

Christ Moravian Church

WEEKLY PASTORAL LETTER

Christ Church Watchword for the Year 2021

“As the deer longs for flowing streams, so my soul
longs for you, O God.”

Psalm 42:1



Pastoral Letter for the weekend of January 10th, 2021

Worship Theme:

“The Light of Epiphany and the Baptism of Jesus”

Greetings Friends in Christ:

The Prophet Isaiah expressed a prayerful announcement of hope in the watchword for Wednesday, January 6 in saying:

“Arise, shine; for the light has come and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.”

It's with irony that this prophetic vision is heard in days of serious repercussions of history cascading across our world. We live in a world awaiting the steps of health leading us from the COVID 19 pandemic with the vaccination process now under way. It is a world shaken by deaths within the United States Capitol on a day in which the peaceful announcement of an election was to be certified. It's a world now prayerfully looking to clarify its truest human calling in creating communities that would support the common good of one another, and compassion for those most vulnerable and marginalized.

The presence of the Risen Christ is to be found in the light of God shining with hope. May these days within a new year offer pathways of faith in having God's people now “arise and shine as the glory of God arises” with justice, peace, and the dignity of all people as children of God.

For more information, visit our website @

www.christmoravian.com

Christmas Wrappings!

As I came to pause and reflect upon the Christmas and New Year's holidays, I came to realize the precious gift of loved ones, friends, family, and neighbors even if we were a bit distanced this year. All of our relationships are seen as such a gift. This Christmas came to truly emphasize the joy found in our many kinships.

Secondly, as I reflect upon this past holiday season I found the meaningful messages of our Advent Voices so rich and faith-filled. This special CMC tradition has become a favorite part of the Advent and Christmas experience of the church. I thank all of those that offered their gifts within our Christmas season. We received word of thanks and appreciation for all the donations to the Mustard Seed with "Warm Feet" items.

Well done, CMC family.

Year End Info and News!

The CMC Executive Board and various committees and groups will be concluding some year-end analysis and review of 2020. This will include a review of the 2020 financials and preparation for some transition steps and activities as the 2021 year moves forward. We will offer this information as it becomes available and invite CMC involvement into those initial plans of the church for the next season.

Mission Concert News!

The final donation total for Virtual Mission Concert has been tabulated. Our Finance Committee notes that the Mission Concert raised a total of \$6749, which is phenomenal! As a result, the Moravian Church, Board of World Mission will receive \$3949.50 for support of hurricane relief in Central America, and \$2799.50 was received for the Calgary Mustard Seed outreach mission.

Many thanks for all the donations and all those involved in sharing this concert.

New Year's blessings to all,

Pastor Steve Gohdes

Weekly Reminders...

- [Indranie Perera continues to receive recycling for support of Sri Lanka](#)

In All Things Love...

Worship & Event Links ~ January 10th, 2021

Topic: CMC Bible Buddies

Hi Everyone,

Jan 10th's lesson is attached "Baptism as a new Beginning" – Mark 1:4-11

Link to join is below:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81982362860?pwd=YjJQVmcxQTJGMVJIS01QSmt2MmozUT09>

Meeting ID: 819 8236 2860

Passcode: 603307

One tap mobile

+16475580588,,81982362860# Canada

+17789072071,,81982362860# Canada

Grace upon Grace,

Barb: -)

Links to Online Worship: Christ Moravian	https://www.christmoravian.com
Good Shepherd	https://www.goodshepherdmoravian.org
Millwoods	https://www.mcchurch.ca/
Rio Terrace	https://www.rioterracechurch.org/live
Moravian Church Northern Province	https://www.moravian.org
for details of events happening within the wider Moravian Church	

January 11, 2015

Baptism as a
New Beginning



Adult
Resource Sheet 1

Focus on Mark 1:4–11

WHAT is important to know?

