



## Baptism of Our Lord

January 11, 2026

*The Good News for Today: Christ brings us through the waters to victory.*

*Thank you for worshiping with us at St. John's. Please fill out your yellow attendance card and place it in the offering plate when we collect the offering later in the service.*

*In the waters of the Jordan, Jesus is revealed as the beloved Son of God. Through this great epiphany, Jesus fulfills all righteousness and becomes the servant of God who will bring forth justice and be a light to the nations. In the waters of baptism we too are washed by the Word, anointed by the Spirit, and named God's beloved children. Our baptismal mission is to proclaim good news to all who are oppressed or in need of God's healing.*

### Gathering Music

*STAND*

### Hymn: Shall We Gather at the River – ELW 423 (Red Book)

1 Shall we gather at the river,  
where bright angel feet have trod,  
with its crystal tide forever  
flowing by the throne of God?

*Refrain*

Yes, we'll gather at the river,  
the beautiful, the beautiful river;  
gather with the saints at the river  
that flows by the throne of God.

2 On the margin of the river,  
washing up its silver spray,  
we will walk and worship ever,  
all the happy golden day. *Refrain*

3 Ere we reach the shining river,  
lay we ev'ry burden down;  
grace our spirits will deliver,  
and provide a robe and crown.

*Refrain*

4 Soon we'll reach the shining river,  
soon our pilgrimage will cease;  
soon our happy hearts will quiver  
with the melody of peace. *Refrain*

Text: Robert Lowry, 1826-1899

### Confession and Forgiveness

Blessed be the holy Trinity, ☩ one God, the Creator of heaven and earth, the Word who spoke life into being, the Wind stirring the waters.

**Amen.**

Let us turn in confession to the one who knows us completely.

*Silence is kept for reflection.*

Mighty God, lover of justice,

**you call us to life in community, but we have served our own interests at the expense of our neighbors. We have sown deceit where honesty was needed. We say the right words, but our hearts are far from you. Turn us to seek your face. Knit us together and give us the mind of Christ, that we may do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with you, our God. Amen.**

The former things have passed away, and new things God now declares: Like a spring of water that never fails, God covers you in the righteousness of Christ, and forgives your sin in  $\dagger$  Jesus' name. May the Spirit give you strength to live for others, and bless you with the gift of peace.

**Amen.**

## Welcome & Greeting

Welcome to St. John's, where we are building a loving, accepting community centered on growing in Christ, and giving people a place to belong at any stage of their journey with God.

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

**And also with you.**

## Prayer of the Day

Let us pray... O God our Father, at the baptism of Jesus you proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. Make all who are baptized into Christ faithful to their calling to be your daughters and sons, and empower us all with your Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

*SIT*

## The Readings

### Isaiah 42:1-9

*God's servant is endowed with God's spirit in order to bring justice to the nations. The servant will not exercise authority boisterously or with violence, nor will weariness ever prevent the fulfilling of the servant's task. God's old promises have been fulfilled; the servant's new assignment is to bring light to the nations.*

The first reading is from the forty-second chapter of Isaiah:

<sup>1</sup> Here is my servant, whom I uphold,  
    my chosen, in whom my soul delights;  
I have put my spirit upon him;  
    he will bring forth justice to the nations.

<sup>2</sup> He will not cry out or lift up his voice  
    or make it heard in the street;

<sup>3</sup> a bruised reed he will not break,  
    and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;  
    he will faithfully bring forth justice.

<sup>4</sup> He will not grow faint or be crushed  
    until he has established justice in the earth,  
    and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

<sup>5</sup> Thus says God, the Lord,  
    who created the heavens and stretched them out,  
    who spread out the earth and what comes from it,  
who gives breath to the people upon it  
    and spirit to those who walk in it:

<sup>6</sup> I am the Lord; I have called you in righteousness;  
    I have taken you by the hand and kept you;  
I have given you as a covenant to the people,  
    a light to the nations,

<sup>7</sup> to open the eyes that are blind,  
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,  
    from the prison those who sit in darkness.

