

Worship in the Home: January 10, 2021

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Worship in the Home

Baptism of Our Lord, Year B

January 10, 2021

In this time of world-wide crisis, congregations throughout this church are not able to gather for worship as the body of Christ. While you cannot be together in person, we can hear the word of God and hold each other in prayer. We offer this brief resource as an aid for prayer in the home. As with our prayers in the gathered assembly for worship, you are encouraged to prepare or adapt them locally for your context.

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

Find a peaceful place to pray, perhaps a table. You may wish to light a candle and place a bowl of water in remembrance of your baptism. One person may lead this acclamation and then pray the Prayer of the Day.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with us all.

Amen.

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

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.

First Reading: Genesis 1:1-5

Out of chaos, God brings order. Out of the formless void, God brings light. This familiar story was good news for the Israelites, who experienced much chaos in their history. It remains good news for us. God created and continues to create new life.

¹In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. ³Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness God called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 29

¹Ascribe to the ^lLORD, you gods,

ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

²Ascribe to the LORD the glory ^ldue God's name;

worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.

³The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; the God of ^lglory thunders;

the LORD is upon the ^lmighty waters.

⁴The voice of the LORD is a powerful voice;

the voice of the LORD is a ^lvoice of splendor.

⁵The voice of the LORD breaks the ^lcedar trees;

the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon;

⁶the LORD makes Lebanon skip ^llike a calf,

and Mount Hermon like a ^lyoung wild ox.

⁷The voice ^lof the LORD

bursts forth in ^llightning flashes.

⁸The voice of the LORD ^lshakes the wilderness;

the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh

⁹The voice of the LORD makes the oak trees writhe and strips the ^lforests bare.

And in the temple of the LORD all are ^lcrying, "Glory!"

¹⁰The LORD sits enthroned above the flood;

the LORD sits enthroned as king for- ^levermore.

¹¹O LORD, give strength ^lto your people;

give them, O LORD, the blessings of peace.

Second Reading: Acts 19:1-7

In Ephesus, Paul encounters people who had received John's baptism of repentance but had never heard of the Holy Spirit or of baptism in the name of Jesus. After Paul baptizes them, the Holy Spirit comes upon them and empowers them with gifts of the Spirit.

¹While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus,

where he found some disciples. ²He 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." ³Then

Paul said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They answered, "Into John's baptism." ⁴Paul 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." ⁵On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord

Jesus. ⁶When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in

tongues and prophesied—⁷altogether there were about twelve of them.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

Gospel: Mark 1:4-11

The holy gospel according to Mark.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Mark's gospel reports the story of Jesus' baptism with some irony: the one on whom the Spirit descends is himself the one who will baptize others with the Holy Spirit.

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the

forgiveness of sins. ⁵And 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. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He proclaimed, "After me the one who is more powerful than I is coming; the thong of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but the one who is coming will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

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

The gospel of the Lord.
Praise to you, O Christ.

Reflection

Having read these readings, think on this:

Many people go out to John, confessing their sins and hoping his baptism will be the sign of a new age, an indication of God creating all things anew. We, too, hope for such a new beginning and we, too, have been baptized, confessing our sins. Jesus also is baptized, hidden among us sinners, joining us in longing for a new age. But, in the text, only he sees something utterly new: the torn-open heavens and the descending dove. Only he hears the voice of God declaring him the beloved Son. But we hear too! This voice over the waters comes here, where we are reading these texts. Jesus Christ, whose identity continues to be hidden in Mark's Gospel until he is finally hidden by the crucifixion, is revealed to us as living in the word and sacraments of the church, a word we today may hear in our homes. In encountering Jesus Christ, we see and hear the holy Trinity, the Voice from above the heavens, the Son in the water, and the descending Spirit, making all things new, as if the creation of Genesis 1 is all around us again, as if Noah's flood is finally over. Our baptism gathers us into the life of the Trinity, making us, like the ancient Christian Ephesians, witnesses to this new creation.

If you have a hymnal, you may now sing or read "Christ, When for Us You Were Baptized" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 304), "I Bind unto Myself Today" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 450). Selected hymns are provided below for those without a hymnal at home.

