

**JANUARY 10TH WORSHIP SERVICE**  
**A SERVICE with RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL VOWS & HOLY COMMUNION**

**WORDS OF WELCOME**

**Introit: #327 v. 2 “Jesus Loves Me”**

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**PRAYER OF INVOCATION:** ☪ \*

L: Creating, Calling, and Faithful God,

we come to this time and place to be with you, to worship you, and to learn from you.

*P: May our time together be like your creation of light in the darkness that you called good.*

*All: May it be that you would call us good while we respond to your call and as we listen to you. Amen.*

**CALL TO WORSHIP IN SONG: v. 2 “Come, Now Is the Time to Worship”** (Led by Pastor Karen)

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**SCRIPTURE:**

**Genesis 1:1-5 MSG - Heaven and Earth**

**1** <sup>1-2</sup> First this: God created the Heavens and Earth—all you see, all you don’t see. Earth was a soup of nothingness, a bottomless emptiness, an inky blackness. God’s Spirit brooded like a bird above the watery abyss.

<sup>3-5</sup> God spoke: “Light!”- And light appeared.

God saw that light was good and separated light from dark.

God named the light Day, he named the dark Night. It was evening, it was morning— Day One.

**Acts 19:1-7 MSG**

**19** <sup>1-2</sup> Now, it happened that while Apollos was away in Corinth, Paul made his way down through the mountains, came to Ephesus, and happened on some disciples there. The first thing he said was, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed? Did you take God into your mind only, or did you also embrace him with your heart? Did he get inside you?”

“We’ve never even heard of that—a Holy Spirit? God within us?”

<sup>3</sup> “How were you baptized, then?” asked Paul.

“In John’s baptism.”

<sup>4</sup> “That explains it,” said Paul. “John preached a baptism of radical life-change so that people would be ready to receive the One coming after him, who turned out to be Jesus. If you’ve been baptized in John’s baptism, you’re ready now for the real thing, for Jesus.”

<sup>5-7</sup> And they were. As soon as they heard of it, they were baptized in the name of the Master Jesus. Paul put his hands on their heads and the Holy Spirit entered them. From that moment on, they were praising God in tongues and talking about God’s actions. Altogether there were about twelve people there that day.

**Mark 1:4-11 MSG**

<sup>4-6</sup> John the Baptizer appeared in the wild, preaching a baptism of life-change that leads to forgiveness of sins. People thronged to him from Judea and Jerusalem and, as they confessed their sins, were baptized by him in the Jordan River into a changed life. John wore a camel-hair habit, tied at the waist with a leather belt. He ate locusts and wild field honey.

7-8 As he preached he said, “The real action comes next: The star in this drama, to whom I’m a mere stagehand, will change your life. I’m baptizing you here in the river, turning your old life in for a kingdom life. His baptism—a holy baptism by the Holy Spirit—will change you from the inside out.”  
9-11 At this time, Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. The moment he came out of the water, he saw the sky split open and God’s Spirit, looking like a dove, come down on him. Along with the Spirit, a voice: “You are my Son, chosen and marked by my love, pride of my life.”

### **REFLECTION:**

Since many of us were baptized as infants we have no recollection of our own baptism. Even for many of us when we were confirmed we may remember the day, but we did not allow God’s action or what we believed to impact our everyday lives as fully as God has offered it to do. So, I thought maybe if we take a closer look at what we profess to believe God does during our baptism, and the significance of Jesus’ baptism which we celebrate today, then we just might be able to fully embrace baptism for what it was meant to be and more fully live into our baptism. After witnessing the events of this past week it is clear we all could embrace and live into our baptism more fully.

