



Worship Guide
The Baptism of Our Lord
January 9, 2022 | 10:00 AM

PREPARING FOR GOD'S WORD

PRELUDE

Cliff Brock

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

This is the day the Lord has made. **Let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Rev. David Jones

Outreach Ministries Coat Drive

This month we are collecting new or clean, gently-worn coats to be distributed through BTG and One Roof.

A Story Telling Weekend | January 22 & 23

We, along with Central Baptist and St. Paul's Episcopal Church, welcome Rev. Don Davis for a weekend of sacred storytelling. Central Baptist will host dinner on Saturday, January 22. Dinner tickets for \$10 are available in our Church Office.

STEWARDSHIP MOMENT

Chris Rice

OPENING PRAYER

◆CALL TO WORSHIP

The voice of God resounds upon the water.

The Spirit of the Lord hovers over the stream.

The Son of God is named, "Beloved."

And all who worship shout out, "Glory!"

Ascribe to the Lord majesty and strength.

Let us worship God in holy splendor.

◆HYMN 267 Come, Christians, Join to Sing

Come, Christians, join to sing: Alleluia! Amen!

Loud praise to Christ our King: Alleluia! Amen!

Let all, with heart and voice, before his throne rejoice;

Praise is his gracious choice: Alleluia! Amen!

Come, lift your hearts on high: Alleluia! Amen!

Let praises fill the sky: Alleluia! Amen!

He is our guide and friend; to us he'll condescend;

his love shall never end: Alleluia! Amen!

Praise yet our Christ again: Alleluia! Amen!

Life shall not end the strain: Alleluia! Amen!

*On heaven's blissful shore his goodness we'll adore,
singing forevermore: Alleluia! Amen!*

CALL TO CONFESSION

God loves us and calls us each by name. Knowing we are eternally forgiven and infinitely loved, let us boldly confess our sins before God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

We are precious in your sight,
yet we often forget that we are your beloved.
We confess that our love is fickle and inconstant.
We follow selfish goals
and deny that our way of life harms others and hurts your world.
We are sorry and we want to change.
Create in us a clean heart, strengthen our resolve,
reconcile us one to another, and bless us with your peace...

We keep a moment of silence for personal confession.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Beloved, God forgives your sins; know that you are pardoned and be at peace to love the Lord and serve the world. **Thanks be to God!**

◆GLORIA 744 Arise! Your Light Is Come!, vv. 1 & 4

*Arise, your light is come! The Spirit's call obey;
show forth the glory of your God, which shines on you today.*

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

◆PASSING THE PEACE

Each of us struggles to find peace within ourselves, as well as peace in our relationships with others. We celebrate for Jesus was born to bring peace to all through salvation. In our relationship to Jesus, we may find wholeness with ourselves. Through Christ, we may find healing to our neighbors. The peace of Christ be with you. **And also with you.**

TIME FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES RECOGNITION OF ACOLYTES

Rev. Darcie Jones
Bob Graff

Elaine Abbott Will Lemons Adeline Craver
Jonathan Eriksen Bennett Rice

LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Glorious God, when Jesus was baptized for your healing mission the heavens opened in a flash of glory as vision and voice blazed upon the waters. May your Spirit so burn in us that we hear your word translated into deed and follow Jesus in paths of justice, right relationship, and peace. **Amen.**

OLD TESTAMENT READING | Isaiah 43:1-7 | Restoration and Protection Promised

¹ But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. ² When 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. ³ For I am the Lord your God, the Holy One of Israel, your Savior. I give Egypt as your ransom, Ethiopia and Seba in exchange for you. ⁴ Because you are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you, I give people in return for you, nations in exchange for your life. ⁵ Do not fear, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you; ⁶ I will say to the north, "Give them up," and to the south, "Do not withhold; bring my sons from far

away and my daughters from the end of the earth—⁷ everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.”

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

CANTICLE OF PRAISE HYMN 155 Raise a Song of Gladness

Raise a song of gladness, peoples of the earth.

Christ has come, bringing peace, joy to every heart.

Alleluia, alleluia, joy to every heart! Alleluia, alleluia, joy to every heart!

