

The Baptism of our Lord

January 9, 2022

The theme for the Epiphany season is recognizing Jesus as God's Son, the Messiah, our Savior. This was first made known publicly at His baptism.

God the Holy Trinity was present at Jesus' Baptism, so also is God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit present in every Baptism in His holy Name. The blessings of Baptism are bestowed by God's Word in our own Baptism. Our Baptism is a "washing of regeneration and renewal in the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5) in which we receive Christ's righteousness, innocence, and blessedness.

Brightest and Best of the Stars of the Morning

Lutheran Service Book 400, Lutheran Worship 86, The Lutheran Hymnal 128



1 Bright - est and best of the stars of the morn - ing,
2 Cold on His cra - dle the dew - drops are shin - ing;
3 Shall we not yield Him, in cost - ly de - vo - tion,
4 Vain - ly we of - fer each am - ple ob - la - tion,



Dawn on our dark - ness and lend us thine aid;
Low lies His head with the beasts of the stall;
Fra - grance of E - dom and of - f'rings di - vine,
Vain - ly with gifts would His fa - vor se - cure.



Star of the East, the ho - ri - zon a - dorn - ing,
An - gels a - dore Him in slum - ber re - clin - ing,
Gems of the moun - tain and pearls of the o - cean,
Rich - er by far is the heart's ad - o - ra - tion;



Guide where our in - fant Re - deem - er is laid.
Mak - er and Mon - arch and Sav - ior of all.
Myrrh from the for - est and gold from the mine?
Dear - er to God are the prayers of the poor.

- 5 Brightest and best of the stars of the morning,
Dawn on our darkness and lend us thine aid;
Star of the East, the horizon adorning,
Guide where our infant Redeemer is laid.

L In the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

L Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C who made heaven and earth. (*Psalm 124:8*)

L Who can discern his errors? Forgive my hidden faults.

C Keep your servant also from willful sins; may they not rule over me. (*Psalm 19:12, 13*)

L If You, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord who could stand?

C But with You there is forgiveness; therefore You are feared. (*Psalm 130:3–4*)

L Let us, confess before God that we have sinned in thought, word, and deed, and as His people let us take refuge in His infinite mercy seeking His grace for the sake of Christ, saying:

C God, be merciful to me, a sinner, forgive us our sins, and lead us to everlasting life. Amen.

(*Luke 18:13*)

L Almighty God, merciful Father, in Your holy Church, You daily and richly forgive us our sins and grant us new life through Your Spirit. Be in our midst, enliven our faith, and graciously receive our prayer and praise; through Your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

C Amen.

Introit Psalm 2:7–11, 12c; antiphon Isaiah 42:1a

L Behold my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights.

C I will tell of the decree:

The Lord said to me, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you.

L Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,
and the ends of the earth your possession.

C You shall break them with a rod of iron
and dash them in pieces like a potter’s vessel.”

L Now therefore, O kings, be wise;
be warned, O rulers of the earth.

C Serve the Lord with fear,
and rejoice with trembling.

L for his wrath is quickly kindled.
Blessèd are all who take refuge in him.

C Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

L Behold my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights.

Kyrie

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

Gloria in Excelsis ~ Glory to God in the Highest

L Glory to God in the highest, and peace to his people on earth.

C **Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father: We worship You, we give You thanks, and we praise You for Your glory.**

L Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father, You are Lord and God, You are the Lamb of God:

C **Lord Jesus Christ, You take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us.**

L Lord Jesus Christ, You are seated at the right hand of the Father; and we ask you to graciously receive our prayer.

C **For You alone are the Holy One,
You alone are the Lord,
You alone are the Most High, Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit, in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

Collect of the Day

L Let us pray: Father in heaven, at the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River You proclaimed Him Your beloved Son and anointed Him with the Holy Spirit. Make all who are baptized in His name faithful in their calling as Your children and inheritors with Him of everlasting life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

Isaiah 43:1–7

¹But now thus says the LORD,
he who created you, O Jacob,
he who formed you, O Israel:
“Fear not, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.