From our service of Baptism in The New Century Hymnal we are reminded that “*That baptism is the sacrament through which we are united to Jesus Christ and given part in Christ’s ministry of reconciliation. So let us hang on to that and consider over the days, weeks and months ahead how we can better be a part of that ministry. It also says, Baptism is the visible sign of an invisible event: the reconciliation of people to God. It shows the death of self and the rising to life of obedience and praise. It shows also the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on those whom God has chosen. In baptism, God works in us the power of forgiveness, the renewal of the spirit, and the knowledge of the call to be God’s people always.*”

In looking at today’s scripture lessons we find that there are two very distinctive baptisms; the baptism of repentance and forgiveness offered by John and the baptism of the Holy Spirit offered by Jesus. Both baptisms require both human and divine action. We hear that John was in the wilderness, so people, in order to be baptized, were very intentional about their actions. Maybe they initially were drawn to the wilderness out of curiosity, but in the end, many heard his message to repent, not just be sorry, but to truly desire to live life differently. As they accepted this message, they also received the baptism of John in which the immersion in water symbolically represented God’s action of cleansing them from their sin through the grace and mercy of God’s forgiveness. Even in John’s baptism of repentance and forgiveness there is a sense dying and rising into new life. The repentance represents a dying not to who God created one to be, but to sinful ways and choosing to live differently. Accepting the forgiveness of baptism was, and still is, very important. Without accepting that forgiveness, we carry the guilt associated with our past sin and that guilt weighs us down like an anchor hung around our neck as we put a death to the sinful ways, but doesn’t let us rise back up out of the waters of forgiveness into new life until we release it. So, what sin in your life still needs cleansing from with-in? Just as important, what anchors of guilt are you allowing to remain on your neck and preventing you from rising up into new life out of the waters of baptism which remain forever?

A question arises for me and for many, why would Jesus, one who is sinless need to be baptized? That being said, the baptism of Jesus is not to be taken lightly. Though Jesus birth is one of our most important celebrations in the liturgical year, Jesus’ baptism was mentioned in all four gospel accounts as well as Acts and Romans. In this simple act, Jesus once again shows us God’s true desire to enter into solidarity with humanity with a sense of humility. Because that baptism of repentance and forgiveness is ultimately about willingly choosing to live according to God’s will, it also shows Jesus making a conscientious choice to do the will of God. We then see that as Jesus rose up out of the waters Jesus saw the heavens ripped apart and the Holy Spirit descending upon him which can also be interpreted as into him because the Greek word used here means into. Because Jesus received the Holy Spirit, Jesus can draw strength, power, and wisdom from that same Spirit that blew over the waters of creation which began the process of bringing order out of chaos. Jesus will do his ministry in communion with God being led by and through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Coming out of the baptismal waters Jesus heard the words "You are my Son, chosen and marked by my love, pride of my life." In Baptism we believe that we become the children of God into whom God sends the same Holy Spirit, and we are beloved, not because of what we have done or will do, but simply because God chooses to love us. As I mentioned earlier, the act of Baptism is the outward visible sign of what God is doing within us as we choose to accept our adoption and inheritance into God's family made possible through the actions of God made known in Jesus Christ. God cleanses us from sin and raises us to new and eternal life. God shows us once again the desire to dwell among us not only in the person of Jesus Christ, but by entering into the very core of our being, to anyone open to accepting that presence into their lives. The Holy Spirit grants us: the spirit of wisdom and understanding, counsel and might, knowledge and fear of the Lord, and the spirit of joy in God's presence, both now and forever more. With these gifts our lights may shine before others that they may see our good works and glorify God. In Galatians we are told that, the fruit produced by the Spirit, though not all inclusive, is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.

This past year, in particular this past week our nation witnessed some very horrific images that rocked many of us to the very core of our being. On the surface, the fruit of the Spirit seemed to be in very short supply and if we are honest, not only in others but in ourselves; yet through it all Spirit is still moving if we look closely, we see the Spirit still moving in those, who in all this chaos still bear the fruit of the Spirit into this chaos, shining a light in the darkness through their forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.

