



Order of worship

Baptism of the Lord Sunday

January 10, 2021

Call to worship *(from Psalm 148)*

The voice of the Lord is powerful and full of majesty.

May the Lord bless us with God's peace!

The voice of the Lord proclaimed Jesus as God's beloved.

In our own baptisms, we are claimed as God's beloved.

Call to confession

On this Baptism of the Lord Sunday, we remember our baptisms, where we were claimed as children of the covenant and beloved of God. Yet we live as those who are alienated from God. We have turned away from God, one another and the earth. Let us confess our sins, trusting in God's mercy.

Prayer of confession

Merciful God, we confess that we are estranged from you and from one another. We treat others as strangers rather than as people created in your image and fellow children of God. We exploit the earth as though it were our possession rather than a gift entrusted to our care and a reflection of your image and glory. Forgive us our sins and transform us by your Spirit that we might live as people who have been baptized as your own children. Amen.

Assurance of pardon

Friends, hear the good news of the gospel and of Jesus' solidarity in his own baptism by John with all who have been immersed in baptismal waters, repenting of their sin. God has forgiven us of our sins and set us on new paths. Let us remember our baptisms and trust in God's mercy to restore our right standing as God's own. Thanks be to God!



Prayer of illumination

O God, pour out your Holy Spirit upon us so that the words we are about to hear will become the Word of God for us this day. Listen to what the Spirit is saying to the church.

Scripture readings

Sermon

Affirmation of faith *(from a Brief Statement of Faith)*

We trust in God the Holy Spirit,
everywhere the giver and renewer of life.

The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the Church.

The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture, engages us through the Word proclaimed, claims us in the waters of baptism, feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation, and calls women and men to all ministries of the Church.

Call for the offering

On this Baptism of the Lord Sunday, we celebrate the great gift of baptism and the life of promise therein. God has given us life and resources for it, so let us give in return.

Prayer of dedication

O God, in our baptisms we have been named and claimed as your covenant people, connected deeply with you, with one another and with the earth. May these gifts be used as a witness to your love, peace and justice at work in the world, renewing the face of the earth.



Prayers of the people and the Lord's Prayer

Loving God, we give you thanks and praise for the story of Jesus' baptism by John in the wilderness, for it reminds us of our own baptisms. Just as you claimed Jesus as your beloved, so also have we been claimed as your own children. We remember before you all the children and adults who have been baptized in this congregation of your people, and for their parents and sponsors. Help us remember as a congregation the promises we also have made to each of them — to nurture them in their lives of faith. And help us remember our own baptisms daily. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Holy one, our baptisms also remind us that the font is the true center of our cosmos. The place where we were called to live as your beloved people in covenant relation with you, with one another and with your good creation. Help us remember that declaration and promise, especially in difficult times like these. Amid a pandemic that is devastating lives and communities, amid exposure of the racism still wreaking its havoc in our nation, amid painful polarization and division, we claim our center in your baptismal promise of love. Empower us to live out of that love in all that we do, healing divisions, addressing enmity, reaching out to those we perceive as enemies. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

God of all nations, we pray for elected officials in our own country and in all countries around the globe — for those who have been entrusted to exercise leadership on behalf of the common good. Help them to discern wise use of resources to address the needs of citizens suffering from the pandemic and its grave economic strains. And move us all to attend to the cries of the marginal in our midst. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

We pray all these things in the name of Jesus Christ, who taught us to pray saying, *Our Father...*



Charge and benediction

Hear the voice of God that claimed you in baptism:
you are precious, beloved, in God's sight.

God has claimed our lives in baptism

that we might die to sin be raised to new life,

And God's Spirit empowers us now to follow Jesus into our world.

So as you go, lift up the brokenhearted and stand with the oppressed.

Love God with your whole life and love neighbors as yourself. Amen.

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Liturgy written by Roger Gench
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