

# Our Savior's Lutheran Church

## Aurora, MN

*January 10, 2021*

Pastor Greg Anderson

PRELUDE

HEARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS

CONFESSION & FORGIVENESS

LBW pg. 77

HYMN "All Who Believe and Are Baptized"

LBW # 194

All who believe and are baptized shall see the Lord's salvation; baptized into the death of Christ, they are a new creation. Through Christ's redemption they shall stand among the glorious heavenly band of every tribe and nation.

With one accord, O God, we pray: grant us thy Holy Spirit; look thou on our infirmity through Jesus' blood and merit. Grant us to grow in grace each day that by this sacrament we may eternal life inherit.

GREETING

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KYRIE

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HYMN OF PRAISE

"This is the Feast..."

LBW pg. 81

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.

FIRST READING

Genesis 1:1-5

1In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, <sup>2</sup>the 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.

<sup>3</sup>Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. <sup>4</sup>And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup>God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

R: The word of the Lord. **C: *Thanks be to God.***

PSALM 29 (read responsively)

<sup>1</sup>Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

<sup>2</sup>**Ascribe to the LORD the glory of his name; worship the LORD in holy splendor.**

<sup>3</sup>The voice of the LORD is over the waters; the God of glory thunders, the LORD, over mighty waters.

<sup>4</sup>**The voice of the LORD is powerful; the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.**

<sup>5</sup>The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars; the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.

<sup>6</sup>**He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and Sirion like a young wild ox.**

<sup>7</sup>The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.

<sup>8</sup>**The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.**

<sup>9</sup>The voice of the LORD causes the oaks to whirl, and strips the forest bare; and in his temple all say, "Glory!"

<sup>10</sup>**The LORD sits enthroned over the flood; the LORD sits enthroned as king forever.**

<sup>11</sup>May the LORD give strength to his people! May the LORD bless his people with peace!

SECOND READING

Acts 10:1-7

<sup>10</sup>In Caesarea there was a man named Cornelius, a centurion of the Italian Cohort, as it was called. <sup>2</sup>He was a devout man who feared God with all his household; he gave alms generously to the people and prayed constantly to God. <sup>3</sup>One afternoon at about three o'clock he had a vision in which he clearly saw an angel of God coming in and saying to him, "Cornelius." <sup>4</sup>He stared at him in terror and said, "What is it, Lord?" He answered, "Your prayers and your alms have ascended as a memorial before God. <sup>5</sup>Now send men to Joppa for a certain Simon who is called Peter; <sup>6</sup>he is lodging with Simon, a tanner, whose house is by the seaside." <sup>7</sup>When the angel who spoke to him had left, he called two of his slaves and a devout soldier from the ranks of those who served him,

R: The word of the Lord. **C: *Thanks be to God.***

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

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**C: *Alleluia. Lord to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life. Alleluia.***

GOSPEL INTRODUCTION

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***C: Glory to you O lord.***

GOSPEL

Mark 1:4-11

<sup>4</sup>John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

<sup>5</sup>And 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. <sup>6</sup>Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>He 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. <sup>8</sup>I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

<sup>9</sup>In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup>And 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.

<sup>11</sup>And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

GOSPEL RESPONSE

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***C: Praise to you, O Christ.***

SERMON

**Sermon Baptism of our Lord, Mark 1.4-11**

**Sermon Title: "I am Baptized"**

Grace to you and peace through Jesus Christ our Lord!

Baptism is one of my favorite subjects to preach on! It is one of God's greatest gifts to us, and all of humanity! I have included in my message today my outline for the Baptism of our Lord and also a wonderful commentary from **Melinda Quivik** taken from ***Luther Seminaries Working Preacher*** web site. Enjoy and live in your Baptism!

Peace,

Pastor Greg Anderson

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The importance of the Baptism of our Lord for us today!

**I. How important is Baptism?** With wedding and funerals still a ritual of society

**For many it is about the bucket list of parenting**

**II. Martin Luther and I would disagree. Baptism is: "The Word" Power**

-God's own hands baptize us.

-Most powerful claim a Christian can make is "I am Baptized." ...not: "I choose to be born again"

-The Devil hates it and evil flees!