²When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.

³For I am the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.
I give Egypt as your ransom,
Cush and Seba in exchange for you.

⁴Because you are precious in my eyes,
and honored, and I love you,
I give men in return for you,
peoples in exchange for your life.

⁵Fear not, for I am with you;
I will bring your offspring from the east,
and from the west I will gather you.

⁶I will say to the north, Give up,
and to the south, Do not withhold;
bring my sons from afar
and my daughters from the end of the earth,

⁷everyone who is called by my name,
whom I created for my glory,
whom I formed and made.”

- L** This is the Word of the Lord.
C Thanks be to God.

Gradual Revelation 7:14; Psalm 84:5

- L** Praise the Lord, all nations! Extol him, all peoples!
C For great is his steadfast love toward us, and the faithfulness of the Lord endures forever.
L Ascribe to the Lord the glory due his name;
C bring an offering, and come into his courts!

Psalm 29

- L** ¹Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
C ²**Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness.**
L ³The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD, over many waters.
C ⁴**The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.**
L ⁵The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.
C ⁶**He makes Lebanon to skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox.**
L ⁷The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.
C ⁸**The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.**
L ⁹The voice of the LORD makes the deer give birth and strips the forests bare,
and in his temple all cry, "Glory!"
C ¹⁰**The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD sits enthroned as king forever.**
L ¹¹May the LORD give strength to his people!
C May the LORD bless his people with peace!

Romans 6:1–11

¹What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ²By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

⁵For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷For one who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹We know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

- L** This is the Word of the Lord.
C Thanks be to God.

Verse of the Day: Mark 1:11b

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia, You are my beloved Son. Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia, With you I am well pleased. Alleluia.

Luke 3:15–22

L The Holy Gospel according to St. Luke, the 3rd chapter.

C **Glory to You, O Lord.**

¹⁵As the people were in expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Christ, ¹⁶John answered them all, saying, “I baptize you with water, but he who is mightier than I is coming, the strap of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire. ¹⁷His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his barn, but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

¹⁸So with many other exhortations he preached good news to the people. ¹⁹But Herod the tetrarch, who had been reprovved by him for Herodias, his brother’s wife, and for all the evil things that Herod had done, ²⁰added this to them all, that he locked up John in prison.

²¹Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, ²²and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”

L This is the Gospel of the Lord.

C **Praise to You, O Christ.**

C **I believe in God, the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.**

**And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died and was buried.
He descended into hell.
The third day He rose again from the dead.
He ascended into heaven**

**and sits at the right hand of God the Father
Almighty.
From thence He will come to judge the living
and the dead.**

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy Christian Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**



1 Songs of thank - ful - ness and praise, Je - sus, Lord, to Thee we raise,
 2 Man - i - fest at Jor-dan's stream, Proph-et, Priest, and King su-preme;
 3 Man - i - fest in mak-ing whole Pal - sied limbs and faint - ing soul;
 4 Sun and moon shall dark-ened be, Stars shall fall, the heav'ns shall flee;
 5 Grant us grace to see Thee, Lord, Pres - ent in Thy ho - ly Word—



Man - i - fest - ed by the star To the sa - ges from a - far,
 And at Ca - na wed - ding guest In Thy God-head man - i - fest;
 Man - i - fest in val - iant fight, Quell-ing all the dev - il's might;
 Christ will then like light - ning shine, All will see His glo - rious sign;
 Grace to im - i - tate Thee now And be pure, as pure art Thou;



Branch of roy - al Da - vid's stem In Thy birth at Beth - le - hem:
 Man - i - fest in pow'r di - vine, Chang - ing wa - ter in - to wine;
 Man - i - fest in gra - cious will, Ev - er bring-ing good from ill;
 All will then the trum - pet hear, All will see the Judge ap - pear;
 That we might be - come like Thee At Thy great e - piph - a - ny



An - thems be to Thee ad-dressed, God in man made man - i - fest.
 An - thems be to Thee ad-dressed, God in man made man - i - fest.
 An - thems be to Thee ad-dressed, God in man made man - i - fest.
 Thou by all wilt be con-fessed, God in man made man - i - fest.
 And may praise Thee, ev - er blest, God in man made man - i - fest.

