

Trinity-Grace United Church

January 12th, 2025
"Precious in God's Sight"
The Baptism of the Lord

ORDER OF SERVICE

PRELUDE

Naoki Natsume

WELCOME

CANDLE LIGHTING

INTROIT: "Bathe Me in Your Light"

MV 82

Soloist:

*Bathe me in your light, O God of All, Creator;
let it shine upon my soul with healing and with grace.
Be to me a beacon bright through shadows of life's wounding,
showing me the way to live in faith, in your embrace.*

*Bathe me in your grace, O One of Spirit's longing;
teach me of your gentle ways that fill the soul with strength.
Guide me on the pilgrimage that leads to truth and wholeness,
Fill me with your promise of a love that knows no length.*

OPENING RESPONSES

One: In this new year, we are called to reconnect with the source of life:

ALL: God's spirit calls us together.

One: The living waters of God's grace invite us
to renew our commitment to the way of Christ.

ALL: A way of grace, hope, gratitude and compassion.

One: As Jesus saw into the hearts of those he encountered,

ALL: So we open our hearts and lives to you, O God.

One: As the spirit was with Jesus and the first community of followers;

ALL: May the spirit join us today as we worship.

HYMN: "Arise, Your Light Is Come"

VU 79

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!
Fling wide the prison door;
proclaim the captive's liberty,
good tidings to the poor.

Arise, your light is come!
All you in sorrow born,
bind up the broken-hearted ones
and comfort those who mourn.

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

PRAYER FOR RELEASE & RENEWAL

One: The light has walked among us,

and continues to shine through those who follow the way of love.
Yet living in Christ's love requires an open heart,
which we don't always have.

**All: Disappointments, doubts, grievances and hurts
can prompt us to build protective walls
which make it difficult for your light to shine through to us,
and our light to shine outwards to others.**

One: Holy One, we offer to you now in silence
those ways in which we have closed off our hearts and minds
to the light of your love and wisdom and grace.
And we confess that which has kept us from knowing fully -
and living courageously - our belovedness.

Time for silent prayer

A WORD OF GRACE

One: And now, hear this good news:
We are always held in divine love;
We are always called beloved.
And when we return to the source,
To God, our wellspring of life,
we are always offered grace and peace
and a new start. Thanks be to God!

SHARING PEACE

One: May the peace of Christ be with you all.
All: And also with you!

We take a moment to greet each other in the peace of Christ.

ENCOUNTERING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

One: Eternal God,
May the words of scripture inform our minds,
may the love of Christ illumine our hearts,
and may the Spirit's presence weave your living word into our lives.

ALL: Amen.

READING: Luke 3: 15-17, 21-22

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, 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. 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."

Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, 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."

One: Hear what the Spirit is saying to the church.

All: Open our hearts, Spirit of Life.

EXPLORING THE WORD

Reflection by Rev. Sandra Nixon

RESPONDING

CLAIMING OUR IDENTITY: ASPERGES (Sprinkling)

Intro (Leader)

Sing: "Lord, Listen To Your Children Praying"

VU 400

(ALL SING 3x)

Lord, listen to your children praying.

Lord, send your spirit in this place.

Lord, listen to your children praying:

Send us love, send us power, send us grace.

Ritual of Asperges

You are invited to dip a cedar branch into the water and sprinkle it on yourself (hand, head, etc). Or invite someone else to sprinkle you.

Prayer

One: Life giving God,

From our birth, you claim us as your own
and your spirit accompanies us.

Jesus' connection to you was strengthened
as he rose from the waters of his baptism and prayed.

And so, like him, as we offer our prayers
and feel the water upon us today,
may the spirit open us to knowing deeply our belovedness,
that we may be strengthened in your love,
and renewed by the living spring of Christ's eternal life within us.

ALL: Amen.

HYMN: "I Have Called You By Your Name" (v.1,3,4)

MV 161

During the hymn, the offering box is brought forward

I have called you by your name, you are mine;

I have gifted you and ask you now to shine.

I will not abandon you;

all my promises are true.

You are gifted, called, and chosen;

you are mine.

I know you will need my touch as you go;
feel it pulsing in creation's ebb and flow.
Like the woman reaching out,
choosing faith in spite of doubt,
hold the hem of Jesus' robe,
then let it go.

I have given you a name, it is mine;
I have given you my Spirit as a sign.
With my wonder in your soul,
make my wounded children whole;
go and tell my precious people
they are mine.

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

Trinity-Grace is grateful for the many ways we are gifted and called to contribute to God's mission through this faith community.

Prayer of Dedication

One: In becoming yours, O God, we give these gifts and our very selves.

**ALL: Love, made visible. Compassion, made practical.
These are our gifts, O God.**

One: Bless all we offer and bless us to steward them wisely,
in Jesus' name.

ALL: Amen.

CONNECTING IN COMMUNITY

Announcements, celebrations & prayer requests.

PRAYERS OF GRATITUDE AND CONCERN (The Prayers of the People)

Periods of silence will be left for you to offer your own prayers

THE PRAYER OF THE DISCIPLES (The Lord's Prayer)

**ALL: Abba, our God,
Whom the heavens disclose:
may your name be held holy,
may your authority come.
May your longing be fulfilled
as in heaven, so on earth.**

**Give us today the bread of tomorrow,
and cancel our debts,
as we have already forgiven
our debtors.**

**Do not draw us towards sin
but set us free from the grip of evil;
for authority, power and glory
are yours alone, for ever and ever.
Amen.**

- Adapted from the Alternative Service Book, 1980

HYMN: "We Are One" (v.1,2,4)

VU 402

We are one as we come,
as we come, joyful to be here,
in the praise on our lips
there's a sense that God is near.
We are one as we sing,
as we seek, we are found;
and we come needful of God's grace
as we meet, together in this place.

We are one as we share,
as we share brokenness and fear,

in the touch of a hand
 there's a sense that God is here.
We are one as we care,
 as we heal, we are healed;
and we share warmth in God's embrace
 as we pray together in this place.

We are one as we hear,
 as we hear, heart and hand unite;
in the word we receive
 there's a sense that God is light.
We are one as we leave,
 as we love, we are loved;
and we seek justice in God's ways
 as we move together from this place.

*The Christ candle is extinguished;
Our prayers rise and are received into God's heart.*

SENDING & BLESSING

One: As Jesus emerged from the river refreshed in his ministry,
 May you emerge from this time of worship
 refreshed for your ministry and ready to live in God's love.
And may the blessing of the presence of God
 Creator, Christ and Spirit accompany you:
 above - beside - and within,
 today and always.

Sung Response: "Go Now In Peace, Guided By the Light"

MV 211

1st time - soloist 2nd time - congregation

Go now in peace, guided by the light of Christ,
so you may be nourished by the word of life.

POSTLUDE