This week we saw the foundational principals upon which this nation was founded being threatened and it shook us as individuals and as a nation and many throughout the world as well. That being said, may we all remember, before there was a United States of America, before there was a United States Constitution to uphold and defend, before there was a world – there was the Holy Spirit that blew over the waters of chaos, bringing order out of disorder, light into the darkness and pronounced it good. Salvation is not in any one person, one country, one form of government but in God alone. It is only embracing the gift of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that is freely offered to everyone who is willing to receive that gift and allowing that Spirit to guide us through this earthly journey that we will become not only the people, but the world God created us to be.

So, let us live out our baptism as a beloved child of God and allow the indwelling of God's Holy Spirit to give us vision, wisdom, and guide us through the wilderness of life. Let us allow God to empower us with power of forgiveness, the renewal of our spirits, and the knowledge of the call to be God's people always, not just when we feel Christian and when we are gathered with people with whom we agree, but always. Amen.

*At this time I am going to ask you to reaffirm the decision made by you or others for you to live a baptized life, by recalling the first promises made in your life of faith.)*

## **BAPTISM AND RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL VOWS**

### **Introduction**

Pastor: Our God created new life forms

and brought them up from the waters of chaos,  
embraced them, and called them good.

Jesus, baptized in the river Jordan by John the Baptist,  
became living water for us and embraces all of us.

Jesus embraces those who are poor, oppressed, marginalized  
and all others who come seeking.

We follow Jesus with our Baptism,  
marking a starting place for new life and new ways of being.

We join Jesus in love and service.

Let us prepare our hearts and minds to see, feel, and hear again  
the vows of Baptism.

### **Renewal of Baptismal Promises (from Book of Worship)**

Do you renew and affirm the promises made at your Baptism?

*People: I do.*

Pastor: Do you recognize the call of God to be God's people always?

*People: I do.*

Pastor: Do you embrace the way of Jesus in faith and ministry?

*People: I do.*

Pastor: Do you accept the nurture of the Holy Spirit who renews your spirit each day?

*People: I do.*

Pastor: Do you accept and embrace others who seek a liberating faith in God?

*People: I do.*

Pastor: In renewing your baptismal vows, remember your Baptism as a mark of acceptance and welcome into the care of Christ's church where you may begin again your Christian faith and life.

### **A Unison Prayer:**

*All: O God, we rejoice in your grace, given and received.*

*We thank you that you claim us, that you wash us, strengthen us, and guide us, that you empower us to live a life worthy of our calling.*

*In the way of Jesus, make us as water in a dry and thirsty world.*

*Establish us to be places of refreshment. Root us and nurture us in love, that with all your people, that we may rightly and justly serve you.*

*Fill us with your fullness that our lives may overflow in service and love. Amen.*

### **CALL TO CONFESSION ☪\***

L: People of God, we have just renewed our baptismal vows.

We desire to be refreshed, renewed and changed.

God's calling our names to encourage us

and strengthen our resolve to be God's people

in faithfulness and peace-loving justice. Can you hear God's voice?

### **PRAYER OF CONFESSION: ☪\***

*All: O God, we hear your voice and we see the way of Jesus set before us.*

*But it's hard, dear God, to try again and again to live up to our baptismal vows and maintain our resolve to be your people in the world.*

*In repentance we ask you to forgive us when we fall short of living into our baptism. Set us once again on a holy path that leads to you. Amen.*

*A Moment of Silent Reflection*

### **WORDS OF ASSURANCE: ☪\***

L: Friends, God became flesh and dwelt among us

in the person of Jesus of Nazareth not to condemn the world

but that the world might be saved through Christ.

God hears our prayers and sets before us the way of Jesus.

God calls us and gives us enough grace and mercy

to follow the way empowered by the Holy Spirit.

