

ST. STEPHEN LUTHERAN CHURCH

Baptism of our Lord Sunday



SUNDAY, JANUARY 7, 2024

10 A.M.

INTRODUCTION

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.

PRELUDE

The assembly stands.



+ GATHERING +

CONFESSION AND FORGIVENESS

All make the sign of the cross, the sign marked at baptism, as the presiding minister begins.

P In the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation (C) Amen.

P Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

Silence is kept for reflection.

P Most merciful God,

C we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. 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. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

P In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. As a called and ordained minister of word and sacrament in the church of Christ, and by his authority, I therefore declare to you the entire forgiveness of all your sins, in the name of the Father, and of the ☩ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

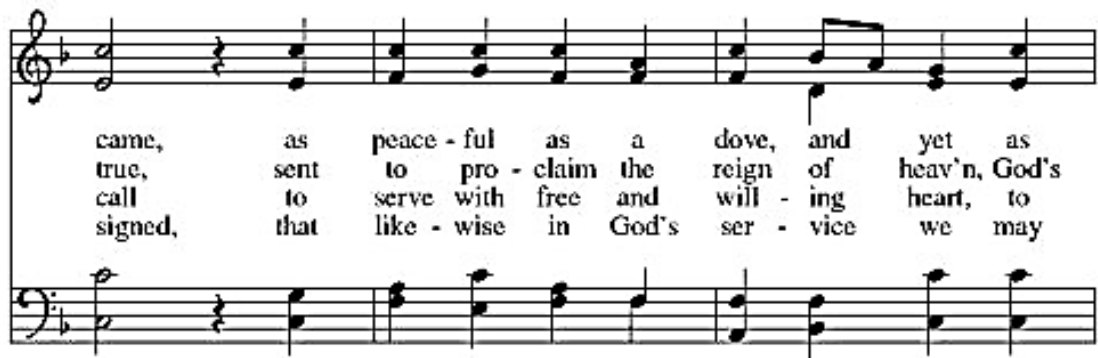
C Amen.

The assembly is seated.

GATHERING HYMN 304 *Christ, When for Us You Were Baptized*



1 Christ, when for us you were bap - tized, God's Spir - it on you
2 God called you, "My be - lov - ed Son"; you are God's ser - vant
3 Straight-way and stead-fast un - til death you then o - beyed the
4 Bap - tize us with your Spir - it, Lord; your cross on us be



came, as peace - ful as a dove, and yet as
true, sent to pro - claim the reign of heav'n, God's
call to serve with free and will - ing heart, to
signed, that like - wise in God's ser - vice we may



ur - gent as a flame, as ur - gent as a flame.
ho - ly will to do, God's ho - ly will to do.
give your life for all, to give your life for all.
per - fect free - dom find, may per - fect free - dom find.

Text: F. Bland Tucker, 1895-1984, alt.
Music: LOBT GOTT, HIR CHRISTEN, Nikolaus Herman, 1480-1561
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GREETING

B The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

C And also with you.


KYRIE

Leader or All



O Lord, have . . . mer-cy up-on us. Christ, have mer - cy.

All



O Lord, have . . . mer-cy up-on us. Christ, have mer - cy.

Leader or All



Have mer - cy, 'O Lord. Have mer - cy, 'O Lord.



PRAYER OF THE DAY

B 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.

C Amen.

The assembly is seated.

CHILDREN'S TIME



+ WORD +

FIRST READING: 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.

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.

Reader The word of the Lord.

C **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM: Psalm 29

We sing the psalm in response to the first reading.



Leader ¹Ascribe to the **LORD**, you gods,
ascribe to the **LORD** glo- **r**y and strength.

C ²**Ascribe to the LORD the glory **due** God’s name;**
worship the LORD in the beau- **ty of holiness.**

L ³The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; the God of | glory thunders;
the LORD is upon the | mighty waters.

**C ⁴The voice of the LORD is a pow- | erful voice;
the voice of the LORD is a | voice of splendor.**

L ⁵The voice of the LORD breaks the | cedar trees;
the LORD breaks the ce- | dars of Lebanon;

**C ⁶the LORD makes Lebanon skip | like a calf,
and Mount Hermon like a | young wild ox.**

L ⁷The voice | of the LORD
bursts forth in | lightning flashes.

