

January 10th Worship  
Baptism of Our Lord

### Introduction to the Day

Our re-creation in baptism is an image of the Genesis creation, where the Spirit of God moved over the waters. Both Mark's gospel and the story in Acts make clear that it is the Spirit's movement that distinguishes Jesus' baptism from John's. The Spirit has come upon us as upon Jesus and the Ephesians, calling us God's beloved children and setting us on Jesus' mission to re-create the world in the image of God's vision of justice and peace.

### Thanksgiving for Baptism

Blessed be the holy Trinity, <sup>†</sup> one God, the fountain of living water, the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation.

Amen.

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism, we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness. Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters and by your Word you created the world, calling forth life in which you took delight.

Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family.

Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom.

At the river your Son was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit.

By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons, making us heirs of your promise and servants of all.

We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life, and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ.

Shower us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.

To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever.

**Amen.**

Almighty God,  
**who gives us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit and forgives us all our sins, strengthen us in all goodness and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep us in eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

**Amen.**

Holy God, creator of light and giver of goodness, your voice moves over the waters. Immerse us in your grace, and transform us by your Spirit, that we may follow after your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### Prayer of the Day

Holy God, creator of light and giver of goodness, your voice moves over the waters. Immerse us in your grace, and transform us by your Spirit, that we may follow after your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

### Lesson – Acts 19:1-7

<sup>1</sup>While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. <sup>2</sup>He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?" They replied, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." <sup>3</sup>Then he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They answered, "Into John's baptism." <sup>4</sup>Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the

people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus.”<sup>5</sup> On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. <sup>6</sup>When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied—<sup>7</sup>altogether there were about twelve of them.

### Gospel – Mark 1:4-11

<sup>4</sup>John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup>Now John was clothed with camel’s hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>He proclaimed, “The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. <sup>8</sup>I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.”

<sup>9</sup>In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup>And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. <sup>11</sup>And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”

### Message

People of God, grace to you and peace from God, and from our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

Earlier this week a question was asked in a clergy discussion group on Facebook. We were all in the process of thinking ahead to this Sunday and the Baptism of our Lord and the question was,

“If Jesus was without sin, why did Jesus get baptized?”

Here are the responses:

Rituals – something we can probably relate to:

- I’m willing to be corrected on this, but I think his baptism was more similar to the Jewish cleansing rituals than how we view baptism. John baptized with water and Jesus would then baptize with the Spirit.
- Baptism in this context, I would argue equates to Mikvah which is a whole discussion in and of itself.

Others asked Questions in response:

- Does it just kill your everything to think of Jesus as less than perfect? I find the idea kind of comforting.
- Baptism is more about love and identity in creation (incarnation too) than it is about sin. This where we’ve long been theologically as Lutherans. IMO. I mean, if baptism is about sin, why baptize infants?

Some stated it has to do with something larger:

- I think he was being initiated into Johns movement for spiritual renewal. Once John was arrested Jesus was radicalized and took up the mantle of leading the movement. (Remember, John never felt that his ministry was about him, but rather it was about pointing people to Jesus.)
- There is a lot more to baptism than a “cleansing of sin”
- To repent is to turn down a new path. While we almost exclusively associate it with sin, I like to theorize that for Jesus, his baptism marked a public declaration of starting out on his own ministry separate from yet parallel to John’s (the Gospel of John even records that Jesus himself baptized others early in his ministry).

Others even thought that Jesus was up to something:

- Maybe Jesus was trolling, knowing that there would be holographic charizard level theophany...On a serious note, the idea of Jesus as a trickster is convincing and helpful for me.

Many made the connection between Christ's baptism and our own

- To reveal to everyone his identity (the beloved Son of God), and to reveal to us our true identities in baptism - we are God's own beloved children.
- So God could have an opportunity to tell him he was beloved (which is always a good thing--maybe he didn't NEED that, but we do).
- His baptism told the world exactly what our baptism tells us - You are God's own beloved child
- Personally, I see it at divine solidarity, showing us where the journey begins and ends. Baptized into Jesus' death and all that.
- Another take: Jesus was baptized to inaugurate the Kingdom of God. If you take this angle, the ripping open of the heavens would be a key focal point. Jesus' baptism (and our own) is the tearing down of the last barrier between us and God.
- Along with what others have said, part of what I see going on is that he identifies himself with us in his baptism, so that we could then be identified with him in ours.
- So that in (and thereafter) our own baptism, God looks also upon each of us and says, "This is my child, the beloved, with whom I am well pleased." Or, to quote Paul, "if we are united in a death like his, we shall certainly be united in a resurrection like his."
- It's just like every other thing Jesus did; he did it for you.

And, finally, I would be remiss to not quote my dear friend, Brad Peterson, who equates everything to Star Wars. That, in Jesus' baptism, when the heavens open up and the Spirit descends upon him like a dove, it's much like a Jedi in star Wars when they realize the power of the light saber. When there is that moment where the hum of the light saber is heard, and the power is realized.

It's just like us. When we remind ourselves of the Mark on our forehead and trace the cross that we are reminded that we are God's children, that we are beloved children of God, nothing can separate us from that.

In all of these answers, I come back to this idea of there being something larger at play here. This idea that there is much more to baptism than a cleansing of sin. This belief that our stories don't end at our baptism, but rather they begin.