— From “Exegetical Perspective,” Leslie J. Hoppe

Mark wishes his readers to know who Jesus really is from the very beginning of his story of Jesus’ ministry and death. The characters in Mark’s story will come to such knowledge only gradually. The climax of Mark’s Gospel comes with the confession of the centurion on Golgotha: “Truly, this man was God’s Son” (Mark 15:39). Ironically, it was the death of Jesus that revealed his true identity. The words spoken by the voice from the heavens identify Jesus as God’s “beloved Son” (Mark 1:11). The rest of the Gospel describes how this beloved Son fulfills the mission given to him by God—a mission that will result in his execution.

WHERE is God in these words?

— From “Theological Perspective,” Lee Barrett

Jesus’ baptism does more than initiate the beloved Son’s career of obedient suffering. A mysterious connection is implied between Jesus’ identity as the suffering, obedient Son and Jesus’ empowerment by the Spirit. This critical descent of the Spirit catalyzes Jesus’ potent public ministry with its exercise of power over demons, sin, the law, and even nature. Jesus did not receive the Spirit in order to enjoy privately its spiritual benefits, but rather in order to pass it on. The church has claimed that Jesus underwent baptism so that we might commune with him in baptism and share his empowerment by the Spirit. If our baptism involves a participation in Jesus’ baptism, and if Jesus’ baptism initiates his ministry of suffering obedience, then our baptism must include a similar acceptance of self-denial.

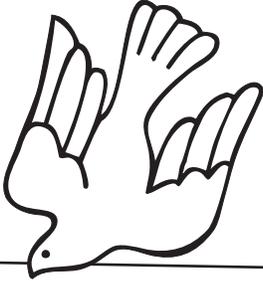
SO WHAT does this mean for our lives? — From “Pastoral Perspective,” Elton W. Brown

When John the baptizer testifies that Jesus will baptize with the Holy Spirit, he is declaring what all of Mark’s Gospel declares: that the ministry of Jesus is the beginning of the eschatological reign of God. The Spirit that is the sign of the turning of the ages has now been poured forth on Jesus. From now on, he and those who follow him are blessed and stuck with an eschatological mission: to declare and embody God’s reign.

NOW WHAT is God’s word calling us to do? — From “Homiletical Perspective,”

Ted A. Smith

Baptism of the Lord Sunday can be a great day for congregations to celebrate the tearing open of the heavens. The coming stretch of Ordinary Time will carry us into the hard work of discipleship. But before Mark takes readers on that journey, the Gospel gives us a moment to taste and see and hear the goodness of the Lord. Today makes God’s love *manifest* in word, song, sacrament, and prayer. It is a day to wear white and shout hallelujah. The heavens have been torn open, and this is a day to bask in the love they reveal.

Baptism Story Comparisons

The four Gospel accounts of Jesus' baptism are below. They contain many similarities, but also some striking differences. Each Gospel writer edited the baptism story so that it would speak most clearly to its intended audience and also stress the theological concepts they believed were the most significant.

Mark 1:9-11

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And 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. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

Matthew 3:13-17

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" 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. And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

Luke 3:21-22

Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, 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."

John 1:29-34

The next day he saw Jesus coming toward him and declared, "Here is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world! This is he of whom I said, 'After me comes a man who ranks ahead of me because he was before me.' I myself did not know him; but I came baptizing with water for this reason, that he might be revealed to Israel." And John testified, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it remained on him. I myself did not know him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'He on whom you see the Spirit descend and remain is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.' And I myself have seen and have testified that this is the Son of God."

Children's Worship Bulletin

The Lord's Baptism

Mark 1:1-12

Word Search

D V Q K S F O R G I V E J M V
 B X F P W G J B A P T I Z E D
 D H R P D T R O H O K X V S H
 K F H V N E I D R E W G W L J
 X Q A E T H J Y K D A L F S J
 V N P A N W T M R K A V F C Z
 H E W P J I J L M N R N E C W
 R Q O S N Q J O O C O Z D N Y
 C O N F E S S C L L J T Z D E
 Y J S J O H N U W O H O N E Y
 J F E I A H I S X T N E P P R
 I P G S N B T T Z H H M G E D
 Q F I B U S I S Z I W H V L I
 B P E O Z S F N D N T I I P N
 Z Y S P I R I T D G R W U U T

