

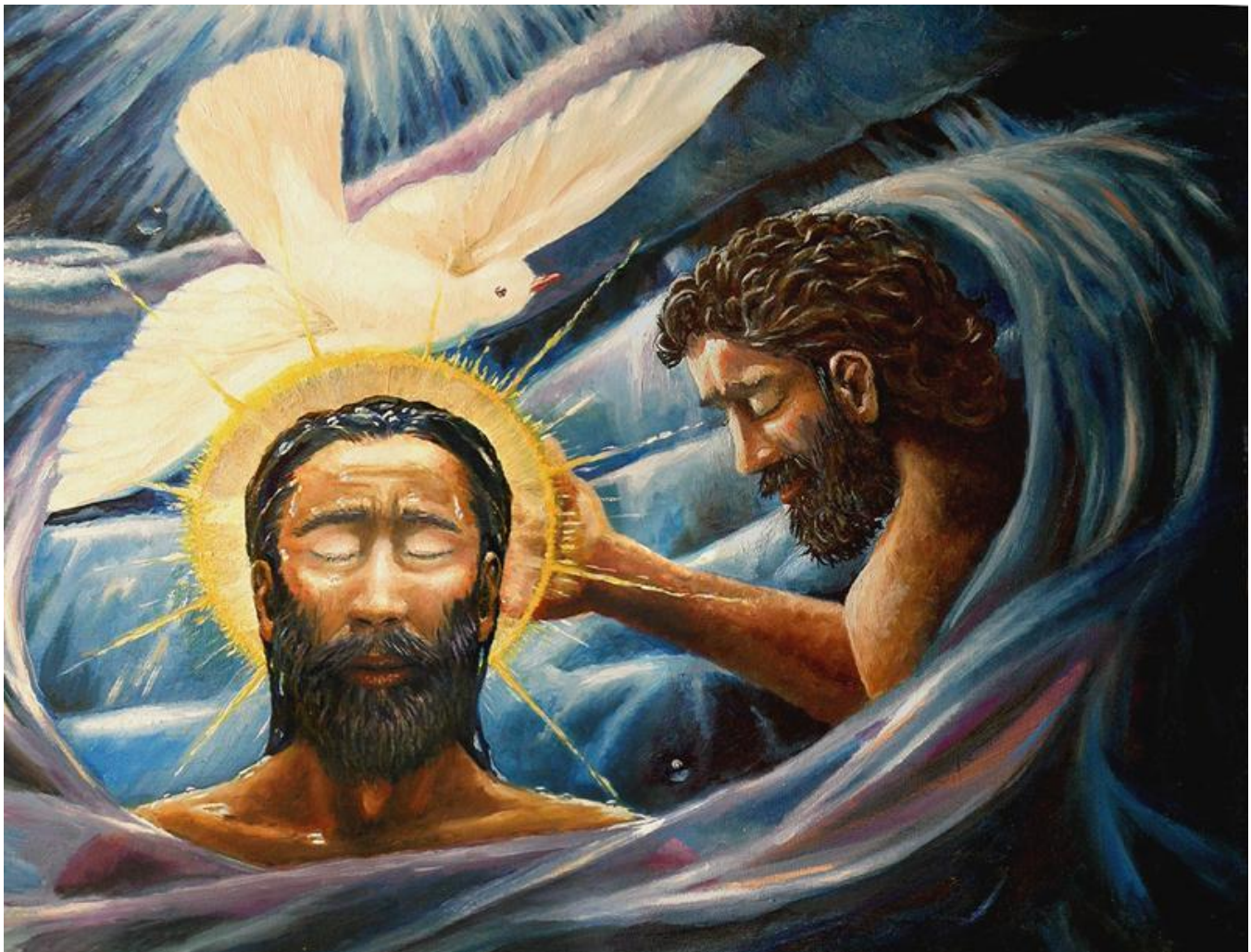
SERVICE OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

January 10 and 13, 2024



*"I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."*

- Mark 1:8 (NRSV)



Baptism of Christ

# Gathering as the Body of Christ

CENTERING SONG

“SPIRIT OF THE LIVING GOD”

UMH 393

GREETING

PRESIDER

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

God has blessed us and adopted us as God’s own beloved children, through the sacrament of Baptism.

**The water of baptism brings to us healing and reconciliation; it is a symbol of nourishment and cleansing.**

This day is the day of the remembrance of Jesus’ Baptism.

**As we hear the words of his baptism, let us be reminded of our own adoption by God and celebrate the joyous connection to the Almighty God.**

\*OPENING HYMN

“TAKE ME TO THE WATER” vs. 1, 2, 6

AAHH 675

\*CONFESSION & WORDS OF ASSURANCE

[All are invited to turn toward the Baptismal Font.]

