

# Holy Baptism

January 9, 2022

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85887946777?pwd=eig4MEdsMUh6clV6b2dUblFOQ3l2Zz09>

Meeting ID: 858 8794 6777

Passcode: 782611

## Epiphany 1C

### Prelude

*All stand as they are able*

### Opening Hymn

Tune: *Bunessan*

*Baptized in water*

*Unison or harmony*

Bap-tized in wa- ter, sealed by the Spi- rit,  
Bap-tized in wa- ter, sealed by the Spi- rit,  
Bap-tized in wa- ter, sealed by the Spi- rit,

Cleansed by the blood of Christ our King:  
Dead in the tomb with Christ our King:  
Marked with the sign of Christ our King:

Heirs of sal-va-tion, trusting his pro-mise,  
One with his ri-sing, freed and for-gi-ven,  
Born of one Fa-ther, we are God's chil-dren,

Faith-ful- ly now God's praises we sing.  
 Thank-ful- ly now God's praises we sing.  
 Joy- ful- ly now God's praises we sing.

*Presider* Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.  
*People* **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and for ever. Amen.**  
*Presider* There is one Body and one Spirit;  
*People* **There is one hope in God's call to us;**  
*Presider* One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;  
*People* **One God and Father of all.**

**Collect of the Day**

*Presider* The Lord be with you.  
*People* **And also with you.**  
*Presider* Let us pray.

Father in heaven, who at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit: Grant that all who are baptized into his Name may keep the covenant they have made, and boldly confess him as Lord and Savior; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

*All sit.*

**First Reading**

**Isaiah 43:1-7**

A Reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah.

<sup>1</sup>Now thus says the LORD,  
 he who created you, O Jacob,  
 he who formed you, O Israel:  
 Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;  
 I have called you by name, you are mine.  
<sup>2</sup>When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;  
 and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you;  
 when you walk through fire you shall not be burned,

and the flame shall not consume you.  
<sup>3</sup>For I am the LORD your God,  
the Holy One of Israel, your Savior.  
I give Egypt as your ransom,  
Ethiopia and Sheba in exchange for you.  
<sup>4</sup>Because you are precious in my sight,  
and honored, and I love you,  
I give people in return for you,  
nations in exchange for your life.  
<sup>5</sup>Do not fear, for I am with you;  
I will bring your offspring from the east,  
and from the west I will gather you;  
<sup>6</sup>I will say to the north, "Give them up,"  
and to the south, "Do not withhold;  
bring my sons from far away  
and my daughters from the end of the earth—  
<sup>7</sup>everyone who is called by my name,  
whom I created for my glory,  
whom I formed and made."

*Reader* The Word of the Lord.

*People* **Thanks be to God.**

*Remain seated*

**Psalm 23**      *to be prayed in unison*

**<sup>1</sup>The LORD is my shepherd; \*  
I shall not be in want.  
<sup>2</sup>He makes me lie down in green pastures \*  
and leads me beside still waters.  
<sup>3</sup>He revives my soul \*  
and guides me along right pathways for his Name's sake.  
<sup>4</sup>Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,  
I shall fear no evil; \*  
for you are with me;  
your rod and your staff, they comfort me.  
<sup>5</sup>You spread a table before me in the presence of those who trouble me; \*  
you have anointed my head with oil,  
and my cup is running over.  
<sup>6</sup>Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me  
all the days of my life, \*  
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.**

## Second Reading

Acts 8:14-17

A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

<sup>14</sup>Now when the apostles at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had accepted the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them. <sup>15</sup>The two went down and prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit <sup>16</sup>(for as yet the Spirit had not come upon any of them; they had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus). <sup>17</sup>Then Peter and John laid their hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

*Reader* The Word of the Lord.

*People* **Thanks be to God.**

*All stand as they are able.*

## Sequence Hymn

Tune: *O Quanta Qualia*

*Spirit of God, you moved over the waters*

Spi- rit of God, you moved o- ver the wa- ters  
Spi- rit of God, like a dove you once rest- ed,  
Help us to see you, still call- ing and car- ing,  
Whisp'ring God's love to the whole of cre- a- tion.  
Show- ing God's joy on the day Christ was bap- tized.  
Help us to know you a- mong us, cre- a- ting.  
You breathe your life in- to God's sons and daugh- ters.  
You sent Christ out to the hills to be test- ed,  
Spi- rit of God, give us cour- age and dar- ing —  
Giv- ing us tal- ents and your in- spi- ra- tion.  
Through you he called us to see God with new eyes.  
To share God's love with a world that is wait- ing.