**C ⁸The voice of the LORD | shakes the wilderness;
the LORD shakes the wilder- | ness of Kadesh.**

L 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!”

**C ¹⁰The LORD sits enthroned a- | bove the flood;
the LORD sits enthroned as king for- | evermore.**

L ¹¹O LORD, give strength | to your people;
give them, O LORD, the bless- | ings of peace.

Spoken after the psalm is sung:

Amen.

SECOND READING: 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.

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.”⁴ Then he said, “Into what then were you baptized?” They answered, “Into John’s baptism.”⁵ Paul 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.”⁶ On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.⁷ When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied—⁸altogether there were about twelve of them.

R The Word of the Lord.

C Thanks be to God.

The assembly stands.

GOSPEL ACCLAMATION *(Sung twice)*

Al - le - lu - ïa, al - le - lu - ïa. Al - le - lu - ïa, al - le - lu - ïa.

Al - le - lu - ïa, al - le - lu - ïa. Christ is ris - en, ris'n in - deed.

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.

P The holy gospel according to Mark, the first chapter.

C 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."

P The gospel of the Lord.

C Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

SERMON *We encounter the living word of God in the preaching.*

The assembly stands.

HYMN OF THE DAY **453** *Baptized and Set Free*



1 We are peo - ple cre - at - ed, cho - sen by God.
2 We are fed and we're nour - ished, filled and re - freshed.
3 We are nour - ished by wa - ter, all liv - ing things,
4 Now with praise and thanks - giv - ing, we join the song.



Then we're washed, ev - er gent - ly, in mer - cy and love.
Then our hun - ger re - turns and a - gain we are blessed.
and by life that the Spir - it a - bun - dant - ly brings.
All are wel - come! We gath - er to sing loud and strong.



Sin has pow - er no more. Je - sus o - pened the door
For what - ev - er the need, God is great - er in - deed:
As we jour - ney toward home, may your pres - ence be known:
Not en - slaved, but set free! From now on, all will be



to a foun - tain bring - ing heal - ing, and whole - ness and more.
end - less o - cean, al - ways deep - er than all of our need.
pre - cious riv - er, ev - er - flow - ing, now car - ry us home.
one in Je - sus, one in wa - ter, bap - tized and set free!

Text: Cathy Skogen-Soldner, b. 1956
Music: BAPTIZED AND SET FREE, Cathy Skogen-Soldner
Text and music © 1999 Augsburg Fortress.

NICENE CREED

A Let us confess our faith.

C We believe in one God, the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God, eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten, not made, of one Being with the Father; through him all things were made. For us and for our salvation he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the virgin Mary and became truly human. For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate; he suffered death and was buried. On the third day he rose again in accordance with the scriptures; he ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father and the Son, who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified, who has spoken through the prophets. We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic church. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Each petition ends: God of grace,

Congregational response: receive our prayer.

PEACE

A The peace of Christ be with you always.

C And also with you.

We greet one another with a sign of Christ's peace.

The assembly is seated.



+ MEAL +

OFFERING *An offering is gathered for the mission of the church, including the care of those in need.*

We stand and sing as the collection and the gifts are brought forward

OFFERING HYMN 690 *We Raise Our Hands to You, O Lord (vs. 1 & 5)*

1 As with glad-ness men of old did the guid-ing star be-hold;
2 As with joy-ful steps they sped, Sav-ior, to thy low-ly bed,
3 As they of-fered gifts most rare at thy cra-dle, rude and bare,
4 Ho-ly Je-sus, ev-'ry day keep us in the nar-row way;
5 In the heav'n-ly coun-try bright need they no cre-a-ted light;

as with joy they hailed its light, lead-ing on-ward, beam-ing bright;
there to bend the knee be-fore thee, whom heav'n and earth a-dore;
so may we with ho-ly joy, pure and free from sin's al-loy,
and when earth-ly things are past, bring our ran-somed souls at last
thou its light, its joy, its crown, thou its sun which goes not down;

so, most gra-cious Lord, may we ev-er-more be led by thee.
so may we with will-ing feet ev-er seek thy mer-cy seat.
all our cost-liest trea-sures bring, Christ, to thee, our heav'n-ly king.
where they need no star to guide, where no clouds thy glo-ry hide.
there for-ev-er may we sing al-le-lu-ias to our king.