NEW TESTAMENT READING | Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Rev. Tyler Brock

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

The Baptism of Jesus

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

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

SERMON

Baptized in Love

I had breakfast with Andrea Kantorczyk recently and we got on the topic of the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper. I began by telling her how odd it is to me at times to be an ordained reverend, and that communion regularly challenges what it means to me to be faithful or to be ordained. You see, I am a cradle Presbyterian; a lifelong member of First Presbyterian of LaGrange until I was ordained into the role of presbytery member; a son of parents who came to be Presbyterians in their adult life after attending McDonough Presbyterian. My Presbyterian roots taught me that the ordained reverend was the one who presided over the table and the elders of the church were the ones who passed out the elements. But my father, Joff, learned a different understanding during his formative years at Moreland Ave Church of Christ. He has told me before that as a teenager within the church, he was taught how and expected to pray in front of the congregation and often helped to serve their weekly communion. For this reason, Joff doesn’t always agree with the separation from the communion table that Presbyterian polity stresses. For me, these questions came about when I was going through seminary, and the ordination process. Even as I prepared myself for a future in ministry, I never served communion, except for a few times in classes where it was a part of the curriculum. Also during this time, my wife Froom was asked to and served as an ordained elder for the Summit Presbyterian Church, which meant that she could serve communion.

You can imagine how odd it felt for me: Joff reminiscing about how he was part of a church where males of all ages were allowed to serve communion, Froom spending a majority of her life as a Baptist who became a Presbyterian elder and was allowed to serve communion long before I could, and there I was, potentially only a few years removed from ordination, a lifelong Presbyterian, and unable to serve communion without special permissions. I told Andrea (K) that it was odd to me because on the one hand, it feels like we are in some ways not that different from the Catholic Church that sought to be a mediator between the faithful and God. Our requirements for who might serve communion without special permission from the session creates a separation from the act of the sacrament itself.

At the same time, it is through my long journey to ordained teaching elder that also provides me with the deep respect for the act of presiding over the table. It means so much to me that I have endured the trials, taken the tests, and am now able to lead communion. It is a privilege for me that I am able to do that, and it isn't one that I hold lightly. You might say that I have a nuanced view regarding communion.

For a faith that is reformed and always reforming, our spiritual ancestors removed the barrier that the Catholic Church created to separate God from the congregation. Following the Reformation, we no longer came to confess our sins to the priest who gave us steps in finding forgiveness. The language of the faith was no longer Latin, a relatively unknown language among the faithful. The words of the Bible were translated into the language of those who were reading it, allowing for all to have access to God. As time has gone on, we have removed the restriction that only men are allowed to participate in the ministry of Christ, which was a fundamental change to the role of women in ministry in the early church. All of these changes allowed for God to be among the faithful as it is intended through scripture.

Because that is what our passages are telling us. We hear the word of God: "do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine." Our God lets us know that our community of faith is not viewed from 30,000 feet. Indeed, we are assured by Isaiah that God is among us. God protects us as we go from the fires and the flood. And if we are scattered to the ends of the earth, God will bring us back together because they have been called by God.

Luke tells us that John, a potential rival to messiahship, was sought by the communities of the faithful. They were baptized by him, though he told them quite plainly that he was not the messiah that they were looking for. John tells the crowds who come to him with questions about his identity that Jesus is coming. The long-awaited messiah comes to baptize the faithful with the Holy Spirit and who will separate the wheat from the chaff. And following John's foretelling, we are told that Jesus is baptized among the community of faith and as he is praying after, the heavens were wrenched apart and the Holy Spirit descended upon him as a dove. Here is where we hear the voice of God saying, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

Our scripture today assures us that God is here, God is among us. When the faithful line up to be baptized and have their sins washed clean, Jesus is among those number. The Son of God joins the lines of the sinners. Indeed, Jesus is among the lines of the people as we sit in traffic, perhaps cursing under our breath or aloud when a driver in front of us doesn't immediately go when the light turns green. Jesus stands in line with us when we are awaiting a chance to ride the rides at amusement parks, as we complain about the extended time for even the fast pass lines.

Jesus coming with all the people to be baptized and God telling us how close at hand God is lets us know that we have our very own fast track to God. The reformed faith removes the clergy class, who serve as the voice to speak to and the ear to hear from God. Our community of faith can be lead by the movement of the Holy Spirit and we can discern the call of God for ourselves.