REPENT	JORDAN	FORGIVE	HEAVEN
CLOTHING	SINS	JESUS	WILD
LOCUSTS	WATER	RIVER	BAPTIZED
SPIRIT	CONFESS	HONEY	JOHN

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 600 Acadia Drive SE
 Calgary, AB T2J 0B8

Decoder Puzzle

Each number represents a letter of the alphabet. Substitute the correct letter for the numbers to reveal the coded words.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
C	W	B	T	E	H	F	Q	S	O	G	N	A	Y	V	X	P	D	J	M	R	I	L	Z	K	U

- 9-22-12-9 _____
- 21-5-17-5-12-4 _____
- 6-10-23-14 _____
- 3-13-17-4-22-24-5 _____
- 18-10-15-5 _____
- 9-17-22-21-22-4 _____
- 6-5-13-15-5-12 _____
- 15-10-22-1-5 _____
- 1-10-12-7-5-9-9 _____
- 2-13-4-5-21 _____

SPIRIT	HOLY	HEAVEN	SINS	BAPTIZE
DOVE	CONFESS	VOICE	WATER	REPENT



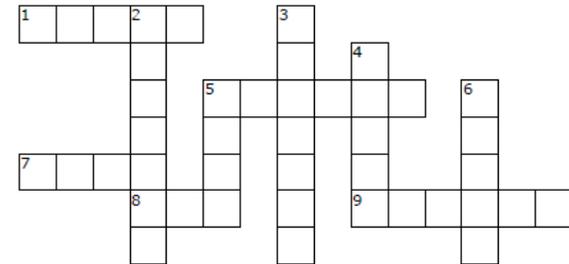
Color Me!



JESUS' BAPTISM

From BibleStoryCard Learning System(tm) Coloring Book © 1996
 Wesleyan Publishing House. Used by permission. Additional
 BibleStoryCard resources available by calling 1-800-493-7539
 or visiting online http://www.parable.com/wph/group_1052.htm

Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

1. What was heard when Jesus was baptized.
5. The river where Jesus was baptized.
7. The Spirit came down from heaven like a _____.
8. To break one of God's commandments.
9. To turn away from sin.

DOWN

2. To admit that you have done wrong.
3. To pardon for sins.
4. The liquid used to baptize someone.
5. Name of the man who baptized Jesus.
6. A sticky, sweet fluid made by bees.

FORGIVE	JORDAN	JOHN	DOVE	REPENT
CONFESS	WATER	SIN	VOICE	HONEY



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BOARD OF WORLD MISSION

of the Moravian Church • North America



DID YOU KNOW..

That each year the Board of World Mission draws a “Watchword”, the same way each of you draw your own watchwords for the coming year?

The watchword that was drawn for the BWM for 2021 is:

“Let us therefore approach the throne of grace with boldness, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. Hebrews 4:16.”

This is an amazingly appropriate text for us!

We see three movements to the text. First, we approach God (the throne of grace) not with a sense of fear or timidity but with boldness. With a cheerful voice, we exalt God with one accord. It is God’s good pleasure to see us arrive, and God welcomes us with open arms. While we approach God with boldness, we also approach knowing that we have not always done what is good and acceptable in God’s eyes. We have all fallen short of our call, we have missed the mark, we have left undone things that should have been completed. We come boldly but knowing that we need God’s mercy and grace. The good news is that for us, for us, the Lamb was slain. Praise the Lord; our God is a merciful God who forgives our sins and shortcomings and calls us to begin anew. Finally, we go into all the world full of grace, knowing that this good news is not for us alone but meant for all the world to hear and know. This is the amazing grace we receive, and the task given to us to spread God’s word. Amen.

Please follow us on our website,

www.moravianmission.org and on Facebook to see where this year takes us to help those in need.

Happy New Year from the BWM Staff!