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Devotional Thoughts:

Our film opens with an aerial shot of barren and desolate hills. Slowly the camera pans to the right across a bleak and deserted plain until it stops on a ribbon of green foliage extending off into the distance. Zooming in, we soon see a crowd of people gathered around a central figure dressed in strange clothing.

Cutting to a close-up of this man, we notice that he is preaching to this group of people. One by one, young and old, men and women, come to the preacher and enter the river to be baptized. Eventually, only one man remains. He, too, enters the river. As a dove amazingly alights upon this singular individual, a booming voice from heaven declares, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

It is almost impossible to over-dramatize the significance of that event in the life of Jesus and in human history. All four Gospels record Jesus' baptism by John. They all record the Holy Spirit descending upon Jesus in the form of a dove. They all report that in His baptism, Jesus is recognized as the Son of God. Matthew,

Mark, and Luke quote the voice from heaven. John quotes John the Baptist's words, "I have seen and have borne witness that this is the Son of God."

It is appropriate that the Baptism of our Lord is the first Sunday after Epiphany. Prior to this, only a few select people knew Jesus to be the Son of God and Savior of the world. Among them were Mary, Joseph, the shepherds, Simeon, Anna, and the Wise Men. Now, God the Father reveals to the entire world that Jesus is His Beloved Son! John the Baptist delivers the message that not only is Jesus the Son of God but He is also "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!" (John 1:29). Truly this is the highlight of Epiphany, "God in man made manifest" to be the Savior of the world!

John was preaching repentance and offering a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. This brought great crowds to Him. If you are wondering why Jesus had to be baptized if He never sinned, you are not the first to ask that question. The first to wonder about Jesus' baptism was John the Baptist. Matthew records his question, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" Jesus answered John and each of us who ask the question, "Let it be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness" (Matthew 3:14-15). Baptism is a matter of sin and righteousness!

Let me pause here for a moment and ask this question, "What is the main reason that people don't come to church?" People much smarter and wiser than I am have pondered that question and suggested many answers. Is it unfamiliar hymns? Is it hard pews? Is it poor heating and air-conditioning? Could it be a lack of good coffee and snacks? The list goes on but I think that all these answers miss the mark.

On the day recorded in our text, crowds of people from far and wide traveled through the Judean desert to an isolated place for one reason. It wasn't to sing upbeat popular music. It wasn't to sit in comfortable lounge chairs. They didn't come for a climate-controlled café. They came for the forgiveness of sins!

In my estimation, people don't flock to church because they don't believe that they need forgiveness. They want creature comforts and a lifestyle coach. This shouldn't be surprising to us. Pharisees of every age have found little value in God's grace.

I thought of this while recently reading about a serial killer who considers himself to be "a good person." I was reminded of Dale Carnegie's book, *How To Win Friends And Influence People*. In the first chapter, he states, "Nine-nine times out of a hundred, people DON'T criticize themselves for anything, no matter how wrong it may be" (page 3-4). He recounts several examples of hardened criminals who thought of themselves as good people.

If criminals of the worst kind believe that they are good people, then it is not surprising when people around us also believe this deception of Satan. It is no wonder that people don't want to come to church and confess that they are poor miserable sinners. But they are. We all are. Death is proof that all sin (Romans 5:12).

Nothing in the Christian Church makes sense if the world is not guilty of sin and disobedience to God's commands. If the church is only a self-help club or social gathering, then let's stop. The world is better at those things than we are.