[I Bind unto Myself Today](#)

Then pray these intercessions:

On this Sunday of the baptism of our Lord, let us offer our prayers for all in need, responding to each petition with words from today's psalm, "Give us your blessings of peace."

A brief silence.

For the worldwide church; for those who minister in the church; for all who will be baptized this year; and for their godparents and sponsors: that the Holy Spirit will empower all the faithful for lives of service, let us pray.

A brief silence.

O God, give strength to your people.

Give us your blessings of peace.

For the waters of the earth; for the seas, the lakes, the rivers; for the wells that provide drinking water; and for the water that is piped into our homes: that God provide clean and nourishing water for all living things, let us pray.

A brief silence.

O God, give strength to your people.

Give us your blessings of peace.

For the nations of the world and their leaders; for international efforts to prevent war and reduce violence; for the armed forces; for police officers; and for peacemakers: that God inspire all people to work for the harmonious well-being of others, let us pray.

A brief silence.

O God, give strength to your people.

Give us your blessings of peace.

For students; for teachers and school administrators; for parents assisting their children in home schooling; and for young people who are finding a way toward graduation: that as the academic year resumes, God give resilience to everyone in the search for education, let us pray.

A brief silence.

O God, give strength to your people.

Give us your blessings of peace.

For all who are in trouble, want, or sickness; for the countless who are suffering with COVID-19; for medical workers; for people who are hungry or homeless, imprisoned or lonely; and for those we name here. . . .: that God grant health and wholeness to a world so filled with pain, let us pray.

A brief silence.

O God, give strength to your people.

Give us your blessings of peace.

For ourselves: that we rejoice in our adoption as members of God's family, and that now in this silence we bring to God our heart's requests, let us pray.

A longer period of silence.

O God, give strength to your people.

Give us your blessings of peace.

In gratitude for our beloved dead, especially . . . , we offer our praise for all the baptized who have accompanied us and supported us and taught us throughout our days; that at our end we join with them in everlasting joy, let us pray.

A brief silence.

O God, give strength to your people.

Give us your blessings of peace.

Almighty and most merciful God, you are the mighty Voice from heaven, you are our beloved Savior, you are the descending Dove. We give you thanks for all your goodness and tender mercies, and we ask you to accept our prayers for the sake of your mercy, today and forever. Amen.

If you have a hymnal, you may now sing or read "Beautiful Savior" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 838), "Wade in the Water" (Evangelical Lutheran Worship 459 / This Far By Faith 114); "Born, Reborn" (All Creation Sings 956). Selected hymns are provided below for those without a hymnal at home.

[Beautiful Savior](#)

[Wade in the Water](#)

[Born, Reborn](#)

Then conclude with these prayers:

Let us pray.

A brief silence is kept before the prayer.

Holy God,
Light of the universe, Teacher of truth, Giver of goodness,
we hear your Word in the Scriptures,
proclaiming to us your wisdom
and inviting us to follow your call.

For speaking this Word, we thank you, O God.

We thank you, O God.

Your Word came among us in Jesus, our brother,
who preached your righteousness, healed the sick,
and revived the brokenhearted.

For giving us this Word, we worship you, O God.

We worship you, O God.

By your Spirit bless all who receive this Word,
that upheld by the mystery of the body of Christ,
we may be light for the world,
revealing the brilliance of your Son.
For sustaining us with your Word, we praise you, O God.

We praise you, O God.

Blessed are you, holy God, around us, with us, and in us,
now and forever. Amen.

Amen.

Offering

Please remember to mail in your offerings so that Grace can continue to serve you.

Offering 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.**

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Then speak the Blessing:

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

Amen.

Devotional Music Links: For your individual or group devotion, you may choose to listen to the following choral recordings made available through Augsburg Fortress: "[My Soul Proclaims Your Greatness](#);" "[Borning Cry](#);" "[Spirit of the Lord](#)."