We are incredibly stubborn, O Lord. We have entered the season in which Your Light has been given to the world, your blessings have been poured out on the world, and yet all we can often think about are our own problems, our own needs, our own desires.

**Help us to desire you, Lord. Help us to yearn for your presence.**

Pour your baptismal waters over our hearts again. Cleanse us from our self-pity and arrogance. Nourish and heal us so that we may joyfully serve you.

**Wash away our jealousy, greed, and all negative thoughts and behaviors that stand in the way of our truly being the people you have called us to be.**

Pause for silent prayers of confession

Again let us receive the blessings offered in creation, in the birth and baptism of Jesus, and in the ministry of the saints of light.

**The love of God is always offered to us, freely, joyfully, for all eternity.  
Amen.**

## \*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

You are invited to pass the peace to each other in a way comfortable to you and your neighbor.  
Be mindful that some of our siblings may prefer non-contact ways of passing the peace.

Peace be with you! **And also with you!**

Let us share this peace with one another.

## *Service of the Word*

POEM [SAT. ONLY]

**AND THE HEAVENS WERE OPENED**

**ANDREW KING**

*This poem invites us to consider the mysteries of a Creator.*

See the wings shine.

The wings are the bright color  
of the morning of that first day  
when light burst out of darkness,  
the darkness of the void that was  
the emptiness of the world  
before God gave to it life;  
that first day that was born  
as God's Spirit moved  
and chaos was transformed by love.  
The wings shine with the radiance of joy.

See the dove descend.

It is gentle as the touch  
of the hand of love  
that embraces a newborn child.  
It is vibrant with the power  
of the breath of the Spirit that  
moved over the waters of creation.  
In its breast beats the heart  
that pulses with the grace  
that is life from God eternal.  
The dove descends with the fullness of joy.

Hear the voice of the heavens.

Hear the voice that spoke  
from time's beginning  
declaring the goodness of creation.  
Hear the word proclaimed  
that speaks to all of time  
the goodness of God's Beloved.  
Hear the voice as it sings  
to all hearts that listen  
God's intention to bless the world.  
It resounds with the exuberance of joy.

Attend.

Attend to the wings that shine upon us,  
to the dove that descends here among us,  
to the voice that sings to our hearts.

Then follow, by grace  
to a future that is joy.

#### **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

Creator God, illuminate the scriptures, both read and explained. Open our hearts to hear from You, Amen.

#### **SCRIPTURE READING**

#### **MARK 1:4-12**

#### **NRSV**

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 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.

Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 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. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 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. And

And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.” And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness.

Holy wisdom, holy Word. **Thanks be to God!**

**SERMON**

**REV. DR. CARRIE CALL - JAN. 10**

**REV. DR. MICHAEL WILSON - JAN. 13**

**PRAYERS OF THE COMMUNITY**

Creator God, when everything first began, water became a symbol of refreshing, of washing away, of renewing. Through the waters of creation you brought forth abundant life. We have gathered this day to remember Jesus’ baptism, how your Spirit proclaimed that He was your beloved Son in whom you were very well pleased.

**Our spirits resound with that proclamation.**

In His baptism, Jesus’ ministry was initiated. He dedicated his life to you completely and without reservation.

**Help us to dedicate our lives to you, to offer our best for you, to be of service to you by serving in your world.**

We hold silent space for those within our community who are experiencing any form of lack whether spiritual, emotional, physical, economical or other.

As we have lifted before you the names of people near and dear to us who need your healing touch and your tender mercies, we have also lifted ourselves up as people in need of your grace. In our world there is war, oppression, hunger, and alienation.

**We have not been good stewards of the world. We have not cared for one another.**

Heal us and this world, Lord. Renew us with your life-giving waters and re-affirm our baptisms as your children. Let us go forth to be people of peace and mercy. For we ask this in Jesus’ Name. **Amen.**

*Service of the Table*

**OFFERTORY SONG**

**INSTRUMENTAL**

## **\*THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

Presider: May the God of glory be with you!

**All: And also with you.**

Presider: People of God, offer your hearts to God.

**All: We give them to the One who comes to redeem us.**

Presider: Sing songs of praise and joy, Children of God.

**All: We lift our voices to the One who journeys with us through the waters of baptism, and who feeds us at the Table of hope.**

Presider: With the water of baptism reminding us of your love for us, Voice of Heaven, we lift our praises to you. Before you breathed the Word which tamed chaos, you named us your children, heirs of all the goodness you desired for us.