No, we are here to proclaim law and gospel, sin and grace. The Christmas story is filled with this message. The angel told Joseph, "She will bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins" (Matthew 1:21). The angel told the shepherds, "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2:11). While holding Jesus in his arms, Simeon declared, "My eyes have seen your salvation" (Luke 2:30).

Now at Jesus' Baptism, His work of salvation is revealed to all of humanity. John the Baptist's beautiful words ring in our ears, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!" The truth of these words is for everyone: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only (beloved) Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life!" (John 3:16).

Epiphany is the time to recognize that God's own Son came to save sinners. Epiphany is also a time to recognize that each of us is sinful and so in need of salvation. When we fail to recognize our sin, we certainly do not recognize our need for a Savior! May God open our eyes to the reality of our need for forgiveness and the miracle of salvation won for us by Jesus on the cross. May we see in our baptism the forgiveness that was so desperately sought by the crowds who came to John the Baptist. We thank God for the righteousness of Jesus that He grants to us through the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5).

“Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, rejoice. Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 4:4-7).

God’s richest blessings to you in Christ.

L Heavenly Father, You have fulfilled all righteousness in the Baptism of Your beloved Son. As we have received this righteousness by our Baptism into Him, make us bold in faith and fervent in love as we sojourn through this world of sin.

C Amen.

L Lord God, heavenly Father, You manifested Yourself with the Holy Spirit in the fullness of grace at the Baptism of Your dear Son. With Your voice, You directed us to the One who has borne our sins, that we may receive grace and forgiveness. Keep us, we implore You, in the true faith. Since we have been baptized in accordance with Your command and the example of Your Son, strengthen our faith by Your Holy Spirit and lead us to everlasting life and salvation; through the same Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

L O Lord God, thank You for Your daily presence. As we witness distressful things happening in the world, grant us endurance of faith that we would not lose heart. Move us to call upon You in times of trouble trusting that You hear our prayers and grant us deliverance through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen.

L Almighty God, send Your holy angels to watch over all of our loved ones, especially those who live in distant places. We thank You for the protection granted to all who have attended to our needs during the pandemic. As we witness this pandemic push our health care system to its limit, we ask for Your continued protection and grace to rest upon all who serve in the medical professions.

C Amen.

C I thank You, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, Your dear Son, that You have kept me this night from all harm and danger; and I pray that You would keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please You. For into Your hands I commend myself, my body and soul, and all things. Let Your holy angel be with me, that the evil foe may have no power over me. Amen.

C Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven; give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

L Let us bless the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

L The Lord bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.

C Amen.



1 Bap-tized in - to Your name most ho - ly, O Fa - ther, Son, and
 2 My lov - ing Fa - ther, here You take me To be hence-forth Your
 3 My faith - ful God, You fail me nev - er; Your prom - ise sure - ly
 4 All that I am and love most dear-ly— Re - ceive it all, O



Ho - ly Ghost, I claim a place, though weak and low - ly,
 child and heir. My faith - ful Sav - ior, here You make me
 will en - dure. O cast me not a - way for - ev - er
 Lord, from me. Let me con - fess my faith sin - cere - ly;



A - mong Your saints, Your cho - sen host. Bur - ied with Christ and
 The fruit of all Your sor - rows share. O Ho - ly Spir - it,
 If words and deeds be - come im - pure. Have mer - cy when I
 Help me Your faith - ful child to be! Let noth - ing that I



dead to sin, Your Spir - it now shall live with - in.
 com - fort me When threat - ning clouds a - round I see.
 come de - filed; For - give, lift up, re - store Your child.
 am or own Serve an - y will but Yours a - lone.

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The Baptism of our Lord



From earliest times the birth of Jesus, Epiphany, and The Baptism of our Lord have been closely associated in the Church Year. By 385 Epiphany and The Baptism of our Lord was a major eight day celebration in Jerusalem.

The Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River is a much loved subject of Christian art. It adorns stained glass windows, paintings and icons.

Although The Baptism of our Lord is often passed over in many non-liturgical churches, it affords us the opportunity direct our attention to Jesus' message and ministry. John the Baptist, Jesus, and His disciples all share a common message, "Repent for the Kingdom of God is at hand." From their time until now, baptism and repentance have been closely connected.

As we celebrate the beginning of Jesus' ministry at His baptism, let us see its fulfillment in the cross and resurrection. Jesus' Baptism is the ideal time for us to remember that in baptism with have been truly connected to Jesus' death and resurrection. May we daily return to baptism in repentance and live the new life we have received by the working of the Holy Spirit through baptism.

Pastor Quardokus

Service Notes:

One person may serve as Leader or this may be shared with a number of individuals.

Read one or more of the lessons. Hymns may be sung or read. Use as much or little of this service as you would like.

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Enhancing Your Worship

Meditating on God's Word and Works

I will meditate on your wondrous works. Psalm 119:27
My eyes are awake through the night watches,
That I may meditate on Your word. Psalm 119:148 NKJV

The Baptism of our Lord

January 10 –15, 2022

Introduction

Most modern forms of mediation turn a person inward. Biblical meditation turns a person outward toward what God has said and done especially what He has said and done through Jesus for our salvation.

Each Sunday has its own special theme directing us to meditate on God's word and actions. This theme is found in the Propers of the Day (the parts of the service that change week to week). From Advent through the Easter season these themes focus our attention on the life of Jesus from His birth to His death and resurrection. There is always much more in the propers than can be covered in any Sunday service. God willing, I will use the propers for Sunday to provide you with a devotion each day to help you mediate on what God has done for you.

Monday

- L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

Verse of the Day: Mark 1:11b

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia, You are my beloved Son. Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia, With you I am well pleased. Alleluia.

Introit Psalm 2:7–11, 12c; antiphon Isaiah 42:1a

- L** Behold my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights.
C I will tell of the decree:
The Lord said to me, "You are my Son; today I have begotten you."
L Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,
and the ends of the earth your possession.
C You shall break them with a rod of iron
and dash them in pieces like a potter's vessel."
L Now therefore, O kings, be wise;
be warned, O rulers of the earth.
C Serve the Lord with fear,
and rejoice with trembling.
L for his wrath is quickly kindled.
Blessèd are all who take refuge in him.

C Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit;
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

L Behold my servant, whom I uphold,
my chosen, in whom my soul delights.

Kyrie

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

Psalm 2 is a powerful psalm about God anointing and protecting His Son and caring for those who come to Him. In verse 7, we read these wonderful words, “You are my Son; today I have begotten you.” It is impossible for us to hear these words today and not remember Jesus’ baptism and God saying from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”

“Begotten” is a word that we don’t use very often anymore. Most of the newer translations of the Bible choose to rephrase sentences to avoid it. I don’t remember using it in a conversation except when speaking about the Bible and God’s only-begotten Son, Jesus.

However, throughout most of history, this was an important word. It denotes natural descent or lineage as opposed to adoption. In one sense, its importance has reemerged with the popularity of genetic testing and the study of ancestry although we do not actually use the word in our conversations.

We know that all who believe in Jesus are children of God. But Ephesians 1 and other places in the Bible make it clear that we are adopted into God’s family. Jesus is unique among all of humanity in that He not only has a human parent; He is also the only-begotten Son of God the Father. He is connected to God the Father in such an intimate way as it can only be described by the word “begotten.” While we cannot fully understand or explain the inner workings of the Holy Trinity, we do know that God has revealed this relationship between the Father and the Son.

