



Baptism of Our Lord

January 7, 2024 + 9am

Zion-Public WiFi password: Zion54484
Congregational responses are in BOLD.

All are welcome to receive Jesus' unconditional gift of God's grace through the sacrament of Holy Communion. Regardless of your church membership or affiliation, all are encouraged to participate in communion or to come forward for a blessing.

The communion bread is homemade by congregation members and contains gluten and honey. For those with allergies or sensitivities, an alternative will be provided upon request.

Children of all ages are encouraged to worship with the whole community in Christ. Children's worship bags are available in the back of the sanctuary.

Page numbers that are listed are found in the front of the cranberry-colored hymnal at the bottom of the page. Hymn numbers are listed in bold, large print on the top of the page.

If you would like home communion, a hospital visit, or a conversation with the pastor, please get in touch with the church office at 715.687.4110 or at office@zionstratford.org or Pastor Amy Heinz at 608.498.5772 or pastoramy@zionstratford.org.

Ministers: All the People of God through the love of Jesus and the power and gifts of the Holy Spirit

Pastor: Rev. Amy Heinz

Administrative Assistant: Kathy Busche

Organists: Judy Polege, Marge Redetzke, Ryan Huther

Custodian: Rod Huther

Missionaries: Steven & Bethany Friberg, Tanzania

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PRELUDE

CENTERING AND BELLS' CALL TO WORSHIP

WELCOME/ANNOUNCEMENTS

We Gather in Grace

OPENING LITANY

We begin in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

In your wisdom, O God, you call us here to worship you.

We gather, alive to the Word of God.

You call us to be fully alive with your life abundant,
ready to listen and respond with heart, soul, strength, and mind.

We gather, alive to the Word of God.

You call us to be always watchful for your Word of wisdom,
sometimes startling and unexpected,

Sometimes still and quiet,

but always dwelling among us.

We watch and wait for the Word of God in this place.

Amen**

HYMN

"We Know that Christ is Raised"

ELW 449

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

Let us make a hopeful confession to God.

Brief silence for individual reflection and confession.

We seek you, God, in the spaces of our lives.

**The spaces between what we've done
and what we've left undone.**

The spaces between our convictions
and our actions,
the spaces between all that we hoped to do,
and what we've actually done.
We come with humility,
knowing that we can't always see
the ways we've disappointed you,
nor can we always see
the long-term effects of the good we've done.
This is a prayer for the road ahead,
which is an empty space stretching before us.
Fill us with a burning compassion
for those around us,
a love that will not let us go.
Give us courage to give boldly,
love simply,
hope deeply,
risk greatly.
Our light is small,
our time is short,
but let it shine for you,
always, ever, all for you.

Amen.

God hears our fervent prayer.

In the name of + Jesus Christ,
our sins are pardoned.

The penalty is paid.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

GREETING

May the love of God the Father, the grace of Jesus the Son,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit abide with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Heavenly God,

**When Jesus was baptized by John in the wilderness, you claimed him as your son. Claim us also as your children, inheritors of your glorious kingdom and give us the courage to walk the way of Jesus. In Jesus' name we pray.
Amen.**

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

We Hear the Word of God

COMPLEMENTARY READING

Psalm 91:9-12

Because you have made the LORD your refuge,
the Most High your dwelling place,

¹⁰no evil shall befall you,
no scourge come near your tent.

¹¹For he will command his angels concerning you
to guard you in all your ways.

¹²On their hands they will bear you up,
so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.

READING

Mark 1:1-20

The beginning of the good news of Jesus Christ.
As it is written in the prophet Isaiah,

"See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way,
3 the voice of one crying out in the wilderness:
'Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight,' "

⁴ so John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵ And the whole Judean region and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him and were baptized by him in the River Jordan, confessing their sins. ⁶ Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷ He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the strap of his sandals. ⁸ I have baptized you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

⁹ In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰ And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove upon him. ¹¹ And a voice came from the heavens, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

¹² And the Spirit immediately drove him out into the wilderness. ¹³ He was in the wilderness forty days, tested by Satan, and he was with the wild beasts, and the angels waited on him.