<sup>8</sup> I am the Lord; that is my name;  
    my glory I give to no other,  
    nor my praise to idols.

<sup>9</sup> See, the former things have come to pass,  
    and new things I now declare;  
before they spring forth,  
    I tell you of them.

The Word of the Lord,

**Thanks be to God.**

## Psalm 29

We will now read Psalm 29 responsively:

<sup>1</sup> Ascribe to the Lord, you gods,  
    ascribe to the Lord glory and strength.

<sup>2</sup> **Ascribe to the Lord the glory due God's name;**  
    **worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.**

<sup>3</sup> The voice of the Lord is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders;  
    the Lord is upon the mighty waters.

**<sup>4</sup>The voice of the Lord is a powerful voice;  
the voice of the Lord is a voice of splendor.**

**<sup>5</sup>The voice of the Lord breaks the cedar trees;  
the Lord breaks the cedars of Lebanon;**

**<sup>6</sup>the Lord makes Lebanon skip like a calf,  
and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.**

**<sup>7</sup>The voice of the Lord  
bursts forth in lightning flashes.**

**<sup>8</sup>The voice of the Lord shakes the wilderness;  
the Lord shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.**

**<sup>9</sup>The 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!”**

**<sup>10</sup>The Lord sits enthroned above the flood;  
the Lord sits enthroned as king forevermore.**

**<sup>11</sup>O Lord, give strength to your people;  
give them, O Lord, the blessings of peace.**

## Acts 10:34-43

*Peter crosses the sharp religious boundary separating Jews from Gentiles and proclaims the good news of God's inclusive forgiveness in Jesus' name to Cornelius, a Roman centurion. As a result of Peter's preaching, Cornelius and his family become the first Gentiles to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.*

The second reading is from the tenth chapter of Acts:

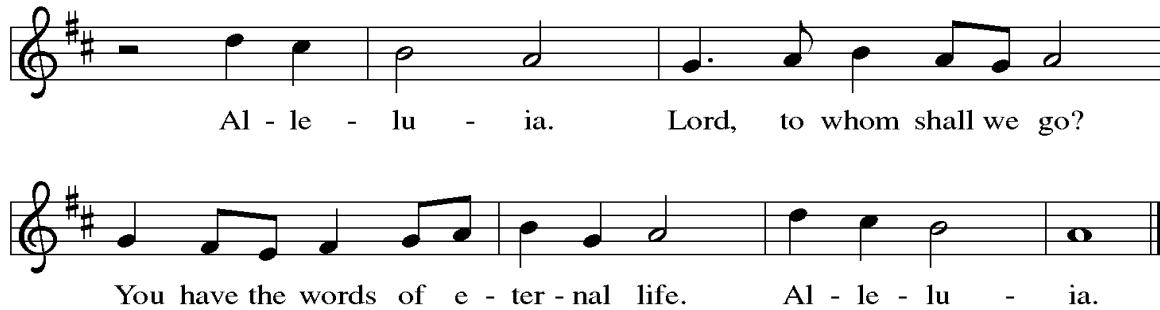
**34** Then Peter began to speak to them: “I truly understand that God shows no partiality, **35** but in every people anyone who fears him and practices righteousness is acceptable to him. **36** You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. **37** That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: **38** how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. **39** We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree, **40** but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, **41** not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. **42** He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. **43** All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

The Word of the Lord,

**Thanks be to God.**

*STAND*

## 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.

## Matthew 3:13-17

*Before Jesus begins his ministry, he is baptized by John, touched by the Spirit, and identified publicly as God's child.*

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the third chapter:

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. <sup>14</sup> John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” <sup>15</sup> But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now, for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. <sup>16</sup> And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw God’s Spirit descending like a dove and alighting on him. <sup>17</sup> And a voice from the heavens said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