On the Sunday of the Baptism of our Lord we are reminded of these words from the Nicene Creed:

And in one Lord Jesus Christ,
the only-begotten Son of God,
begotten of His Father before all worlds,
God of God, Light of Light,
very God of very God,
begotten, not made,
being of one substance with the Father,
by whom all things were made;
who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven
and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary
and was made man;

We understand this all to be true for one purpose:

and was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate.
He suffered and was buried.
And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures
and ascended into heaven
and sits at the right hand of the Father.
And He will come again with glory to judge both the living and the dead,
whose kingdom will have no end.

We thank God for the gift of His only-begotten Son. May we always believe in Him and so receive the gift of eternal life that He won for us on the cross.

Let us pray: Lord God, Our Heavenly Father, thank You for the gift of Your only-begotten Son. Grant us faith to live as Your children here on earth as we await the day when you will draw us to be with You. Amen.

[Please allow me a postscript. A favorite part of this psalm for me is verse 2, “He who sits in the heavens laughs; the Lord holds them in derision.” I often think of this verse when people in our unbelieving world think that they can live in sin and disregard God and His commands. God simply laughs at their foolishness. May we never be counted among them.]

Tuesday

L In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Verse of the Day: Mark 1:11b

L Alleluia, Alleluia, You are my beloved Son. Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia, With you I am well pleased. Alleluia.

Kyrie

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L Let us pray: Father in heaven, at the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River You proclaimed Him Your beloved Son and anointed Him with the Holy Spirit. Make all who are baptized in His name faithful in their calling as Your children and inheritors with Him of everlasting life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C Amen.

Our collect gives us an outline of the significance of this Sunday for us in the Church Year. Jesus’ earthly ministry began at His baptism. In the Jordan River, we witness the fullness of the Triune God present at Jesus Baptism. God, the Father, is present in the voice from heaven that declares, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.” God, the Holy Spirit, is present in the form of a dove. God, the Son, is present in the person of Jesus.

In His baptism, Jesus was anointed to be the Christ or Messiah. (Anointed One in Greek is Christ. In Hebrew, it is Messiah.) By this, we mean that Jesus is the One who fulfills all the Old Testament prophecies concerning the coming savior. He will do all that God has planned to save us from our sin.

Just as Jesus is called in baptism to the work of saving us from our sins, we are called in our baptism to lifelong faithfulness to God and His mission. In baptism, our sins are forgiven and we are made part of the family of God. We now live as His children in all that we do. When we fail in our Christian endeavors, we return to our baptism in repentance. As part of God’s family, as His sons and daughters, we inherit all that God has prepared for us—Eternal life in paradise.

Let us pray: Father in heaven, at the Baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River You proclaimed Him Your beloved Son and anointed Him with the Holy Spirit. Make all who are baptized in His name faithful in their calling as Your children and inheritors with Him of everlasting life; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

Wednesday

- L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
C Amen.

Verse of the Day: Mark 1:11b

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia, You are my beloved Son. Alleluia.
C Alleluia, Alleluia, With you I am well pleased. Alleluia.

Psalm 29

- L** ¹Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
C ²**Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his name; worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness.**
L ³The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD, over many waters.
C ⁴**The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.**
L ⁵The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.
C ⁶**He makes Lebanon to skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox.**
L ⁷The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.
C ⁸**The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.**
L ⁹The voice of the LORD makes the deer give birth and strips the forests bare,
and in his temple all cry, "Glory!"
C ¹⁰**The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD sits enthroned as king forever.**
L ¹¹May the LORD give strength to his people!
C May the LORD bless his people with peace!

Kyrie

- | | |
|--------------------|----------------------------|
| L O Lord, | C Have Mercy on us. |
| L O Christ, | C Have Mercy on us. |
| L O Lord, | C Have Mercy on us. |

Psalm 29 is a natural choice for use on the Baptism of our Lord. When Martin Luther read this psalm, it reminded him of baptism. Concerning Psalm 29, he wrote, "He established the flood, Baptism, in which the old Adam is drowned and the new man arises" (The Lutheran Study Bible, page 870).

