Beloved, yet we seem to think that we alone are Your beloved, others are not. Help us see the light: that life and blessings are for sharing; that Jesus is the One to model our life upon; that all life, including those who are not like us and those we don't like, is precious to You.
Amen.

We Are Blessed By God

Solo: "In Bethlehem so Lowly" 17th Century German, arr. by Johannes Brahms

Nancy Quinn

Time for the Young and the Young @ 

Hymn: VU 100 "When Jesus Comes to Be Baptized

When Jesus comes to be baptized,
he leaves the hidden years behind,
the years of safety and of peace,
to bear the sins of humankind.

The Spirit of the Lord comes down,
anoints the Christ to suffering,
to preach the word, to free the bound,
and to the mourner, comfort bring.

He will not quench the dying flame,
and what is bruised we will not break,
but heal the wound injustice dealt,
and out of death his triumph make.

O Spirit help us be like Christ:
to live in love and charity,
to walk in truth and justice now,
and grow in Christian dignity.

We praise you, God, source of all life,
we praise you, Christ, eternal Word,
we praise you, Spirit, gracious gift;
your triune presence fills our world.

Psalm 29 VU 756

R: Glory, glory, glory to our God!

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.**

R: 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!**

R: 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.**

R: Glory, glory, glory to our God!

Scripture: Mark 1:4-11 The Proclamation of John the Baptist, and The Baptism of Jesus

So John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And the whole Judean region and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him and were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals. I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."
In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove upon him. And a voice came from the heavens, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

*The other readings for this week are: **Genesis 1:1-5; Acts 19:1-7***

Meditation: "Pickled, or just all wet?"

Hymn VU 449 "Crashing Waters at Creation"

Crashing waters at creation,
ordered by the Spirit's breath,
first to witness day's beginning
from the brightness of night's death.

Parting water stood and trembled
as the captives passed on through,
washing off the chains of bondage
channel to a life made new.

Cleansing water once at Jordan
closed around the one foretold,
opened to reveal the glory
ever new and ever old.

Living water, never ending,
quench the thirst and flood the soul.
Wellspring, Source of life eternal,
drench our dryness, make us whole.

We Respond To God's Grace

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 pray for your gifts:

Wisdom and guidance for your church, especially Dawn Valley – Oil Springs Pastoral Charge;
Healing and wholeness of spirit for all who are ill or dying, all who are recovering from medical intervention and those awaiting medical treatment; especially we remember Jack Lorimer, and their friends and families and caregivers, and those known only in the silence of our own hearts.....;

Comfort and ease of heart for all who mourn; especially the friends and families of the Rev. Bruce Scott, Elizabeth Clements, and the Rev. Lewis Snow;

Some human contact for all who are lonely;

A sense of being able to trust in your guidance for all who are wondering what path in life to take;

Wisdom and compassion for our leaders;

Hope for all the people of the world especially the peoples of Iran, Iraq, and Syria.

Finally, we think of our own individual lives.

We take some moments of silence to 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. We pray in the name of Jesus Christ, the Living Water, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever, and 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.**

Invitation to Invest in God's Mission

At his baptism, God announced that Jesus was his son, his beloved, and sent the Holy Spirit to equip Jesus for his ministry. At our baptism, we too became a son or daughter of God, and we too received the Holy Spirit, equipping us for ministry in God's world. We do this by reaching out to those in isolation, by caring for the vulnerable in our community and around the world, in person and through our offerings. Our tithes and other offerings will be received.

Offertory Hymn VU 544 "In Gratitude and Humble Trust"

In gratitude and humble trust we bring our best today
to serve your cause and share your love with all along life's way.
O God, who gave yourself to us in Jesus Christ, your Son,
teach us to give ourselves each day until life's work is done.

Prayer of Dedication

God, use what we offer to bless the vulnerable and marginalized in our world; to cause justice to roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. In the name of the Living Water, Jesus, the Christ, we pray. Amen.

Hymn VU 375 “Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness”

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow thro’ the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, Wind, Wind on the sea.

You moved on the waters, you called to the deep,
then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep,
and over the eons you called to each thing:
– wake from your slumbers and rise on your wings.

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow thro’ the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, Wind, Wind on the sea.

You swept thro’ the desert, you stung with the sand,
and you goaded your people with a law and a land;
and when they were blinded with their idols and lies,
then you spoke thro’ your prophets to open their eyes.

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow thro’ the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, Wind, Wind on the sea.

You sang in a stable, you cried from a hill,
then you whispered in silence when the whole world was still;
and down in the city you called once again,
when you blew thro’ your people on the rush of the wind.

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow thro’ the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, Wind, Wind on the sea.

You call from tomorrow, you break ancient schemes,
from the bondage of sorrow the captives dream dreams,
our women see visions, our men clear their eyes,
with bold new decisions your people arise.

Spirit, Spirit of gentleness, blow thro’ the wilderness calling and free,
Spirit, Spirit of restlessness, stir me from placidness, Wind, Wind on the sea.

Commissioning and Benediction

May the water of your baptism enliven you;
May the faith of your baptism strengthen you;
May the community of the baptized support you;

And may Christ who was baptized keep us all in God’s love.

May it be so. **Amen.**

Response: “Go Now in Peace”

Go now in peace. Never be afraid.
God will go with you each hour of ev’ry day.
Go now in faith, steadfast, strong and true.
Know He will guide you in all you do.
Go now in love, and show you believe.
Reach out to others so all the world can see.
God will be there supporting us with love.
Go now in peace, in faith, and in love.
Amen, amen, amen.

Postlude: “Come, Holy Spirit, Dove Divine” H. Percy Smith, arr. by Cindy Berry

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Wanted: Volunteers to greet people as they arrive at church, light the Christ candle, and take the offering forward. Each week one person will cover all three tasks. A sign-up list is located across from the elevator, outside the front of the sanctuary.

Coffee Time Wednesday mornings at 10 a.m.

LECTIONARY READINGS:

January 14 – 2nd after Epiphany

1 Samuel 3:1-10, (11-20); Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51