S. Minister: You sang to us in Eden's fields, inviting us to glorify you forever. Yet, we walked into the shadows of the world, leaving the songs behind us. You persisted in your hopes for us, knowing that where no life is anticipated, no hope is expected, no future is seen, it is in those barren and desolate places that you gather your children up to carry us into your kingdom.

S. Minister: So, with angel choirs in every region, with shepherds who caroled a homeless family, with those who came home singing from exile, we lift our voices in joy and hope:

**Holy, holy, holy, Awesome Voice of life and hope.  
All creation resounds with your wondrous love.  
Hosanna in the highest!**

**Blessed is the One who comes to be baptized  
with water and the Spirit.  
Hosanna in the highest!**

Presider: Holy are you, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Bearer of grace and Singer of truth. When we lost our voice to sin, you sent your Word to teach us new songs of joy and praise. When our feet became muddy from playing in life's puddles, he stepped into the Jordan, so we might be cleansed of sin.

S. Minister: When our ears were filled with the lies of the world, he spoke the truth of your everlasting hope for us. When we were about to die, he came running to us, defeating sin and death, marking us as your own with the kiss of the Holy Spirit.



Presider: As we remember Christ's baptism, as we recall his life and ministry, as we follow him through death into the resurrection of the new life, we proclaim that mystery we call faith:

**Baptized, Christ was called your Beloved;  
dying, Christ was your heart broken for us;  
risen to new life, Christ is the Voice which  
shatters all our fears; coming to gather us up,  
Christ will bring us home to you.**

Holy Spirit, fill us with the bread of forgiveness and with the cup of hope. Flow through us like baptismal waters, so we might become a river of reconciliation. Grant us your peace, so we might carry this gift to the world. Set our hope on Christ, so we might build such hope in our neighbors and communities.

S. Minister: And when the river of time stops flowing, when we gather as one around your Table, we will join our voices as your children, singing to God, Child, and Spirit, God in Community, Holy in One. **Amen**

#### **INVITATION TO THE TABLE**

We have a few COVID related options for those who wish to partake. If you wish to receive from the ministers, take an empty cup from the stack on the aisle table and approach the minister, who will place a piece of bread in your open hand. All bread is gluten free. Or you may take one of the sealed celebration cups with the wafer on top and juice beneath; hold them out to the minister for a blessing. A minister will pour grape juice into your cup. Eat, drink, and dispose of the cup in the waste baskets at the side aisles as you return to your seat.

If you are unable to come forward, please signal the ministers and we will come to you at your seat. Those who prefer not to partake in Communion are invited to a different kind of divine encounter through an interfaith prayer of blessing. If this is your preference, we invite you to meet the minister at the baptismal font.

Whoever you are and wherever you are on life's journey, you are welcome here at this table where Christ is the host.

**COMMUNION SONG**

**“ONE BREAD, ONE BODY”**

**UMH 620**

# Going Forth as the Body of Christ

## \*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We thank you God for this holy meal that empowers and nourishes us. Baptized, we will go to share God's love with others. We will welcome those the world rejects as our sisters and brothers. Baptized, we will become the grace of our Lord Jesus. We will share the waters of life with everyone we meet. Baptized, we will become the fellowship of the Holy Spirit. We will be a community of justice, not judgment; we will be a household of hope, not an exclusive club for just a few. Amen.

## \*CLOSING SONG

“EVERY TIME I FEEL THE SPIRIT”

AAHH 325

## \*BENEDICTION

## SENDING & POSTLUDE

*A voice cries out in the wilderness to prepare  
For the greatness it knows will soon arrive  
Go, and make ready for joy is coming anew*



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**Cover Art:** Baptism of Christ

<https://diglib.library.vanderbilt.edu/diglib-fulldisplay.pl?SID=20230720500202665&code=act&RC=56385&Row=22> (Accessed July 10, 2023)

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**Poem:** Andrew King, “And the Heavens Were Opened.”

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**Prayers Of The Community:** Nancy C. Townley.

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**Communion Liturgy:** Written by Thom Schuman, “Liturgy w/communion for January 7, 2024 (Baptism of the Lord - B),” *Lectionary Liturgies*, accessed January 3, 2024., <https://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>.

**Prayer after Communion:** Adapted from liturgy written by Thom Schuman, “Liturgy w/communion for January 7, 2024 (Baptism of the Lord - B),” *Lectionary Liturgies*, accessed January 3, 2024., <https://lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com/>.

*\*The worship planning team creates all other parts of the liturgy except where noted.*

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**LANCASTER THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY WORSHIP TEAM**

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**THE WORSHIP TEAM SEEKS:**

*To serve the universal church of our Creator.*

*To minister to the unique and diverse needs of the seminary community.*

*To foster an expansive culture of worship that values difference and challenges the normative.*