Luther was not the first to connect Noah's flood to baptism. He was following in the footsteps of the Apostle Peter. He wrote, "...in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3:20-21).

I'm never quite sure why our modern translations like to muddle the connection between Baptism and salvation in this verse. The King James Version makes it very clear when it says, "baptism doth also now save us." The Greek word order puts the words "save" and "baptism" right next to each other!

What first jumped out at me when I read Psalm 29 is the repetition of "The voice of the Lord." I immediately thought of God's voice at Jesus' baptism declaring, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased."

God's word and voice are powerful things! They always accomplish what they say. Right at the very beginning, God's voice was active when God said, "Let there be light," and there was light (Genesis 1:3).

God's word is still powerful in our lives today. It is His word that brings us to faith and keeps us in the faith. St. Paul calls God's word "the Sword of the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:17). Hebrews tells us that "the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword" (Hebrews 4:12).

All of us have come to faith by the working of the Holy Spirit through the mighty and powerful word of God! For some of us, it was the water connected to the word in holy Baptism (Ephesians 5:26). For others, it was God's word that first worked in our hearts and then we were baptized later.

If we desire for God to be active in our lives today, then let us be active in His word!

Prayer: O Lord, thank You for the gift of Holy Baptism and of Your word in Holy Scripture. Move us to be diligent in the study of Your word so that You will be powerful and active in our lives and that our faith and love may grow through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Thursday

L In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Verse of the Day: Mark 1:11b

L Alleluia, Alleluia, You are my beloved Son. Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia, With you I am well pleased. Alleluia.

Kyrie

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

Isaiah 43:1–7

¹But now thus says the LORD,
he who created you, O Jacob,
he who formed you, O Israel:
"Fear not, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name, you are mine.

²When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;
when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,
and the flame shall not consume you.

³For I am the LORD your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.

I give Egypt as your ransom,
Cush and Seba in exchange for you.

⁴Because you are precious in my eyes,
and honored, and I love you,
I give men in return for you,
peoples in exchange for your life.

⁵Fear not, for I am with you;
I will bring your offspring from the east,
and from the west I will gather you.

⁶I will say to the north, Give up,

and to the south, Do not withhold;
bring my sons from afar
and my daughters from the end of the earth,
⁷everyone who is called by my name,
whom I created for my glory,
whom I formed and made.”

These words that the Lord revealed to Isaiah bring hope and comfort to God’s people of old and to God’s people today. Reading through Isaiah 42, you will notice that His people had been deaf and blind to His word. Because they ignored God and disobeyed His commandments, the people suffered. They were slow to take to heart the seriousness of their disobedience so He poured the heat of His anger upon them (Isaiah 42:25).

But “now” (Isaiah 43:1), God has redeemed them and called them by name. The fulfillment of that “now” is found in Jesus. His work of redemption began at His baptism. It was completed on the cross. God put His plan of salvation into action because His people are precious in His eyes and He loves them. (Isaiah 43:4).

Jesus’ work of redemption on the cross was for all people of all time and in every place. But it only has its intended effect when we receive it by faith. Many of us first received it when He called us by name in our baptism. Being made God’s people in baptism, the fire of God’s judgment will not burn us (Isaiah 43:2).

Life has many challenges, even for God’s people. But we need not fear. As God’s people, He gathers us to Himself and grants us life and salvation. May we always find hope and comfort in the redemption that is ours in Jesus.

Prayer: O Lord, keep us from being deaf and blind to Your word and commandments. Grant us, we pray, the faith to trust in Jesus for all the hope and comfort that we need for facing the trials and troubles of life. Remind us again that You have called us by name and that we are precious in Your sight through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Friday

L In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C Amen.

Verse of the Day: Mark 1:11b

L Alleluia, Alleluia, You are my beloved Son. Alleluia.

C Alleluia, Alleluia, With you I am well pleased. Alleluia.

Kyrie

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.