**III. In today's reading we can see the importance of Jesus' Baptism divided into three parts, for not only did these three events happen at Jesus' Baptism, but they happen with us today:**

1. The Heavens are opened...to be torn? *anoygo*, opened by God, violence against sin suffering

2. The Holy Spirit "descended upon him in bodily form like a dove." *kaabaheeno* (something) what was it? *panyoo-mah theos* the Spirit of God

3. The voice of the Father is heard from heaven,

"This is my Son, the Beloved; with whom I am well pleased." Greek: "to be clear"

- With a loud voice God also claims us!

-Jesus also connects us to his humanness and to God's promises by being Baptized.

**IV. What are God's Promises of Baptism? Promises Received by Faith**

1. Forever (The Ship which sails us to the haven of Salvation)

2. The daily killing of the old nature, creature or sinful self. The old Adam and Eve.

-The old creature is our selfishness, pride, greed, our lust and envy, which although remains in weakened form until death, we are not enslaved by it.

-Old creature fully dies at our death.

3. Resurrection of the Dead

-Luther: **"No greater jewel can adorn our body and soul than Baptism, for through it we obtain perfect holiness and salvation, which no other kind of life and work on earth can acquire"**

4. A daily garment (I am Baptized!)

-This answers the question: "What does my Baptism mean for how I live today?"

-Our call to help bring about the Kingdom of God!

-Daily ritual: The sign of the cross

-If anyone ever asks if you are saved just say: "I am Baptized!"

5. What Baptism is not: Magic words, just a ritual, it is not what saves you but is a door way for the cross..

#### **V. I saw the power of Baptism in my own life, God never left me alone**

-I was a non-believer who had a conversion experience in college. I became a born again Christian but came back to my Lutheran roots by my Sr. year.

-when Pastor Jerry from my first job as a youth director in an ELCA congregation interviewed me, he had a question: "How are you saved?" I replied: "I am Baptized" and got the job!

-Why did Jesus want to be baptized? He did not need it, maybe he struggled with His call? Maybe He also needed God's gifts and promises to do His work?

-Jesus is not a super hero, water's not magic, but it is about God's promises for all!

**Yes I learned that there is power in those words "I am Baptized!" Amen!**

**Melinda Quivik**

Liturgical and Homiletical Scholar

St. Paul, Minnesota

This Sunday's Prayer of the Day, with language that echoes all three appointed readings, orients us to the powerful observance of Jesus' baptism with these words:

"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..." (*Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, 22). Light and water from Genesis 1 remind us of the eternity in which God resides, creating order out of the chaos of unordered matter. In the context of that immensity, the Son, the Beloved, is baptized to know himself, to be transformed into the subservience John calls all people to engage so that he will carry out the mission he has been given.

When we look just at the Gospel reading for the Baptism of Our Lord, we do not see Jesus as fully as we see John the Baptist, his forerunner. Jesus remains a mystery while John stands before us in all the wildness of a life that shuns the interiors of buildings, eating what God provides in nature, speaking from the humility of a self that knows to whom it is indebted. We know what John wears; we are not told what Jesus wears. It is that clear of a difference. John, though peculiar according to our standards, is a fully human creature while Jesus—enigmatic, given to hearing a voice no one else hears—is identified in this scene in a way no one else has or will be known.

In Jesus' baptism, as the Synoptic Gospels tell it, nature itself is upended. The heavens are "torn apart" (verse 10). All creation in the moment of Jesus' baptism is altered. Out of that rupture comes the Holy Spirit in a form that is described as a dove. That dove does not simply alight *on* Jesus, because in the Greek, *eis auton* can be said to have come *into* him. He is infused with the Spirit from God. A new reality has come into the world, transforming all things including the seen (the heavens and a dove) and the unseen (a voice).

As befits this wondrous transformation, it is on the banks of the River Jordan on "the border between the wilderness and the land of milk and honey" where John stands, crying out for the people to repent and be baptized.<sup>1</sup> He comes out of the wilderness with a prophetic announcement, that he is "not worthy" to serve, in even a lowly manner, the one who will bring a new kind of baptism.