Text: William C. Dix, 1837-1898, alt.
Music: DIX, Conrad Kocher, 1786-1872

GREAT THANKSGIVING

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Lift up your hearts.

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

P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

P 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. You comforted your people with the promise of the Redeemer, through whom you will also make all things new in the day when he comes to judge the world in righteousness. 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:

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly God of pow - er and might,



heav - en and earth . . . are full of your glo - ry.



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.



Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san - na in the high - est.

Bless-ed is the one who comes in the name of our God.

Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san-na in the high - est.

Ho - san - na, ho - san - na, ho - san-na in the high - est.

The presiding minister continues to give thanks.

P In the night in which he was betrayed,
 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.

C **Amen.**

THE LORD'S PRAYER

P Lord, remember us in your kingdom, and teach us to pray.

C **Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.**

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

P Taste and see that the Lord is good.

The assembly is seated.

LAMB OF GOD



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

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

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

Grant us your peace. A - men.

DISTRIBUTION OF COMMUNION

As the ushers direct you, come to the altar using the side aisles and return to your seat via the central aisle. The assisting minister offers a pouring cup (wine or grape juice). If you prefer to receive the wine or juice in an individual glass, take one from the tray as you approach the rail. Leave the empty glass on the rail. Wheat-free wafers are available--simply tell the pastor.

COMMUNION HYMNS	423	<i>Shall We Gather at the River</i>
	448	<i>This Is the Spirit's Entry Now</i>
	455	<i>Crashing Waters at Creation</i>

The assembly stands.

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

A Let us pray.

O God, in this holy communion you have welcomed us into your presence, nourished us with words of mercy, and fed us at your table. Amid the cares of this life, strengthen us to love you with all our heart, serve our neighbors with a willing spirit, and honor the earth you have made; through Christ our Lord.

C **Amen.**

+ SENDING +

BLESSING *We receive the blessings of the triune God.*

P The holy Three, the holy One increase your hope, strengthen your faith, deepen your love, and ✠ grant you peace.

C **Amen.**

The assembly is seated.

ANNOUNCEMENTS


The assembly stands.

Refrain
All




Wade in the wa - ter, wade in the wa - ter, chil - dren,
wade in the wa - ter, God's a - goin' - a trou - ble the wa - ter.

Leader All



1 See that host all dressed in white,
2 See that band all dressed in red, God's a - goin' - a trou - ble the
3 Look o - ver yon - der, what do I see?
4 If you don't be - lieve I've been re - deemed,

Leader



wa - ter. the lead - er looks like the Is - rael - ite.
looks like the band that . . . Mo - ses led.
the Ho - ly Ghost a - com - ing on me.
just fol - low me down to . . . Jor - dan's stream.

All *Refrain*



God's a - goin' - a trou - ble the wa - ter.

Text: African American spiritual

Music: WADI IN THE WATER, African American spiritual

DISMISSAL

- A We believe out loud that God’s mission for us is:
C **to be an active community that welcomes all people to nurture and share their faith and gifts with everyone, according to God’s call.**
- A Go in peace. You are God’s beloved.
C **Thanks be to God.**

+ + +

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**Audrey Post dedicates today’s altar flowers
to the glory of God and in gratitude for
God's many blessings,
including my St. Stephen family.**

Calendar for January 7 - 14

Jan. 7	Sun.	9:00 am	Book study
		10:00 am	Worship, Baptism of Our Lord Sunday
		11:30 am	Council meeting
9	Tue.	11:30 am	OWL’s gathering at Panda Buffet
10	Wed.	7:00 pm	Choir practice
15	Sun.	9:00 am	Book study
		9:30 am	Choir practice
		10:00 am	Worship, Second Sunday after Epiphany
		11:30 a.m.	Potluck

SERVING EVERY SUNDAY

Pastor Tom, presiding and preaching

Katharine Gossman, piano

Karl Barton, flute

Denise Bookwalter, announcements

Choir: Karl Barton, Melissa Barton, Mark Canning, Judi Duffy, Kirsten Ebbesen, Rita Ford, Martin Guttenplan, Vicki Guttenplan, Ron Hartung, Rudy Hehn, Susan Hehn, Colleen Holdcraft, Pastor Tom Holdcraft, Sandy Ness, Dave Suhrweir, Cassandra White