*SIT*

Sermon – “Vindicated in Spirit” – Pastor Bo Bannister

*STAND*

## Hymn: Baptized and Set Free – W&P 14 (Purple Book)

- 1 We are people created,  
chosen by God.  
Then we're washed, ever gently,  
in mercy and love.  
Sin has power no more.  
Jesus opened the door  
to a fountain bringing healing,  
and wholeness and more.
- 2 We are fed and we're nourished,  
filled and refreshed.  
Then our hunger returns and  
again we are blessed.  
For whatever the need,  
God is greater indeed:  
endless ocean, always deeper  
than all of our need.
- 3 We are nourished by water,  
all living things,  
and by life that the Spirit  
abundantly brings.  
As we journey toward home,  
may your presence be known:  
precious river, ever-flowing,  
now carry us home.
- 4 Now with praise and thanksgiving,  
we join the song.  
All are welcome! We gather  
to sing loud and strong.  
Not enslaved, but set free!  
From now on, all will be  
one in Jesus, one in water,  
baptized and set free!

Text: Cathy Skogen-Soldner, b. 1956  
Text © 1999 Augsburg Fortress.

## The Nicene Creed

With the whole church let us confess our faith.

**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

As God's beloved children united in Christ, let us pray for the church, the whole human community, and the well-being of the earth, our home.

*A brief silence.*

Steadfast God, give courage to your servant church. Heal our divisions and unite us in mission. Uphold our lay leaders, missionaries, pastors, and bishops, and all who proclaim hope in a broken world. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Restoring God, cleanse the life-giving waters of rivers, seas, and springs. Create in us an urgent desire to preserve the beauty and bounty of your good creation. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Righteous God, you guide the nations. Reconcile warring enemies and end cycles of violent retribution. Defend the rights of prisoners, detainees, and all who flee from persecution. Sustain international aid workers and peacemakers. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Compassionate God, you care for all in distress. Provide safety and support for those seeking asylum or in need of shelter. Be near to the dying, and comfort all who are grieving or ill. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Loving God, awaken the gifts of the Spirit in this congregation, that we may serve Christ by loving one another, our neighbors, and our enemies. We pray for travelers and those who are homebound. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Promising God, in baptism we die and rise with Christ. We give thanks for those who have gone before us, and we trust that we will join them in your everlasting peace. Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

Confident that the Holy Spirit receives our prayers and answers us, we commend all for whom we pray to God's loving-kindness made known to us in Christ Jesus our Savior.

**Amen.**

## Peace

The peace of Christ be with you always.

**And also with you.**

Please share a sign of peace with one another.

*SIT*

## Announcements

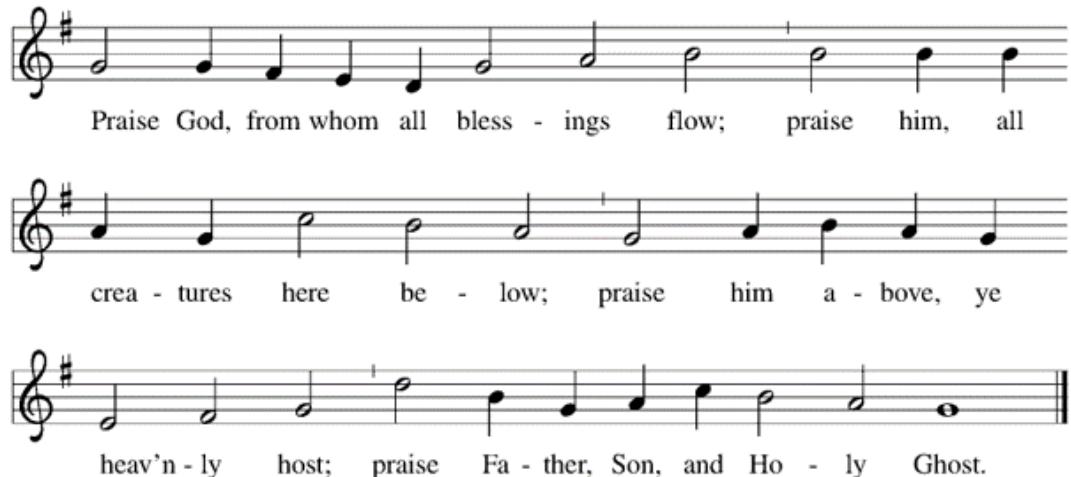
*Printed copies of our weekly announcements are available at the usher's stand in the Narthex, and monthly newsletters are on the Hospitality Table. Please include your email address on your yellow attendance card to receive announcements electronically.*

