

January 9, 2022
1 Epiphany C: The Baptism of our Lord
St. Mary's-in-the-Valley Episcopal Church
P.O. Box 491, Ramona, CA. 92065

Open Song: As I Went Down to the River to Pray
Sung and played by Dr. Joshua Charney

As I went down in the river to pray
Studying about that good ol' way
And who shall wear the starry crown
Good Lord, show me the way

O sisters, let's go down
Let's go down, come on down
O sisters, let's go down
Down in the river to pray

As I went down in the river to pray
Studying about that good ol' way
And who shall wear the robe and crown
Good Lord, show me the way

O brothers, let's go down
Let's go down, come on down
Come on, brothers, let's go down
Down in the river to pray

As I went down in the river to pray
Studying about that good ol' way
And who shall wear the starry crown
Good Lord, show me the way

O fathers, let's go down
Let's go down, come on down
O fathers, let's go down
Down in the river to pray

As I went down in the river to pray
Studying about that good ol' way
And who shall wear the robe and crown
Good Lord, show me the way

O mothers, let's go down
Come on down, don't you wanna go down?

Come on, mothers, let's go down
Down in the river to pray

As I went down in the river to pray
Studying about that good ol' way
And who shall wear the starry crown
Good Lord, show me the way

O sinners, let's go down
Let's go down, come on down
O sinners, let's go down
Down in the river to pray

BCP, page 355

Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
People And Blessed be God's kingdom now and forever. Amen.

Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known and from you no secrets are hid:
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly
love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Baptismal Versicles

Celebrant: There is one Body and one Spirit;
People There is one hope in God's call to us;
Celebrant One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;
People One God and Father of all.

The Celebrant then says
The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
Celebrant Let us pray.

Collect

Father in heaven, who at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan proclaimed him your
beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit: Grant that all who are baptized into his
Name may keep the covenant they have made, and boldly confess him as Lord and Savior;
who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. *Amen.*

Isaiah 43:1-7

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.
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.
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.
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.
Do not fear, for I am with you;
 I will bring your offspring from the east,
 and from the west I will gather you;
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--
everyone who is called by my name,
 whom I created for my glory,
 whom I formed and made."

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people
Thanks be to God

Psalm 29

Afferte Domino

- 1 Ascribe to the LORD, you gods, *
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
- 2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his Name; *
worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.
- 3 The voice of the LORD is upon the waters;
the God of glory thunders; *
the LORD is upon the mighty waters.
- 4 The voice of the LORD is a powerful voice; *
the voice of the LORD is a voice of splendor.
- 5 The voice of the LORD breaks the cedar trees; *
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon;
- 6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, *
and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.
- 7 The voice of the LORD splits the flames of fire;
the voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; *
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
- 8 The voice of the LORD makes the oak trees writhe *
and strips the forests bare.
- 9 And in the temple of the LORD *
all are crying, "Glory!"
- 10 The LORD sits enthroned above the flood; *
the LORD sits enthroned as King for evermore.
- 11 The LORD shall give strength to his people; *
the LORD shall give his people the blessing of peace.

Acts 8:14-17

When the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit (for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people

Thanks be to God

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, according to Luke

Glory to you Lord Christ

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."

The Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you Lord Christ

Sermon:

1 Epiphany c January 9, 2022
Isaiah 43:1-7 Psalm 29
Acts 8:14-17 Luke 3:15-17,21-22

Baptism is referred to as Christian initiation. And what kind of initiation is baptism? We are familiar with formal and informal initiations in different organizations that we belong to in our lives.

Some initiation rites are very formal and even private, like various Freemasonry groups and Lodges for men and women. College Fraternities and Sororities have initiation rituals; some are infamously hazing ritual that are extreme ordeals for those wishing to become members.

Other organization like scouting organizations and clubs have membership requirements and fees.

What would be some of the main features of baptism as Christian initiation?

The main feature of Christian initiation of baptism is the notion of personal intention. One has to choose the community with the chief values with which one is going to live.

But you say, I was baptized as an infant, so I did not choose. You didn't choose as an infant to be baptized, but as an adult you intentionally were confirmed or you have agreed to participate in the church as a baptized member.

Intentionality is important in Christian baptism. Why? We are passively and unintentionally human. We did not choose to be born and have the parents in the setting of our birth. So, we received as passive young infants, the coding of the language and habits of our family and cultures. Part of responsible maturation is to grow in our moral significance by understanding the intentionality of the identities which we choose to embrace.

Many people can live unexamined lives; that means they may remain satisfied with what they have been raised with from birth and so they may not want to change or see any need for value adjustments, even as they grow older.

But in the rigorously examined life which can happen through significant education and exposure to various models of moral and spiritual influence, one is forced often to new intentionality, the intentionality of repentance, the intentionality of the renewal of one's mind, with attending behavioral changes as well.

How intentionally are we baptized Episcopal Christians now? And what does that mean? Is our community what we are used to from early age, or is it also a community within which we are rigorously and intentionally being made more Christ-like?