## Holy Gospel

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

*Gospeller* The Holy Gospel of our Savior Jesus Christ according to Luke.  
*People* **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

<sup>15</sup>As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, <sup>16</sup>John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup>His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

<sup>21</sup>Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, <sup>22</sup>and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, “You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.”



*Gospeller* The Gospel of the Lord.  
*People* **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

## Sermon

### Thanksgiving over the Water

*The Presider blesses the water of Baptism*

*Presider* The Lord be with you.

*People* **And also with you.**

*Presider* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*People* **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

*Presider* We thank you, Almighty God, for the gift of water. Over it the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation. Through it you led the children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt into the land of promise. In it your Son Jesus received the baptism of John and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ, to lead us, through his death and resurrection, from the bondage of sin into everlasting life.

We thank you, Father, for the water of Baptism. In it we are buried with Christ in his death. By it we share in his resurrection. Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit. Therefore in joyful obedience to your Son, we bring into his fellowship those who come to him in faith, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

*At the following words, the Presider dips the foot of the Paschal Candle in the water*

Now sanctify this water, we pray you, by the power of your Holy Spirit, that those who here are cleansed from sin and born again may continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Savior. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and for ever. **Amen.**

## **Presentation and Examination of the Candidates**

*The candidates, parents and godparents, stand as they are able.*

*The Presider says*

The Candidates for Holy Baptism will now be presented.

*The candidates who are able to answer for themselves are presented individually by their Sponsors.*

*Sponsor*

I present Stephanie Lynn Leonard to receive the Sacrament of Baptism.

I present Kailyn Trace Schubring to receive the Sacrament of Baptism.

*The Presider then asks each candidate when presented*

Do you desire to be baptized?

*Candidate*

I do.

*Then the Presider asks the following questions of the candidates who can speak for themselves, and of the parents and godparents who speak on behalf of the infants and younger children*

*Question* Do you renounce Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God?

*Answer* I renounce them.

*Question* Do you renounce the evil powers of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?

*Answer* I renounce them.

*Question* Do you renounce all sinful desires that draw you from the love of God?

*Answer* I renounce them.

*Question* Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Savior?

*Answer* I do.

*Question* Do you put your whole trust in his grace and love?

*Answer* I do.

*Question* Do you promise to follow and obey him as your Lord?

*Answer* I do.

*After all have been presented, the Presider addresses the congregation, saying*

Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support this person in his life in Christ?

*People*        **We will.**

*The Presider then says*

Let us join with those who are committing themselves to Christ, and renew our own baptismal covenant.

*All stand as they are able*

## **The Baptismal Covenant**

*Presider* Do you believe in God the Father?

*People*    **I believe in God, the Father almighty,  
creator of heaven and earth.**

*Presider* Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

*People*    **I 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 to the dead.  
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.**

*Presider* Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

*People*    **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.**

*Presider* Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of the bread, and in the prayers?

*People*    **I will, with God's help.**

*Presider* Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

*People*    **I will, with God's help.**



*Presider* Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

*People* **I will, with God's help.**

*Presider* Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

*People* **I will, with God's help.**

*Presider* Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

*People* **I will, with God's help.**

## **Prayers for the Candidates**

*Intercessor* Deliver them, O Lord, from the way of sin and death.

*People* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Intercessor* Open their hearts to your grace and truth.

*People* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Intercessor* Fill them with your holy and life-giving Spirit.

*People* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Intercessor* Keep them in the faith and communion of your holy Church.

*People* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Intercessor* Teach them to love others in the power of the Spirit.

*People* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Intercessor* Send them into the world in witness to your love.

*People* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*Intercessor* Bring them to the fullness of your peace and glory.

*People* **Lord, hear our prayer.**

*The Presider then says*

Grant, O Lord, that all who are baptized into the death of Jesus Christ your Son may live in the power of his resurrection and look for him to come again in glory; who lives and reigns now and forever. **Amen.**

## **The Baptism**

*The candidates are presented by name to the Presider, who then pours water upon each candidate, saying*

**N.N.**, I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

*Then the Presider places a hand on each person's head, marking on the forehead the sign of the cross [using Chrism if desired] and saying*

**N.**, you are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ's own for ever. **Amen.**

*When this action has been completed, the Presider, at a place in full sight of the congregation, prays over the newly baptized, saying*

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit you have bestowed upon these your servants the forgiveness of sin, and have raised them to the new life of grace. Sustain them, O Lord, in your Holy Spirit. Give them inquiring and discerning hearts, the courage to will and to persevere, a spirit to know and to love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works. **Amen.**

*The Presider then says*

Let us welcome the newly baptized:

*Presider and People then say*

**We receive you into the household of God. Confess the faith of Christ crucified, proclaim his resurrection, and share with us in his eternal priesthood.**

*All remain standing as they are able.*

## **The Prayers of the People**

*Presider* The Lord shall give us the blessings of strength and peace. Beloved of God, let us pray, “Walk with us through the waters, O God; walk with us through the fire.”