## Children's Message

## Offering

*STAND*

### Offertory Hymn: Praise God from Whom all Blessings Flow (ELW 885 / Red Book)



Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above, ye heav'n-ly host; praise Fa-ther, Son, and Ho-ly Ghost.

## Offering Prayer

God of majesty, no eye has seen, no ear has heard what you have prepared for those who love you, yet in this meal you reveal the wideness of your mercy. Use what we have gathered to feed us with the reign of God come near, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

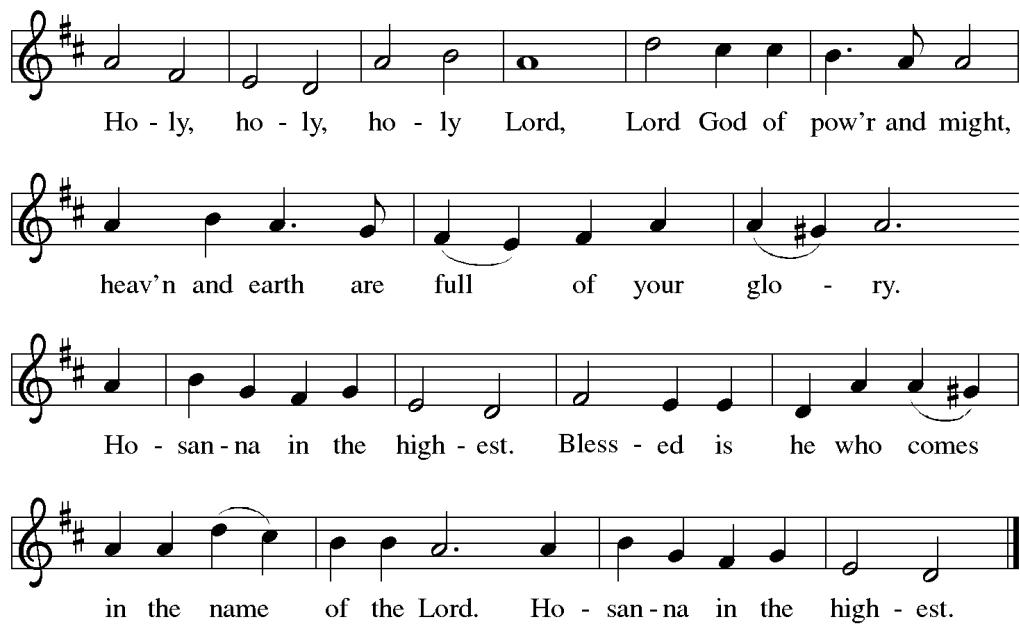
**We lift them to the Lord.**

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 being baptized by John in Jordan's waters, Jesus took his place with sinners, and your voice proclaimed him as your Son. Like a dove, the Spirit descended upon him, anointing him as the Christ, to bring good news to the poor and proclaim release to the captives, to restore sight to the blind and free the oppressed. We praise you that in our baptism we are joined to Christ and, with all the baptized, are called to share his ministry. Therefore we join our voices with all the baptized through all times and places, as well as all creation, both visible and invisible, to proclaim the glory of your name:

**Sanctus**



Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, Lord God of pow'r and might,  
heav'n and earth are full of your glo - ry.

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.

**Eucharistic Prayer**

Without any doubt, the mystery of godliness is great:

Christ was revealed in flesh, vindicated in spirit, seen by angels, proclaimed among gentiles, believed in throughout the world, taken up in glory.