We might not always get it right as a community of the faithful. The church has been struggling for almost 2,000 years to witness and serve following the physical absence of Christ. Even to this day, we find ourselves at odds with one another over this or that. I appreciate the words that Andrea said during that breakfast, which I am now paraphrasing: "It is a privilege to serve and a privilege to participate."

Friends, our community of faithful believers is a privilege where we might serve out the mission of Christ's church, experience the sacraments that Jesus instituted, and live out what it means to live for one another.

A moment of silent reflection follows the sermon.

◆HYMN 164 Down Galilee's Slow Roadways

*Down Galilee's slow roadways a stranger traveled on
from Nazareth to Jordan to be baptized 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."*

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER

Invitation to the Table *Please choose a fresh piece of bread or a pre-filled, gluten-free, communion kit.*

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Sung Sanctus Hymn 490 Wash, O God, Your Sons and Daughters, v. 3

Therefore, with all creation, we sing your praise:

*O how deep your holy wisdom! Unimagined, all your ways!
To your name be glory, honor! With our lives we worship, praise!
We your people stand before you, water-washed and Spirit-born.
By your grace, our lives we offer. Re-create us; God, transform!*

Words of Institution

Memorial Acclamation

Great is the mystery of faith:

Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.

The Lord's Prayer

**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 debts as we
forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is
the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

Receiving of the Elements

Jesus said: "I am the bread of life." Taste and see that the Lord is good.

Jesus said: "I am the vine, you are the branches.

Come to me and never be hungry; believe in me and never thirst."

These are the gifts of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

SPECIAL MUSIC

Baptized in Water
Lalla McGee, soloist

Music by Cliff Brock
Words by Michael Saward

*Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit, cleansed by the blood of Christ our King;
heirs of salvation, trusting the promise faithfully now God's praises we sing.*

*Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit, dead in the tomb with Christ our King;
one with his rising, freed and forgiven, thankfully now God's praises we sing. Alleluia.*

*Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit, marked with the sign of Christ our King;
born of the Spirit, we are God's children; joyfully now God's praises we sing. Alleluia.*

Prayers of the People:

Winn & Kim Wise in the death of Winn's sister, Betsy

Melanie & Ed Atkinson Jo An & Art Neil Sharon & Martin Harmon

Barbara Brown

Post Communion Prayer

GOING FORTH TO SHARE GOD'S WORD

◆ **HYMN 375 Shall We Gather at the River**, vv. 1, 2 & 4

*Shall we gather at the river, where bright angel feet have trod,
with its crystal tide forever flowing by the throne of God?*

Refrain: *Yes, we'll gather at the river, the beautiful, the beautiful river;
gather with the saints at the river that flows by the throne of God.*

*On the margin of the river, washing up its silver spray,
we will walk and worship ever, all the happy golden day.* (Refrain)

*Soon we'll reach the shining river; soon our pilgrimage will cease;
soon our happy hearts will quiver with the melody of peace.* (Refrain)

◆ CHARGE & BLESSING

May the Christ who walks on wounded feet walk with you along the way.

May the Christ who serves with wounded hands stretch out your hands to serve.

May the Christ who loves with a wounded heart cause your heart to love.

May you see the face of Christ in everyone you meet,

and may everyone you meet see the face of Christ in you. **Amen.**

POSTLUDE

WORSHIP PARTICIPANTS

Rev. David Jones, Pastor

Rev. Tyler Brock, Associate Pastor

Cliff Brock, Choir Director

Chris Rice, Elder, Youth Ministry

Lalla McGee, Cantor

Rev. Darcie Jones, Children's Coordinator

Bob Graff, Acolyte Coordinator

Nick Kantorczyk, Online Worship Producer

FINANCIAL REPORT

	Year End Total Giving 2021	Year End Total Giving 2020
Pledged	\$482,993.44	\$400,536.08
Unpledged	\$32,385.60	\$31,980.00
Total	\$461,379.04	\$432,516.08

Members and visitors alike, please plan to give today in whatever way you are able, either online through Realm, through your bank account, using the QR code below, or by mailing a check to the church. Thank you for your generosity.



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*Organized in 1828
Surrounded by so great
a cloud of witnesses.*