Jesus Christ set the bar so high for humanity, that we have to be those who want to intentionally be more Christ-like.

We, Episcopalians are out-numbered these days, since we are losing members. There are people who have left the Episcopal Church because we changed our prayer book to more contemporary English language. There are people who left the Episcopal Church because we believed that baptized women could also serve on vestry, serve at the altar, and be ordained as deacons, priests and bishops. There are people who have left the Episcopal because we have embraced sacramental justice and full participation for gay, lesbian and transgendered persons. It would seem that a more inclusive church, should be a more popular church, but that has not been the case. Many people who follow Christ do not allow the full participation of their churches lots of people because of knowing themselves to be women, gay and transgendered people.

One of the radical things about our baptismal liturgy are the vows that we take to love our neighbor as ourself and to respect the dignity of every human being, because we seek the image of Christ which is on each person. But why are these values of Jesus Christ regarded to be radical instead of the basic values of human justice, dignity, and respect?

You and I have to be intentional baptized Episcopal Christians today, because we value the basic dignity of every person. We must be for the equal justice for all people if we are going to live up to our baptismal vows. Rather than leave the Episcopal church because of being offended about who God loves; let us stay and invite people to be initiated into a community which holds to loving our neighbor as ourselves.

God in Jesus Christ is how God chose to show us how to be our human best. When Jesus was baptized he was initiated into a particular group of people at a particular time. This was God's way of saying, I am with you completely even though you are not perfect and never will be perfect, I am with you in the messiness of human community.

And today, Jesus is still baptized as one among us, initiated into our community, and not because we're perfect, or even adequate, so why is Jesus the beloved one of God with us? Because he believes that you and I are called to be beloved ones of God too, and that we are to be a community of people who are calling other people to know their belovedness in God's eyes and in our ours.

May God help us today to be more intentionally Christ-like, as we invite every person to know themselves as beloved children of God, who celebrate the mutual belovedness of all people in the great Love of God. Amen.

The Renewal of Baptismal Vows

Through the Paschal mystery, dear friends, we are buried with Christ by Baptism into his death, and raised with him to newness of life. I call upon you to renew the solemn promises and vows of Holy Baptism, by which we once renounced Satan and all his works, and promised to serve God faithfully in his holy Catholic Church.

Celebrant Do you reaffirm your renunciation of evil and
renew your commitment to Jesus Christ?

People I do.

Celebrant Do you believe in God the Father?

People I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.

Celebrant Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again.
He ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Celebrant Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

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

Celebrant Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and
fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the
prayers?

People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever
you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you proclaim by word and example the Good
News of God in Christ?

People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving
your neighbor as yourself?

People I will, with God's help.

Celebrant Will you strive for justice and peace among all people,
and respect the dignity of every human being?

People I will, with God's help.

The Celebrant concludes the Renewal of Vows as follows

May Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who
has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and
bestowed upon us the forgiveness of sins, keep us in eternal
life by his grace, in Christ Jesus our Lord. *Amen.*

Prayers of the People:

The Peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you

Hymn: Blessed Assurance

Played by Stanley V. Smith, Jr. on the Hammer Dulcimer

1 Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!
Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine!
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,
born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.

Refrain:

This is my story, this is my song,
praising my Savior all the day long.
This is my story, this is my song,
praising my Savior all the day long.

2 Perfect communion, perfect delight,
visions of rapture now burst on my sight.
Angels descending bring from above
echoes of mercy, whispers of love. [Refrain]

3 Perfect submission, all is at rest.
I in my Savior am happy and bless'd,
watching and waiting, looking above,
filled with his goodness, lost in his love. [Refrain]

Doxology: Sung by Rob and Deb Lewallen

Eucharistic Prayer A

The Lord be with you.
People And also with you.
Celebrant Lift up your hearts.
People We lift them to the Lord.
Celebrant Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.
People It is right to give him thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Because in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give the knowledge of your glory in the face of your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Celebrant and People

Sanctus
Sung and played by Rob and Deb Lewallen

Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.
Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.

Celebrant: Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Memorial Acclamation:

Sung and played by Rob and Deb Lewallen

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

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. AMEN.

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

Led by Rob and Deb Lewallen

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,
for ever and ever. Amen.
The Breaking of the Bread

The Breaking of the Bread

Celebrant: Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
People: Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia

Celebrant: The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

Communion Hymn: Taize, *Jesus Remember Me*
Played and sung by Rob and Deborah Lewallen

Jesus remember me, when you come into your kingdom.

Post Communion Prayer (BCP, page 365)

Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Benediction:

Dismissal:

Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People: Thanks be to God!

Closing Song: *O Beautiful for Spacious Skies*
Play by Joshua Charney, Ph.D

Offering in hopes of the rededication of our “temple of democracy,” The Capitol that experienced the desecration of the site of our justice ideals

Our Prayer: America, God mend thine every flaw!