¹⁴ Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the good news of God ¹⁵ and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."

¹⁶ As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea, for they were fishers. ¹⁷ And Jesus said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people." ¹⁸ And immediately they left their nets and followed him. ¹⁹ As he went a little farther, he saw James son of Zebedee and his brother John, who were in their boat mending the nets. ²⁰ Immediately he called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired men and followed him.

Word of God, word of life.

Thanks be to God.

SERMON

Back to the Future

Rev. Amy Heinz

HYMN

“Baptized and Set Free”

ELW 453

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 PEOPLE

United with your saints across time and place, we pray for our shared world.

A brief silence.

O Triune God, grant us your gracious, guiding presence as we enter the new year. As we join Christians of every time who have awaited Jesus' return, lead us into this new time, confident that your promises will be fulfilled. Hear us, O God:

Your mercy is great.

Spirit of Truth, call us to repentance in this new year. Forgive us for past unfaithfulness, silence in the face of injustice and inaction amid suffering. Move us from the desire to hoard our wealth toward faithful stewardship. Help us to share your gifts with those who cry out for daily bread. Hear us, O God:

Your mercy is great.

Prince of Peace, healer and reconciler, heal the divisions in your Church and among the peoples of the world. As you prayed that we should all be one, give us new visions to enable that unity. Be with us on our ecumenical journey, and with those sisters and brothers who surround us in the great cloud of witnesses. Hear us, O God:

Your mercy is great.

God of all ages, release us from fear. Lead us forward, even as you have led your Church forward from an empty cross and tomb through millenia. Be our companion as we walk unexplored paths into an unknown future. Open us to new possibilities. Renew our hope. Grant us faith to move ahead. Be our companion until Jesus comes again. In his name we pray.

Amen.

SHARING OF THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.

And also with you.

We Share the Meal

OFFERING

OFFERTORY *"Accept, O Lord, the Gifts We Bring* ELW 691 v1

OFFERTORY PRAYER

Faithful God,

We look back on the year behind us and appreciate your presence with us through it. In this new year, grant that we may become more faithful, more committed to your kingdom work, more knowledgeable of your ways, more familiar with your spirit, more yielding to your instruction, and more willing to give of ourselves for others.

Accept our tithes and offerings this day as an act of faith and of worship.

In Jesus' name we pray. 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.

You are holy, O God of majesty,

and blessed is Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord, in whom you have revealed yourself, our light and our salvation.

Baptized in Jordan's waters, Jesus took his place with sinners, and your voice proclaimed him your beloved. Your Spirit anointed him to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim release to the captives, to restore sight to the blind, to free the oppressed.

He lived among us in power and grace, touching broken lives with your healing peace.

By the baptism of his suffering, death, and resurrection, you gave birth to your church and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

Therefore with the whole company of saints in heaven and on earth we worship and glorify you, God most holy, and we sing with joy:**

SANCTUS

“Holy, Holy, Holy”

ELW p. 153

WORDS OF INSTITUTION

THE LORD'S PRAYER

DISTRIBUTION SONGS

“Lamb of God”

ELW p. 154

“Wash, O God, Our Sons and Daughters”

ELW 445

“Christ, When For Us You Were Baptized”

ELW 304

BLESSING AND PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

We Serve the World in God's Name

BENEDICTION

May the grace of Christ, which daily renews us, and the love of God, which enables us to love all, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, which unites us in one body, make us eager to obey the will of God until we meet again, through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Amen.

CLOSING SONG

“Remember and Rejoice”

ELW 454 v1-4

DISMISSAL

We go in peace to love and serve our neighbors,
with open doors, open hearts, and open hands.
Thanks be to God!

POSTLUDE

Notes, Prayers, and Thoughts

Zion Lutheran Church

Open Doors, Open Hearts, Open Hands

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