Readings for the Week:

Monday Psalm 69:1-5, 30-36. **Tuesday** Acts 22:2-16. **Wednesday** Isaiah 41:14-20. **Thursday** Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18. **Friday** (commemoration of Martin Luther King, Jr., renewer of society martyr, 1968) Acts 13:16-25. **Saturday** 1 Samuel 2:21-25. **Second Sunday after Epiphany:** (commemoration of Antony of Egypt, renewer of the church, c. 356; Pachomius, renewer of the church, 346) 1 Samuel 3:1-10 [11-20]; Psalm 139:1-6, 13-18; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; John 1:43-51.

Daily Prayer Resources are available, including simple forms of Morning, Evening, and Night Prayer; Responsive Prayer; and prayers for mealtimes and other occasions.

Due to copyright restrictions, we are only able to provide downloadable hymns that are in the public domain and selected hymns for limited use. Other suggestions provided above may be found in *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*. To purchase copies of *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* and *All Creation Sings* for the home, visit the [Augsburg Fortress website](#) or call 1-800-328-4648. Selected hymns from *All Creation Sings* will be provided for limited use.

Reflection text: Gordon Lathrop. Intercessory Prayer: Gail Ramshaw

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Thank you to those who clean the Church following worship.
In House Church Services have been cancelled until further notice.

Please keep in your prayers this week: Kevin Johnson, Barbara Metzger, Rob Johnson and Steve Lindberg (Streeter Family Friend's & Kin), Noah Klenken (Fred Fixsen's Nephew), Cal Curtis & Patty Thompson (Carole Holten's Son-in-Law & Sister), Bill Warner, David Warner, Emily (Ben & Casey's Daughter), Terry Newgard, Judy Wingses, Steve Murdock, Bob Broberg.

Pastor's Mid-week Message – Jan. 6, 2021

Some people, who have everything under the sun going for them, will start off this 2021 new year feeling miserable. Meanwhile, there are other people for whom life is a constant struggle, who give God thanks every day just for the gift of being alive. It doesn't make sense, but it's true. Which camp are you in, by the way?

Let's face it – some people live charmed lives.

I was reading about Timothy Dexter, a businessman who lived in the late 1700s. According to the testimony of people who knew him, Dexter was no mental heavyweight. But if he was lacking in brains, he was blessed with a super-abundance of luck. He seemed to blunder into one fortune after another.

During the American Revolution, Dexter bought up state bonds, which everyone said were worth less than dirt. In 1791, the U.S. government restored the value of the bonds. Suddenly, Timothy Dexter was rich. Local townspeople made a game of trying to trick Dexter out of his money. Someone suggested he buy warming pans and sell them in the West Indies. It was a stupid idea, like selling milk to a dairy farmer. But Timothy Dexter did it anyway. Turns out, warming pans could be used to make molasses, a big business in the West Indies. He made a killing on the deal. Another man suggested that Timothy invested in Bibles, and sell them in the least Christianized area he knew. The Bibles reached the islands just as a missionary-led revival was bringing in hundreds of converts. They sold out immediately.

On the suggestion of another joker, Dexter bought up whalebones, which were virtually worthless. But the next season, ladies' fashions dictated corsets made with – you guessed it – whalebone stays. Timothy Dexter made a huge profit on that one.

Or how do you explain the likes of Don Whitman, Jr. of Colorado? In 1989 he won \$2 million in the Colorado state lottery. Then, two years later, he won \$2.2 million. Or what about Joseph P. Crowley of Ohio? In 1987 he won \$3 million in the Ohio lottery. So, he packed it in, retired, and moved to Boca Raton, where he promptly won the Florida lottery – for \$20 million.

There's no way around it – some people live charmed lives. Meanwhile, there are other people who, if they had a lucky horseshoe, it would fall off the wall and clunk them on the head. Some of us don't need a word of hope. Things are going pretty well. Some of us, however, need all the hope we can get. Life has dealt roughly with us, or with somebody we love, and we are in pain. We don't need our faults pointed out to us. We need someone to convince us that life is somehow going to get better. So we listen with keen attention. And what the Bible says to us it this: Trust God. God is faithful. God has not forsaken us, or forgotten us. God will deliver us. Amen.