

St. Stephen Lutheran Church
January 10, 2021
Baptism of Our Lord



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.

Gathering

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

Prelude

“”

***Confession and Forgiveness**

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, Love from the beginning, who was in the beginning, who makes a dwelling among us, who covers us with justice and mercy.

Amen.

Let us confess our sin, trusting in the abundant grace of God.

Silence is kept for reflection

Holy God

you search us and know us. You are acquainted with all our ways. We confess that our hearts are burdened by sin—our own sins and the broken systems that bind us. We turn inward, failing to follow your outward way of love. We distrust those who are not like us. We exploit the earth and its resources and fail to consider generations to come. Forgive us, gracious God, for all we have done and left undone. Even before the words are on our tongues, you know them; receive them in your divine mercy. Amen

How vast is God's grace! Through the power and promise of † Christ Jesus, our sins are washed away and we are claimed as God's own beloved. Indeed, we are forgiven. In the wake of God's forgiveness, we are called to be the beloved community living out Christ's justice and the Spirit's reconciling peace.

Amen.

Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters



1 Wash, O God, our sons and daughters, where your cleans-ing wa-ters flow.
 2 We who bring them long for nur-ture; by your milk may we be fed.
 3 Oh, how deep your ho-ly wis-dom! Un-im-ag-ined, all your ways!



Num-ber them a-mong your peo-ple; bless as Christ blessed long a-go.
 Let us join your feast, par-tak-ing cup of bless-ing, liv-ing bread.
 To your name be glo-ry, hon-or! With our lives we wor-ship, praise!



Weave them gar-ments bright and spark-ling; com-pass them with love and light.
 God, re-new us, guide our foot-steps; free from sin and all its snares,
 We your peo-ple stand be-fore you, wa-ter-washed and Spir-it-born.



Fill, a-noint them; send your Spir-it, ho-ly dove and heart's de-light.
 one with Christ in liv-ing, dy-ing, by your Spir-it, chil-dren, heirs.
 By your grace, our lives we of-fer. Re-cre-ate us; God, trans-form!

Text: Ruth Duck, b. 1947

Music: BEACH SPRING, *The Sacred Harp*, Philadelphia, 1844

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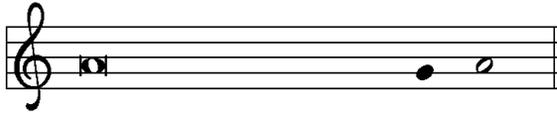
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***Apostolic Greeting**

The boundless grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the wisdom of God, and the light of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

***Kyrie**



In peace, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For the peace from a-bove, and for our sal - vation, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



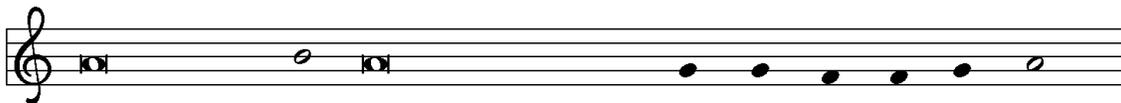
For the peace of the whole world, for the well-being of the church of God,



and for the unity of all, let us pray to the Lord.



Lord, have mer - cy.



For this holy house, and for all who offer here their wor-ship and praise,



let us pray to the Lord.

Lord have mer - cy.



Help, save, comfort, and de - fend us, gra-cious Lord. A - men.

***Canticle of Praise**

Refrain

Assisting minister



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.

All



1 Wor- thy is Christ, the Lamb who was slain, whose blood set us



free to be peo-ple of God. Pow - er and rich - es and wis - dom and



strength, and hon - or and bless-ing and glo - ry are his.

Refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God. Al-le - lu - ia.



2 Sing with all the peo - ple of God and join in the



hymn of all cre - a - tion: Bless-ing and hon - or and glo - ry and



might be to God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.

Final refrain



This is the feast of vic-to-ry for our God, for the Lamb who was slain



has be - gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia. Al - le - lu - ia.

***Prayer of the Day**

Let us pray.

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.

The First Lesson

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.

A reading from the book of Genesis, the 1st chapter.

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.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm

Psalm 29

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.**

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.**

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.

The Second Lesson

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.

A reading from the Acts of the Apostles, the 19th chapter.

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.

Word of God. Word of Life. **Thanks be to God.**

*Gospel Acclamation



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

*The Holy Gospel

Mark 1:4-11

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.

A reading from the Gospel according to St. Mark , the first chapter.

Glory to You o Lord.