Why do we baptize infants if it's simply about our sin? Baptism, and so much about baptism for us, is about what comes after. It's about what we do with it. It's no wonder it's a part of our baptismal litany. As we baptize a child, we make promises as a congregation. Parents make promises that they will bring their child to worship and that they will teach them all the things that we know as people of faith. Sponsors make promises too, to make sure that parents do those things that they have promised to do.

And we make promises as a congregation as well. Beyond that we invite them into the mission we share. We promise that we will look at them as a beloved child of God. And in them, see the cross that we too wear upon our brow, that we too have been marked with. That mission that we too have been called into much like the colleague who offers that maybe it was Jesus taking on the mantle of the mission that John had started. Thought, John knew there was much greater coming after him.

Maybe it's that mission we share to make sure that each and every child of God knows that in their baptism, they shared a moment with Jesus, a moment that he too, he himself shared. In our baptism, that last barrier is torn down. That God looks upon us as God's own beloved children.

And just as Jesus, when the skies opened up and the Spirit descended upon him like a dove, He knew there was more to do. Just like a Jedi when they receive and experience the power of a light saber, they know there's great responsibility that comes with that power. Just like us as people of faith, that as we look upon our brow and see that cross, we know there is more to this life than simply being free from sin and death.

We know that this mark calls us into a life of making sure that each other person we see who, if we remember from last week is made in the image of God no matter what we have to say about it, that when we look at them, they are in that same mission as we are. God has called us into that together.

In our baptism God looked upon us and said, "you are my beloved."

In Jesus' baptism God looked upon him and said, "you are my beloved."

In our neighbor's baptism God looked upon them and said, "you are my beloved."

And we are all in this mission together.

We speak those words in our baptismal service as we invite the newly baptized into the mission that we share as people of God.

People of God, let us go forth in that mission, seeing the mark of our God on our neighbor and the reminder of that mission we share.

Thanks be to God.

### **Apostle's Creed**

### **Prayers**

Guided by Christ made known to the nations, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all people in need.

For the church throughout the world and its leaders, that guided by the Holy Spirit they proclaim the forgiveness of sins, let us pray.

#### **Have mercy, O God.**

For wilderness and water, wind and wild beasts, and all living things on earth, that God's goodness is revealed through creation and faithful stewards care for all God has made, let us pray.

#### **Have mercy, O God.**

For the nations of the world and their leaders, for laborers busy both day and night, and for peacemakers amid strife, that God inspire all people to use their strength wisely, let us pray.

#### **Have mercy, O God.**

For the sick and those who provide medical care, for the imprisoned and those who show them mercy, for the lonely and those who provide companionship, for all who suffer, that God shower compassion, let us pray.

#### **Have mercy, O God.**

For the congregation gathered here, for students returning to school, for those seeking renewal in their daily work, that all the beloved of God experience grace and peace, let us pray.

#### **Have mercy, O God.**

In thanksgiving for the faithful departed who now rest from their labors, that their witness inspire us in our baptismal vocations, let us pray.

#### **Have mercy, O God.**

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior.

**Amen.**

## **Offering**

Our 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Well Offering / Mission Offering will be determined by you, the people of Good Shepherd. A theme for us for the coming year is going to be Extravagant Generosity. Instead of US telling YOU what our Mission Offering for the first quarter is going to go to, we are going to have YOU tell US. If there is a local cause that you are passionate about, we want to hear about it. At the conclusion of the 1<sup>st</sup> Quarter, the Leadership Team will meet to discuss the causes that folks are passionate about, and determine the distribution of funds from there.

## **Offertory Prayer**

O God, receive these gifts as you receive us: like a mother receives her child, with arms open wide. Nourish us anew in your tender care, and empower us in faithful service to tend to others with this same love, through Jesus Christ, our saving grace.

**Amen.**

## **At Home Communion Liturgy**

### +WORDS OF INSTITUTION+

(Holding the bread) In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, “Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.”

(Holding the cup) Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink saying, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this in remembrance of me.” When we eat this bread and drink from this cup, we proclaim the Lord’s death until he comes.

(Tear the bread, share with each person – invite them to dip into the cup of wine/grace juice) +

### LORD’S PRAYER +

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION +

Christ Jesus, at this table we have feasted on your very life and are strengthened for our journey. Send us forth from this banquet nourished in body and in spirit to proclaim your good news and serve others in your name.

**Amen.**

### BLESSING EACH OTHER +

(Using your pointer finger, dip it in the bowl of water, and make the sign of the cross on another’s forehead or the back of their hand)

“Child of God, marked as God’s own, Jesus loves you, and will love you forever. AMEN”

Take turns until each person has been blessed.

## **Blessing**

God the creator strengthen you;  
Jesus the beloved fill you;  
and the Holy Spirit the comforter ✚ keep you in peace.

**Amen.**

## **Dismissal**

Go in peace. Be the light of Christ.

**Thanks be to God.**

## **ANNOUNCEMENTS! ANNOUNCEMENTS! ANNOUNCEMENTS!**

### **Carport Carside Communion**

Join us THIS SUNDAY, January 10<sup>th</sup>, for Carport Carside Communion from 10 am – 11 am.

If you have candles and would like to return them, this would be a good time.

### **Annual Meeting!!**

The Annual Meeting of the Lutheran Church of the Good Shepherd will be held on the morning of January 31<sup>st</sup>. This meeting will be happening via Zoom and details will be coming. YOU DO NOT NEED A COMPUTER TO JOIN A ZOOM MEETING. There will be Zoom test meetings in the weeks leading up to the Annual Meeting as well as Zoom Fellowship on Sunday mornings where there is no communion.