We do not know why John the Baptist cries out to the people to repent and be baptized or how he knows Jesus is coming and will change the world. But like the earlier prophets, John has a vision that requires the people to prepare themselves through repentance and baptism in water. His washing is more than a ritual bath, more than a repeated ablution required by law. The new bath has become the first sacrament.

John calls the people to faith through repentance and baptism. Out of the wilderness came the voice that knew faith as a gift essential to life. Alexander Schmemmann deepens our understanding of the relationship between sacrament and faith in this way:

The essential question about faith in its relationship to the sacrament is: *what* faith, and even more precisely, *whose* faith? And the equally essential answer to this question is: *it is Christ's faith* given to us, becoming our faith and our desire...

Faith, Schmemmann continues, is either a *response* to God's call or "the very *reality* of that to which the call summons." Faith, in other words, is what baptism imparts *to* us. Through the Holy Spirit, in baptism we are given the faith *of* Jesus. "The presence in this world of Christ's faith is the Church."<sup>2</sup> Baptism opens our hearts and our minds to becoming instruments that bring unity and peace to our neighbors.

Sometimes that reality—the faith *of* Jesus within the baptized—is not apparent to us. In the words of John the Baptist, we hear the cry to Repent and Be Baptized. The people come to him "confessing their sins" (verse 5). We see a crowd responding to a concrete action that then allows them to be washed in baptismal waters.

John, however, describes a different baptism through Jesus. In Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit has the central role. It is the Spirit rather than the washing that affects the transformation of the baptized. The Spirit creates a profound change in us because, at least in most Christian traditions, we receive faith that does not result from our fulfilling John's requirement to repent. We baptize infants who have no words of repentance.

If John's baptism is our focus, we may forget that we have been "immersed" in God's gracious welcome and "transformed" by the Holy Spirit. We can be caught up in our participation in the work of the Church, failing to acknowledge the mystery itself. We may forget that the mystery, which is God's defeat of death in the resurrection of Jesus, is the reason we come together to care about the world. The work we do may seem to be the goal rather than the life that grows out from gratitude.

Through Jesus' baptism, the Church is born and his faith washes over Earth through the baptized. By his baptism in the waters of the earth, the faith of Jesus made all waters sacred. The faith of Jesus is the reason Christians seek to keep the waters of earth clean, nourishing, plentiful, and free for everyone. Water is life itself in more ways than we can fathom.

## Notes

1. Ted A. Smith, "Mark 1:4-11: Homiletical Perspective," in *Feasting on the Word, Year B, Vol. 1: Advent through Transfiguration*, ed. David L. Bartlett and Barbara Brown Taylor (Louisville: WJK, 2008), 239.
2. Alexander Schmemmann, *Of Water & The Spirit: A Liturgical Study of Baptism* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2000), 67-78.

HYMN

"When Jesus Came to Jordan"

WOV # 647

When Jesus came to Jordan to be baptized by John, he did not come for pardon. but as his Father's Son. He came to share repentance with all who mourn their sins, to speak the vital sentence with which good news begins.

He came to share temptation, our utmost woe and loss, for us and our salvation to die upon the cross. So when the Dove descended on him, the Son of Man, the hidden years had ended, the age of grace began.

## APOSTLES' CREED

**We believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. We 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 into hell. 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. We 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. Amen**

## PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

P: ...let us pray,      **C: *Have mercy, O God.***

THE PEACE

OFFERING

OFFERTORY

OFFERING PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

LBW pg. 91

**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 forever and ever. Amen.**

BENEDICTION

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SENDING HYMN

“Beautiful Savior”

LBW # 518

Beautiful Savior, King of Creation, Son of God and Son of Man! Truly I'd love Thee, Truly I'd serve Thee,  
Light of my soul, my Joy, my Crown.

Fair are the meadows, Fair are the woodlands, Robed in flowers of blooming spring; Jesus is fairer, Jesus is  
purer; He makes our sorrowing spirit sing.

DISMISSAL

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**Prayer Concerns**

Lorna Kallio, Charlotte and Ken Carlson, Marie Anderson, Louise Ellingson, Glorene Clark, Herb  
Moore, Bill Utley, Bob Kallio, Marilyn Koschak, Susan (Paula Skelton's sister), Tom Lehtinen,  
Ruby Okstad (218-749-2866)