*All: Thanks be to God.*

### **HYMN OF JOY #327 v. 3 "Jesus Loves Me"**

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Verse 3

### **A TIME OF PRAYER –**

### **LIFTING UP PRAYER REQUESTS –**

### **THE LORD'S PRAYER:**

**COMMUNION HYMN: #349 V.V. 1 – 2 “I Come with Joy”**

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**SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION**

**INVITATION**

Pastor: This banquet set before us is Christ’s banquet.  
It is Christ who extends an invitation to all who desire to come and join in the feast.  
No one can earn a place at this meal. Come of your own choice.  
You need only desire a deeper relationship with the risen Christ.  
Bring your hopes and your history. Bring your deliberations and your doubts. Come as your whole self.

**GREAT THANKSGIVING**

Pastor: As you bring your whole self may God be with you. *People: And also with you.*  
Pastor: Lift up your hearts. *People: We lift them to God.*  
Pastor: Let us give thanks to God Most High. *People: It is right to give God thanks and praise.*

**COMMUNION PRAYER**

Pastor: Holy God, you created a planet full of life. You created humans in your image.  
You taught our ancestors how to live in your world by giving them challenges as well as hope.  
You brought our forebears out of captivity in Egypt into fullness of life.  
You sent prophets to teach us.  
Most of all, you sent to us your child Jesus, who showed us through his loving example how you love us.  
You call us to follow in the path of Jesus, carrying your message of hope and justice to the world.

Creating us in your image, you offered to us the challenges of living in your complex world.  
And so we join with all creation to praise you:

*All: Holy, holy, holy God of love and majesty, the whole universe speaks of your glory, O God Most High.  
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of our God! Hosanna in the highest!*

**BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND POURING OF THE WINE**

*(Words of Institution)*

**BLESSING**

*Holy God, descend your Spirit upon these gifts of grain and grape  
that they might be for us the presence of the living Christ  
and pour out your Spirit upon us  
so that we might be reflections of your likeness in all we say and do  
so that others might know the blessings of living in communion with you  
with one another and all of your magnificent creation.  
Through Christ, with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
all glory and honor are yours Almighty God, now and forever. Amen.*

**SHARING IN THE MEAL**

## PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

*We give you thanks, Almighty God, that you have Refreshed us at your table*

*By granting us the presence of Jesus Christ.*

*By the power of your Holy Spirit, keep us faithful to your will.*

*Be with us - wherever we are - that whether we are gathered or scattered,*

*We may be the servant church - of the servant Christ - in whose name we pray. Amen.*

## PRAYER OF OFFERING & DEDICATION: \*

L: Faithful God, Bless us in our baptismal calling to be in ministry of showing hospitality to others.

*All: We offer the gifts that we have been given to be used not for conquest and dominance,  
but for use in liberating the poor and hurting people who pray for our liberation as well as their own.*

L: Receive and multiply our gifts for life-giving ministry not only for ourselves

But for all of humanity and all of your majestic and divine creation. Amen.

## SUMM-IT UP:

**Diaconate – 10:30 Monday**

**Trustees/B&G - 12:30 Monday**

**Bible study –1:30 On Tuesday using Sunday Zoom Meeting number**

**Revelations – Session 5**

**OME – Thanks everyone for their generous contributions to the Bingo Prizes for Sunnycrest Residents and Faith and Ashlyn Welbes for delivering them.**

**Annual Meeting – Reports are Due in this Friday to Merlin**

**Save the dates!**

**Annual Meeting will be held immediately following Worship on**

**Sunday January 24 You will absolutely be able to participate through Zoom**

**We will make a determination at our January 18<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Church Council at 4:00 p.m.  
as to whether it is both safe and wise to resume in-person gatherings and worship as well**

## SENDING HYMN: #351 “I Was There to Hear Your Borne Cry”

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## CHARGE & BENEDICTION: \*

L: Thank you, God, for blessing us with memories of Jesus’ baptism and ours.

*All: Thank you for removing our reluctance, doubt, and fears,  
for replacing them with courage and commission.*

*We now go forth with your calling, direction, and blessing  
to love and serve the others with God's own love and concern.*

L: As we do that, may God’s light shine upon us and be gracious to us,

May God look upon us kindly and grant us God’s peace. Amen

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