*Intercessor* Deliver your Church, O God, from fear. Strengthen those you have redeemed by your presence. Strengthen our Bishops Bonnie, Michael, Justin, Moises, Elizabeth, Donald and Craig. Bless all ministers, priests, deacons, ministry teams, those in formation; and our brothers and sisters worshipping at Christ United, DeWitt, St Clement’s, Inkster, and St Anthony of Padua, Carreton, in the Dominican Republic; and those in the Province of Iglesia Anglicana de Chile; Give us all the courage to keep our baptismal promises. Walk with us through the waters, O God; **walk with us through the fire.**

*Silence is kept.*

O God, you have blessed us to be members of your household. Strengthen the unity of the Church—those serving you in the east, west, north, and south. Walk with us through the waters, O God; **walk with us through the fire.**

*Silence is kept.*

Break down the walls of division in our city and our nation. Bring us together as one human family, formed and made by your great hands. Walk with us through the waters, O God; **walk with us through the fire.**

*Silence is kept.*

Heal and comfort your beloved children, O God. Be with [\_\_\_\_\_ and] the needy in their trials. May they know that they are precious in your sight. Walk with us through the waters, O God; **walk with us through the fire.**

Your power, O God, is evident in the mysteries of our universe. By water and your Holy Spirit you have made us a new people. We give you thanks and praise for all the blessings you give us [especially \_\_\_\_\_]. Walk with us through the waters, O God; **walk with us through the fire.**

Heavenly Parent, you have accepted us as your children. You have made us heirs with Christ. In your great mercy, receive us, [\_\_\_\_\_], and all who have died, into glory everlasting. Walk with us through the waters, O God; **walk with us through the fire.**

*Silence is kept.*

*Presider* Almighty and transcendent God, your glory fills all creation, and your authority extends beyond time and forever: Let your Spirit open our lives to your grace and truth, that we may always see your Christ at his coming, to whom be glory and dominion forever and ever. **Amen.**

## **Confession of Sin**

*The Presider says*

Jesus said, “The first commandment is this: Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is the only Lord. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. The second is this: Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other commandment greater than these.” *Mark 12:29-31*

*A Minister then says*

Let us confess our sins to God.

*Silence is kept.*

*Minister and People*

**Most merciful God,  
we confess that we have sinned against you  
in thought, word, and deed,  
by what we have done,  
and by what we have left undone.  
We have not loved you with our whole heart;  
we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.  
We are truly sorry and we humbly repent.  
For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ,  
have mercy on us and forgive us;  
that we may delight in your will,**

**and walk in your ways,  
to the glory of your Name. Amen.**

*A Priest stands and says*

Almighty God have mercy on you, + forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life. **Amen.**

## **Peace**

*All stand as they are able.*

*Presider* The peace of the Lord be always with you.

*People* **And also with you.**

*Then the Ministers and the People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.*

***The People then are seated.***

## **Announcements**

### **Holy Communion**

Yours, O Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory, the victory, and the majesty. For everything in heaven and on earth is yours. Yours, O Lord, is the kingdom, and you are exalted as head over all. *1 Chronicles 29:11*

#### *How the Holy Communion is prepared*

The Presider, other Eucharistic Ministers, and any participating Acolytes must wash their hands, or use hand sanitizer, before celebrating and before distribution. Gloves will not be used.

The Presider alone will bring the bread and wine from the credence table to the Altar at the time of the offertory. All of the elements for Holy Communion will be placed on the Altar for the Eucharistic Prayer. The Presider alone stands at the altar, with others 6 feet or more away.

The **priest's wafer and chalice** will be uncovered in front of the Presider during the Eucharistic Prayer. They **are for the Presider alone**. They are consumed entirely by the Presider, or appropriately disposed of after the service.

The priest's wafer and the people's wafers will be kept separate at all times. The **people's wafers will be a container** on the Altar, which will remain covered throughout the Eucharistic Prayer.

During consecration, the Presider will touch the container, not the wafers.

The **distribution** of consecrated wine is not permitted at this time (as of June 19, 2020 Diocese of Michigan directive).