L O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

Romans 6:1–11

¹What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? ²By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it? ³Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

⁵For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷For one who has died has been set free from sin. ⁸Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. ⁹We know that Christ being

raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. ¹⁰For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. ¹¹So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.

There are two sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. A sacrament is a sacred act instituted by God (Christ), in which God Himself has joined His Word of promise to a visible element, and by which He offers, gives, and seals the forgiveness of sins earned by Christ. Only Baptism and the Lord's Supper meet this definition.

Other definitions result in other numbers of sacraments. For example, some early Lutherans talked about three sacraments, the third sacrament being confession and absolution. However, since there is no "visible element" such as water, bread or wine in confession and absolution, most Lutherans have long ago stopped referring to confession and absolution as a sacrament even though it is instituted by Christ and gives forgiveness of sins.

The word sacrament comes to us from the Latin Bible, where it translates the Greek word mystery. Without a doubt, the fact that God offers forgiveness through the human activity of eating, drinking, and washing with water is a great mystery. It is only possible because God's word and command accomplish exactly what He says it does. It is God's word that gives power to sacraments, not human action.

One of the great mysteries of baptism is described in Romans 6:1-11. This mystery is that baptism connects us to Jesus' death on the cross. Amazing but true, in your Baptism, you were mysteriously connected to Jesus' death on the cross and the forgiveness of sins that He won for you there.

Paul goes on to say that since we are connected to Jesus in His death, we will also be connected to Jesus in His resurrection! No wonder we prize Baptism so highly! We are no longer enslaved to sin and its consequence! Paul then says "if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him." Thank God for the blessings that we mysteriously receive by the power of God in the sacrament of Baptism.

Prayer: O God, thank You for the life-giving water of Holy Baptism. Grant that we would always trust Your word and promise that You have connected to Baptism. Move us to live the new life given to us in the new birth of Baptism. Amen.

Saturday

- L** In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
- C** Amen.

Gradual Revelation 7:14; Psalm 84:5

- L** These are the ones coming out of the great tribulation.
- C** They have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.
- L** Blessed are those whose strength is in you,
- C** in whose heart are the highways to Zion.

Verse of the Day: Mark 1:11b

- L** Alleluia, Alleluia, You are my beloved Son. Alleluia.
- C** Alleluia, Alleluia, With you I am well pleased. Alleluia.

Kyrie

- L** O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.
- L** O Christ, **C** Have Mercy on us.
- L** O Lord, **C** Have Mercy on us.

Luke 3:21–22

²¹Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, ²²and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”

There is always more to learn from each lesson than we can consider in our devotional thoughts and meditations. While preparing the home worship for this week, I made an interesting discovery about the word “beloved” spoken by God’s voice from heaven in Luke 3:22.

The Greek word *agapétos* (beloved) sometimes has a special meaning. It is a way that a father or mother would speak about his or her only child. When God the Father calls Jesus His beloved Son, we cannot help but recall that the Beloved is the only-begotten Son who was sent to offer Himself for us. Now, those who were destined to perish are granted eternal life through faith in this beloved and only Son of God. In Him, we have become beloved!

In earlier times, Christians addressed one another as “dearly beloved.” You may still hear this at times in a wedding ceremony. However, by calling each other “beloved,” we did not just mean that we love one another (although it does), it was a way of saying that we are connected to The Beloved, the only-begotten Son of God.

In this week of celebrating Baptism, it is good for us to recall the words of St. Paul recorded in 1 Corinthians 12:12-13, 27:

¹² For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. ¹³ For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit... ²⁷ Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it.

The Apostle John was fond of referring to Christians as “beloved.” He writes in his first letter:

¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. ¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another (1 John 4:10-11).

Prayer: Almighty God, Heavenly Father, thank You for connecting us to Your Beloved Son through Holy Baptism. As we have now also become Your beloved children, grant us the wisdom and grace to love one another in the same way that You have loved us through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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