While on earth, to the very end, Jesus loved those whom he had been given, and prayed that his love, his joy, and his closeness with his heavenly Father might be in them. On the night he was betrayed, he took bread, and having blessed it, he broke it and gave it to his beloved friends, saying, "Take, eat, this is my body which was given for you. Do this in remembrance of me." In the same way he took wine and, having given thanks for it, poured it out and gave the cup to them, saying, "Drink this, all of you. This is my blood which is poured out for you and for all. Whenever you drink it, do this in remembrance of me."

Let us proclaim the mystery of faith:

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

God, we pray that in your goodness and mercy your Holy Spirit may descend upon us and upon these gifts, sanctifying them and showing them to be holy gifts for your holy people, the bread of life and the cup of salvation, the Body and Blood of your Son Jesus Christ.

Grant that all who share this bread and cup may become one body and one spirit, a living sacrifice in Christ, to the praise of your Name.

Remember, Lord, your one holy catholic and apostolic Church, redeemed by the blood of your Christ. Reveal its unity, guard its faith, and preserve it in peace.

And grant that we may find our inheritance with all the saints who have found favor with you in ages past. We praise you in union with them and give you glory through your Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

Through Christ, and with Christ, and in Christ, all honor and glory are yours, Almighty God and Father, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for ever and ever.

**Amen.**

And now, as Christ our Savior has taught us, we are bold to pray:

### **The Lord's Prayer**

**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.**

*SIT*

### **Invitation to Communion**

Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! Come to the table; taste and see.

### **Distribution of the Elements**

#### **Lamb of God**

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world;  
grant us peace, grant us peace.

*STAND*

## Post-Communion Blessing

The Body and Blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you keep you in his Grace.

**Amen.**

## Prayer after Communion

Radiant God, we have seen your glory in the face of Jesus Christ. In the sacrament of his body and blood you have drawn us to your heart. Send us from this table with delight, that our lives may reflect the beauty of your love, and bear witness to all we have seen and heard, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

**Amen.**

## Blessing

May the triune God, who has put a new song in your mouth and tuned your heart for praise + bless you now and forever.

**Amen.**

## Hymn: The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve – ELW 551 (Red Book)

1	The Spirit sends us forth to serve; we go in Jesus' name to bring glad tidings to the poor, God's favor to proclaim.	3	We go to be the hands of Christ, to scatter joy like seed and, all our days, to cherish life, to do the loving deed.
2	We go to comfort those who mourn and set the burdened free; where hope is dim, to share a dream and help the blind to see.	4	Then let us go to serve in peace, the gospel to proclaim. God's Spirit has empowered us; we go in Jesus' name.

Text: Delores Dufner, OSB, b. 1939

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## Dismissal

Go in peace. Do justice. Love mercy.

**Thanks be to God.**

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The Candles for the Month of January are given to the glory of God.

The altar flowers are dedicated from Cappy and Pat Adduci in loving memory of member and friend Wilson Heath. We remember and honor his commitment to country, work, music, community, church, and family. May God bring peace to his wife, Jeannette, and his family. And may Diane hug her daddy tight.

Today's reader is Cathanne Bart.

Ask the Pastor: Why do Lutheran churches baptize babies who neither understand baptism nor make any kind of choice to decide for themselves?

Though there are prominent churches, particularly Baptist, Pentecostal, and non-denominational churches in the United States who don't, the majority of Christians throughout the world still belong to traditions that hold to the ancient practice of baptizing infants whose families and sponsors commit to raising these children in the faith. It is true that these children are made Christians without being able to understand. It is also true that God loves us before we understand faith. For us, baptism is not something we do for God, but about a love of God for us that precedes anything we might do to show that we are worthy of or even want such a love from God. The Church administers God's grace through baptism, claims God's loving promises for these children, and promises to train them in the Christian faith throughout their childhood. When children are old enough to understand more about the faith, the Church provides age-appropriate education and the chance for these young adults to publicly affirm that they commit to continue in the faith, if that is their faith and desire.

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