SERVING TODAY AND ONE WEEK FROM TODAY

Serving	January 7	January 15
Assisting Minister	Audrey Post	Beth Alexander
Cup Minister	Colleen Holdcraft	Kirsten Ebbesen
Cantor		
Lector	Elliot Reece	Jen Reece
Acolyte	Cup Minister - or Colton Allen or Graham Reece	
Tech Team	Audrey Post	
Ushers	Colin Hackley	
Altar Guild	Beth Alexander Billie Reardon	
Counters	Margaret Bowers Patricia Handschy	Kirsten Ebbesen Rob Schiffer

PRAYER REQUESTS

New concerns: Mark and Kimmy Davis (brother and sister-in-law of Sandy Davis), mourning the death of their son, Jon; Bob Eshleman, awaiting heart surgery; Gladys Kane for continued healing.

For the sick: Val Sullivan; Margarete Decker (mother of Caroline Collins); Sallie Robinson (wife of Erik Robinson); Don Dowd; Isabelle Taylor (granddaughter of Bill & Connie Taylor), being treated for rheumatoid arthritis and Primary Immunodeficiency; Theresa Martin (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Dan Graney (friend of Cheryl Stuart); Sarah (friend of Cassandra White).

In treatment for cancer: Phil Williams; Gordon Fleischer; Stephanie Barber; Jenny (niece of Laura Sullivan & Colin Hackley); Rosalinda Wright; James Sablan (brother of Donna Schiffer); Bruce Blubaum (cousin of Sharon Simmons); Craig Timm (friend of Cheryl & Steve); Laura Ketchum-Jahn, (friend of Cheryl & Steve); Aubrey Thonvold (Reconciling Works Exec. Dir.); Judy Renwick (friend of Judi Duffy); Gil Johnson (friend of Judi Duffy).

Health and protection: For all affected by the coronavirus – especially those experiencing mental-health difficulties due to isolation, those struggling to recover from the disease, those on the front lines fighting, researching and treating the disease (doctors, nurses, medical personnel, EMTs), the millions of unemployed people, etc.; for the unaccompanied children entering the U.S., including those “unaccounted for.”

For prisoners: All those on Death Row.

Other concerns: For Karen Olson; Kevin Robinson (son of Erik Robinson), in need of encouragement; Isaac (son of Terri Schmitt), for physical and emotional healing; Steve Michael (cousin of Rob Schiffer), in rehab after a serious accident.

Church concerns: St. Stephen’s Church Council; the Florida-Bahamas Synod Council; all congregations searching for ways to stay connected and proclaim the Good News; Reconciling Works; Grace Lutheran Church; Bishop Pedro Suarez; for rest and rejuvenation for Presiding Bishop Eaton as she takes a leave of absence for several months; Interim Presiding Bishop Michael Burk, providing leadership in Bp. Eaton's absence; Our Savior Lutheran Church in Freeport, Bahamas; the ELCA Advocacy offices and ministry; St. Paul Lutheran Church, Pensacola.

World concerns: For all people suffering and/or recovering from hurricanes; migrants and asylum seekers; civil rights for people around the world; a ceasefire in Ethiopia and in Ukraine; peace in Afghanistan and the Middle East.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OWLS GATHERING: The next OWLS lunch will be Tuesday, January 9th at 11:30 a.m. at the Panda Buffet on Thomasville Road.

POTLUCK will be next Sunday, Jan. 14, following worship.

FLOWER CHART FOR 2024: Do you have an anniversary, birthday or special memory you would like to honor? Celebrate the occasion by sponsoring the flowers for our service by signing up for the 2024 Flower Chart located in the narthex. The cost is \$40, and you can place it in the offering plate.

WEEKLY NEWSLETTER: Want to read a sermon you missed? Visit <https://ststephenlutherantally.com/newsletters>. Want to read the latest newsletters? Go to <https://ststephenlutherantally.com/newsletters>. Want to browse a collection of St. Stephen songs? They're at <https://ststephenlutherantally.com/newsletters>.