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

Pastor Matthew Best

***Hymn of the Day**

"We are Baptized in Christ Jesus "

Hymn#451 vs. 1-3

- 1 We are baptized in Christ Jesus,
we are baptized in his death;
that as Christ is raised victorious,
we might live a brand new life.
And if we have been united
in a dreadful death like his,
we will all be reunited, for he lives.
- 2 In the water and the witness,
in the breaking of the bread,
in the waiting arms of Jesus
who is risen from the dead,
God has made a new beginning
from the ashes of our past;
in the losing and the winning we hold fast.
- 3 Glory be to God the Father,
glory be to Christ the Son,
glory to the Holy Spirit,
ever three and ever one;
as it was in the beginning,
glory now resounds again
in a song that has no ending. Amen

Text: John C. Ylvisaker
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***Apostles' Creed**

AM: Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us profess our faith, using the words of the Apostles' Creed.

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.
I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
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,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.
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. Amen.**

***Prayers of the Church**

Congregational response after each petition:

AM: ...Let us pray, **C: Have mercy O God.**

Guided by Christ made known to the nations, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all people in need.

A brief silence.

For the church throughout the world and its leaders, that guided by the Holy Spirit they proclaim the forgiveness of sins, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For wilderness and water, wind and wild beasts, and all living things on earth, that God's goodness is revealed through creation and faithful stewards care for all God has made, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For the nations of the world and their leaders, for laborers busy both day and night, and for peacemakers amid strife, that God inspire all people to use their strength wisely, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For the sick and those who provide medical care, for the imprisoned and those who show them mercy, for the lonely and those who provide companionship, for all who suffer, that God shower compassion, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

For the congregation gathered here, for students returning to school, for those seeking renewal in their daily work, that all the beloved of God experience grace and peace, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

In thanksgiving for the faithful departed who now rest from their labors, that their witness inspire us in our baptismal vocations, let us pray.

Have mercy, O God.

Here other intercessions may be offered.

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior.

Amen.

Meal

God feeds us with the presence of Jesus Christ.

***Peace**

P: The Peace of Christ be with you always.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us show a sign of that peace!

Offering

The offering, whether in person or through digital means, is an act of worship. Worship, at its core, is a reverent love and devotion accorded to God. We give because God loves us first, and we are called to love God and neighbor as a result. The offering is one way we show our love of God.

Note that beginning in 2021, the fund which has been called Benevolence has been changed to Mission Support. This has been done to better reflect how the funds are used.

We are in the process of changing how we receive electronic (bank draft, credit and debit cards) gifts. We are changing from Vanco/SimplyGiving to Engage from Suran. The new system works better with the church office system and provides more information to the giver.

To assist you in this act of worship, there are several ways to make your offering: Go to www.StStephenLC.org and scroll to the bottom of the page, and click **DONATE**.

Text your offering dollar amount to 717-685-6947. Text "help" for options.

Use Engage from your smart phone or Internet connected device at <https://engage.suran.com/sslc/> or QR code below:



Set up regular electronic offerings by contacting Kevin, our office manager, at 717-766- 2168, Monday through Thursday from 9am – 2pm, or by email at office@StStephenLC.org to get set up.

Mail in your check, made payable to St. Stephen Lutheran Church. Our address is
30 W. Main St., PO Box 266, New Kingstown, PA 17072.

The offerings are used to carry out the ministry of the church, to share the Good News, to provide pastoral care, to worship as a community, and to create an environment where Jesus encounters people and their lives are transformed. All of these things continue to take place. Thank you for your generosity.

***Offertory Prayer**

Let us pray.

O God,

receive these gifts as you receive us: like a mother receives her child, with arms open wide. Nourish us anew in your tender care, and empower us in faithful service to tend to others with this same love, through Jesus Christ, our saving grace.

Amen

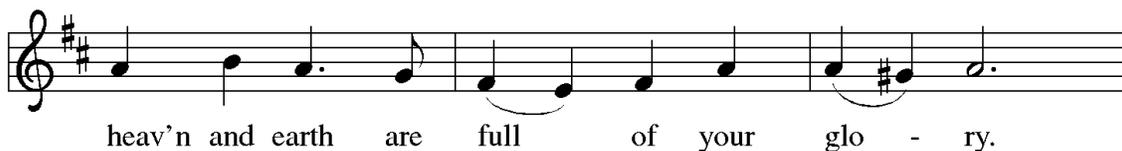
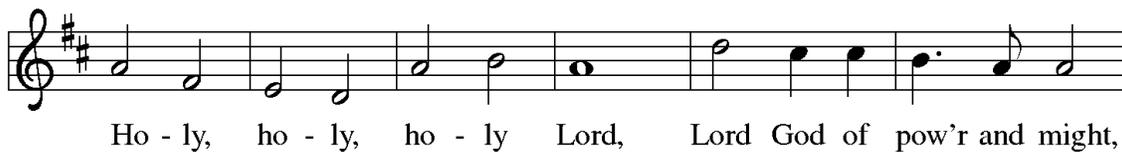
***The Great Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God. **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is indeed right, our duty and our joy, that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you, almighty and merciful God, through our Savior Jesus Christ. In the wonder and mystery of the Word made flesh you have opened the eyes of faith to a new and radiant vision of your glory, that, beholding the God made visible, we may be drawn to love the God whom we cannot see. And so, with all the choirs of angels, with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:



Ho - san - na in the high - est. Bless - ed is he who comes
in the name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

Holy One, the beginning and the end, the giver of life:
Blessed are you for the birth of creation.
Blessed are you in the darkness and in the light.
Blessed are you for your promise to your people.
Blessed are you in the prophets' hopes and dreams.
Blessed are you for Mary's openness to your will.
Blessed are you for your Son Jesus,
the Word made flesh.

In the night in which he was handed over, our Lord Jesus took bread, and gave thanks; broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body, given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

With this bread and cup we remember your Word dwelling among us, full of grace and truth. We remember our new birth in his death and resurrection. We look with hope for his coming.

Come, Lord Jesus.

Holy God, we long for your Spirit. Come among us. Bless this meal. May your Word take flesh in us. Awaken your people. Fill us with your light. Bring the gift of peace on earth.

Come, Holy Spirit.

All praise and glory are yours, Holy One of Israel, Word of God incarnate, Power of the Most High, one God, now and forever.

Amen.

Gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us pray as Jesus taught us:

**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.**

***Invitation to Communion**

AM. Beloved: here is bread; here is wine. Here is Jesus.
Come and be fed



Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have mer-cy on



us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the sin of the world; have



mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a-way the



sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

***Post Communion Prayer**

Christ Jesus,
at this table we have feasted on your very life and are strengthened for our journey. Send us
forth from this banquet nourished in body and in spirit to proclaim your good news and serve
others in your name. **Amen.**

Sending

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

Installation of Council Members

P: The following people have been *elected* to positions of leadership – Ilona Burd, President, Wayne Lengel, Vice President, Nicole Grove, Secretary. We give thanks for their willingness to serve. In baptism we are welcomed into the body of Christ and sent to share in the mission of God; we rejoice now that these *sisters and brother* will lead us in our common life and our mutual mission as a congregation.

A reading from First Corinthians: There are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of services, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of activities, but it is the same God who activates all of them in everyone. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. (1 Corinthians 12:4-7)

Ilona, Wayne, and Nicole, you have been *elected* to positions of leadership and trust in this congregation. You are to see that the words and deeds of this household of faith bear witness to God, who gathers us into one together with the whole church. You are to seek to involve all members of this congregation in worship, learning, witness, service, and support, so that the mission of Christ is carried out in this congregation, in the wider church, in this community, and in the whole world. You are to be faithful in your specific area of serving, that the Spirit who empowers you may be glorified. You are to be examples of faith active in love, fostering peace, harmony, and mutual understanding in this congregation. You are to pray for our congregation, our Pastor, one another, and our mission in the world.

On behalf of your sisters and brothers in Christ, I ask you: Will you accept and faithfully carry out the duties of the offices to which you have been *elected*?

Response: I will, and I ask God to help me.

P: People of God, I ask you: Will you support these, your *elected* leaders?

We will, and we ask God to help us.

Will you pray for them?

We will and we ask God to help us.

In obedience to the Eighth Commandment, will you seek interpret everything they say and do in the best possible light?

We will and we ask God to help us.

Will you strive always to share in the mutual ministry that Christ has given to all who are baptized?

We will, and we ask God to help us.

P: I now declare you installed as *officers and council members* of this congregation. Almighty God bless you, and direct your days and your deeds in peace, that you may be faithful servants of Christ.

Amen.

***Blessing**

God the creator strengthen you; Jesus the beloved fill you; and the Holy Spirit the comforter ☩ keep you in peace.

Amen.

***Sending Hymn**

“God, Whose Almighty Word”

Hymn#673 vs. 1-3

- 1 God, whose almighty word
chaos and darkness heard
and took their flight:
hear us, we humbly pray,
and where the gospel day
sheds not its glorious ray,
let there be light.
- 2 Christ, who once came to bring,
on your redeeming wing,
healing and sight;
health to the troubled mind,
sight where illusions blind;
oh, now to humankind
let there be light.
- 3 Spirit of truth and love,
life-giving, holy dove,
speed forth your flight;
move on the water's face
bearing the lamp of grace,
and in earth's darkest place
let there be light.

Text: John Marriott, 1780-1825, alt.

***Dismissal**

AM: Christ is born! Go tell it on the mountain and everywhere.

C: Thanks be to God. We Will

Postlude

“”

St. Stephen Evangelical Lutheran Church is a community of faith inspired and empowered by the Holy Spirit to proclaim boldly the Good News of God’s loving and saving presence in the world.

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