### *How the Holy Communion will be distributed*

Everyone distributing communion will use hand sanitizer before they begin distribution. Gloves will not be used. Communicants will be encouraged to use hand sanitizer before receiving. Hand sanitizer will be available at the service.

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Communicants will be encouraged to use hand sanitizer before receiving. Hand sanitizer will be available at the service.

The people will come to the Altar rail as they are able. The Minister will place the bread in the hand. The distribution will happen without directly touching the hand of the person receiving. Hand-to-mouth distribution is not permitted. If hand-to-hand contact happens, the minister will re-sanitize.

If a blessing is preferred, the blessing will be given without touch.

***The people stand as they are able as a minister brings forward the alms basin.***

## **Offertory Hymn**

Doxology

**Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;  
Praise God, all creatures here below;  
Praise God above, you heavenly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.**

*The people remain standing.*

## **Great Thanksgiving**

*Presider* The Lord be with you.

*People* **And also with you.**

*Presider* Lift up your hearts.

*People* **We lift them to the Lord.**

*Presider* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*People* **It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Because in the mystery of the Word made flesh, you have caused a new light to shine in our hearts, to give the knowledge of your glory in the face of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

## Sanctus

Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly

5  
God of po - wer and might. Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly

9  
God of po - wer and might. Hea - ven and earth are

12  
full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na in the high - est! All

15  
hea - ven and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho - san - na, ho -

18  
san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est!

24 *molto rit.*  
Bles - sed is the one who comes in the name of the LORD.

*The people continue to stand, or kneel, as they are able.*

*The Presider continues*

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself; and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come again.**

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us **✝** also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ. By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever.  
**AMEN.**

*The Presider then continues*

As our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray:

**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.  
Breaking of the Bread**

*A period of silence is kept.*

*The Presider says*

Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;  
**Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

These are the Gifts of God.  
**And we are the people of God.**

And in union and solidarity with your faithful people  
who are not able to be present at this table, we pray together:  
**Strengthen and sustain us with your grace, Lord Christ,  
and let us never be separated from you.**

Come spiritually into all of our hearts, Lord Christ.

**May we live in you, and you in us, in this life, and in the life to come.  
Amen.**

*All baptized persons are welcome to receive Holy Communion.*

*After Communion, the Presider says*

Let us pray.

*Presider and People*

**Almighty and everliving God,  
we thank you for feeding us with the spiritual food  
of the most precious Body and Blood  
of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ;  
and for assuring us in these holy mysteries  
that we are living members of the Body of Christ,  
and heirs of your eternal kingdom.  
And now, send us out  
to do the work you have given us to do,  
to love and serve you  
as faithful witnesses of Christ our Savior.**

**To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit,  
be honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.**

## Blessing

*A priest blesses the people, saying*

You are the body of Christ.  
May you have the heart of Christ, tender for mercy.  
May you have the eyes of Christ to see a world in need.  
May you have the feet of Christ to bring good news.

And may the blessing of the Holy One who made you,  
✠Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer be with you today and always. **Amen.**

## Concluding Hymn

*Go light your world*

LEVAS 68

1. There is a can - dle in ev - 'ry soul, Some burn - ing  
2. Frus - trat - ed broth - er, see how he's tried to Light his own  
3. We are a fam - 'ly whose hearts are blaz - ing. Let's raise our

bright - ly, some dark and cold. There is a Spir - it who brings a  
can - dle some oth - er way. See now your sis - ter, she's been robbed and  
can - dles - light up the sky! Pray to our Fath - er in the name of

fire, Ig - nites a can - dle and makes His home.  
lied to, Still holds a can - dle with - out a flame. Car - ry your  
Je - sus; Make us a bea - con in dark - est times.

can - dle, run to the dark - ness, Seek out the hope - less, con - fused and  
 torn. Hold out your can - dle for all to see it, Take your  
 can - dle, and go light your world. Take your can - dle, and go light your world.

**Dismissal**

*Minister* My brothers and my sisters, let us go forth into the world, rejoicing in the power of the Spirit.  
*People* **Thanks be to God.**



**Postlude**

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**Congratulations to the newly Baptized and their Families!**

Stephanie Lynn Leonard  
 Kailyn Trace Schubring

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**Faith in Action** provides leadership in collecting donations to support households in need in the Chelsea and Dexter areas. They are in need of our continuing help. You may bring your donations to FIA, or to Nancy who will see that they get there. **If you bring food directly to FIA**, please let Nancy know, so she can continue to keep our records of donation. If you

write a check, please make it to *Faith In Action*. The **next Food Drive at the church** is **next Sunday, January 16**. Please contribute as generously as you can.

