

Salem Lutheran Church

115 N. Washington Ave., Albert Lea

Baptism of Our Lord

January 7, 2024

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.

**Congregation: please stand. If standing is difficult for you, please feel free to remain seated.*

Gathering

The Holy Spirit calls us together as the people of God.

Prelude

Announcements

***Confession and Forgiveness**

All may make the sign of the cross, the sign that is marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ✠ one God,
creator of darkness and light,
word of truth,
wind sweeping over the waters.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

God, our rock and refuge,
we pour out our hearts before you.
We have known you but have not always loved you.
We have wounded one another
and sinned against you.
We have not always recognized the Holy Spirit
dwelling in each of us.
Remember your covenant.
Renew your creation.
Restore us,

that we might proclaim your good news to all.

Amen.

The voice of the Lord is upon the waters.

God has spoken:

The time of grace is now.

In Jesus, the reign of God has come near.

By the authority of ✠ Jesus Christ,

your sins are forgiven.

You are God's beloved.

Amen.

***HYMN**

Christ, When For Us You Were Baptized

#304

***Greeting**

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

And also with you.

***Canticle of Praise**

Glory Be to God

page 204

***PRAYER OF THE DAY**

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.

Word

God speaks to us in scripture reading, preaching, and song.

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 he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm: Psalm 29

The voice of the LORD is upon the waters. (Ps. 29:3)

¹Ascribe to the | LORD, you gods,
ascribe to the LORD glo- | ry and strength.

²**Ascribe to the LORD the glory | due God's name;
worship the LORD in the beau- | ty of holiness.**

³The 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 pow- | erful voice;
the voice of the LORD is a | voice of splendor. R**

⁵The voice of the LORD breaks the | cedar trees;
the LORD breaks the ce- | dars of Lebanon;

⁶**the LORD makes Lebanon skip | like a calf,
and Mount Hermon like a | young wild ox.**

⁷The voice | of the LORD
bursts forth in | lightning flashes.

⁸**The voice of the LORD | shakes the wilderness;
the LORD shakes the wilder- | ness of Kadesh. R**

⁹The voice of the LORD makes the oak trees writhe and strips the | forests bare.
And in the temple of the LORD all are | crying, "Glory!"

¹⁰**The LORD sits enthroned a- | bove the flood;
the LORD sits enthroned as king for- | evermore.**

¹¹O LORD, give strength | to your people;
give them, O LORD, the bless- | ings of peace. R

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 he 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.

The word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

***GOSPEL READING: 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, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And just as he 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.

SERMON

Bishop Regina Hassanally

***HYMN**

We Are Baptized in Jesus Christ

#451

***NICENE CREED**

We believe in one God,

**the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.**

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

**the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God,
begotten, not made,
of one Being with the Father;
through him all things were made.**

For us and for our salvation

**he came down from heaven,
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary
and became truly human.**

**For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;
he suffered death and was buried.**

**On the third day he rose again
in accordance with the scriptures;**

**he ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead,
and his kingdom will have no end.**

**We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,*
who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,
who has spoken through the prophets.
We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church.
We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.
We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. Amen.**

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

As we celebrate Christ embodied in human form, we pray for God's blessing on the church, the world, and all of creation.

A brief silence.

Inspire wisdom and a spirit of proclamation in your church, God of forgiveness. Uplift leaders to share the truth of your word in community. Encourage us to live into the promises of baptism, working for justice and peace in all the world.

God of grace,

receive our prayer.

Renew your creation, God of thunder and mighty waters. Restore the rivers in which your children are baptized. May fields flourish and grow. Summon the stewards and caretakers of the land to cherish your good works.

God of grace,

receive our prayer.

Give strength to your leaders, God who is present in every country and community. Raise up leaders committed to equity and healing. Grant them discernment and compassion as they lead in love.

God of grace,

receive our prayer.

Protect and cherish the most vulnerable among us, God of strength. Accompany those separated from family or hurting from broken relationships. Shelter our unhoused neighbors and any experiencing poverty. Protect those incarcerated in prisons and detention centers. Care for the sick and suffering Kathy, Mary, Shirley, Marianne, Leland, Larry, Woody, Tom, Dean, Andrea and all others on our hearts and minds this day.

God of grace,

receive our prayer.

Encourage this congregation, God who calls and sends disciples. Guide us in accompanying, learning from, and serving our neighbors on the margins, following the example of Jesus.

God of grace,

receive our prayer.

Trusting the assurance of the Holy Spirit, we remember all who have died and rest in God's care. Give hope to those who grieve even as we rest in your eternal promise of resurrection.

God of grace,

receive our prayer.

Knowing the Holy Spirit intercedes for us, we offer these prayers and the silent prayers of our hearts in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Amen.

***PEACE**

The peace of Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

OFFERING

We very much appreciate your continued giving and generosity at this time.

Offering can be placed in the offering plate at the door.

OFFERING HYMN

All My Heart Again Rejoices

#273

THANKSGIVING AT THE TABLE

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 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,

ever and ever. Amen.

Giver of every gift,
Christ's body is our food, and we are Christ's body.
Raise us to life by your power
for the benefit of all and to your glory,
now and forever.
Amen.

Sending

God blesses us and sends us in mission to the world.

***Blessing**

God who names you,
Christ who claims you,
and the Holy Spirit who dwells in you,
✠ bless you and remain with you always.
Amen.

***HYMN**

O Morning Star, How Fair and Bright

#308

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. You are God's beloved.
Thanks be to God.

Assisting in Worship

Worship Assistant: Jim Gulbrandson
Ushers: Bruce Ness
Coffee: Beth Spande

We are pleased to welcome Bishop Regina Hassaally today. She will be participating in our worship today. Thank you for joining us in our worship this morning.

Thank you to Bev Lombardi for the beautiful organ music this morning.

This Week at Salem

Tuesday, January 9th: 8:30 a.m. Sew 'N Tell

9:00 a.m. Staff Meeting

Wednesday, January 10th: Nominating Committee Meeting

Thursday, January 11th: 4:30 p.m. Worship & Music Committee Meeting

Friday, January 13th: 6:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study

Sunday, January 14th: 9:00 a.m. Coffee Hour

10:00 a.m. Worship Service

Our annual Congregational Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 28, 2024 immediately after the worship service. It is important for all members to attend. If you have a report due for the annual report please get it to the Church Office as soon as you are able.