**A reminder** that our Social Time is still active every Tuesday evening from 7:00-7:30 on Zoom! The link can be found on the church web site calendar, and also here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86367804283?pwd=eW9jelFKTTdaaUlXRozxMEc1NlM3Zzo9>  
Meeting ID: 863 6780 4283, Passcode: 894503

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### Upcoming Commemorations

- January 9 Julia Chester Emery, Lay Leader and Missionary, 1922
- 10 William Laud, Archbishop of Canterbury, 1645
- 12 Aelred of Rievaulx, Abbot, 1167
- 13 Hilary of Poitiers, Bishop, 367
- 14 Richard Meux Benson, Priest, and Charles Gore, Bishop, 1915 and 1932

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#### Epiphany 1C January 9, 2022

##### Isaiah 43:1-7

As we remember Jesus’ baptism in the River Jordan, the prophet Isaiah’s words speak to us about the profound faithfulness of God. In this passage, God promises his chosen people that he will be with them no matter what. During my undergraduate days at a small church-related college in the Midwest, we sang the hymn *Great is Thy faithfulness* constantly. My campus minister once pointed out to me why he liked it so much: “The song attributes faithfulness where it belongs—to God.” As Christians, we have a tendency to focus on *our* faithfulness, forgetting that it is God who is first and foremost faithful to us. Isaiah tells us that the Lord protects us. With God by our side, we can rest assured that no harm will come to us. “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.”

- We often consider the importance of the promises that the candidates (or their sponsors) make at baptism, but what promises does God make to us in baptism? How does God’s relationship with Israel also represent these promises?

##### Acts 8:14-17

This passage from the Acts of the Apostles speaks of the ever-expanding body of Christ. Since the origin of the Church, baptism has meant inclusion in the Christian community. What we miss from this excerpt is that Philip has gone to Samaria to preach Jesus Christ, and he has evidently done so to great success, baptizing many along the way. When the apostles in

Jerusalem hear of his success, they go to add their support and prayers for the new initiates. Putting aside complex theological arguments about the apostles' role in bestowing the Holy Spirit, this story serves as a reminder of what baptism is really about: the Christian community. The newly baptized are part of a community that reaches far beyond the bounds of the local parish. Baptism is not a family rite of passage or a celebration of a little baby in a white dress. Just like our bishops today connect us to the wider church, Peter and John remind us that baptism is not about us, or our family, or even our parish. Baptism is about the entire community of Christ. Through it, God's children are incorporated into an everlasting heritage dating back to the first apostles and stretching forward to eternity.

- Do you feel connected to the larger Body of Christ beyond your parish community?
- How does your baptism call you beyond the bounds of your congregation and into wider relationship with the people of God?

**Luke 3:15-17, 21-22**

The first three verses of this text take the hearer immediately back to Advent. On the Third Sunday of Advent in Year C, we hear these verses toward the end of the gospel reading. As John urges the people to “bear fruits worthy of repentance,” they begin to wonder if he might be the Messiah. No, he assures them, I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with fire and the Spirit. Today we also hear Luke's brief account of Jesus' baptism. After Jesus' baptism, the Holy Spirit is bestowed upon him by God: “The heaven was opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, ‘You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.’” The hearer gets the sense that this baptism—Jesus' baptism—is different. This is not simply John's baptism of repentance, this is God's own son, specially anointed with the Spirit. Now that he has been identified by the very voice of God, his public ministry will begin to unfold.

- Just as Jesus' baptism was the beginning of his public ministry, your baptism was the beginning of your life in Christ. What is the ministry of the baptized? How do you live into that ministry?

*This Bible study was written by the Rev. Warren Swenson.*

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**Entrance Hymn** text at *LEVAS*, #121 Tune *Bunessan* at *Hymnal*, #8.

**Sequence Hymn** text at *Voices Found*, #58 Tune: *O Quanta Qualia* at *Hymnal*, #348.

**Concluding prayer** at the Intercessions adapted from *The Armed Forces Prayer Book*, 1951.

**Sanctus** musical setting from *St Barnabas Mass*, by Doug Howell. © 2016 Creative Measures. Used by permission of the composer.

**Invitation to the Table** from <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/bcr-132/> Accessed 12 June 2019

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## **Our Mission:**

We seek to grow as diverse disciples of Jesus Christ, and to serve Jesus by serving others in the world, guided by the values of Ancient Rites, Open Minds, and Affirming Hearts.



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