



St. Luke Ev. Lutheran Church

Rev. Ronald C. Szep, pastor

Sunday, January 10, 2021

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EPIPHANY

The readings during the Epiphany season carry forward the emphasis in the readings for Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, the theme of Jesus revealing himself to us as God and Savior. At the same time the readings present us with a real conundrum. The conundrum is that he hides the manifestations of his deity, so that his glory remains a secret and a mystery, even while he is revealing it. The theme present in all of the Epiphany readings is this: He shows his hidden glory to those he calls.

First Sunday after the Epiphany—The Baptism of Our Lord

During the Epiphany season we want to get to know Jesus. This Sunday we get to know him by baptism, both his and ours. But the glory is evident only to a chosen few; notice, too, that the greater the glory, the more hidden its manifestation—the glory of our life with Christ is by faith, not by sight.

Greeting by the minister

Please Stand

OPENING DIALOGUE:

Minister: God, our Father, each day is a gift of your grace.

Congregation: Your mercies are new every morning.

M: Guide our steps by the light of your Word.

C: Shield us from harm and keep us from evil.

M: Better than life is your love.

C: Put joy in our hearts and praise on our lips.

THE PRAYER FOR GRACE:

M: O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, you have brought us safely to this new day. Defend us with your mighty power, and grant that this day we neither fall into sin nor run into any kind of danger; and in all we do, direct us to what is right in your sight, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord.

C: Amen.

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Mark 1:4-11

It's almost a secret that Jesus was baptized; it appears that no one was there to witness it except for John. But what an amazing announcement!

As the lowliest of the low baptized the highest of the high, the Trinity showed itself; the Spirit covered and filled the lowly human nature of the Son, and the Father attested to his favor in all that the Son is and is about to do. But it was all a secret except to John and now to us, to whom God reveals it in his Word and in our baptism. For there, too, is a mystery and secret known only to God and to those he reveals it. In your baptism the Trinity is hidden, but really there: the Spirit covers and comes to dwell in you; the Son presents you to his Father as one for whom he did all of his work; the Father is well pleased with you because of what his Son has done for you.

⁴ And so John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness, preaching a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

⁵ The whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem went out to him. Confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River.

⁶ John wore clothing made of camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

⁷ And this was his message: "After me comes the one more powerful than I, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to stoop down and untie.

⁸ I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

⁹ At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

¹⁰ Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.

¹¹ And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

Please Be Seated

HYMN OF THE DAY: CW Hymn 089

"To Jordan's River Came Our Lord"

89

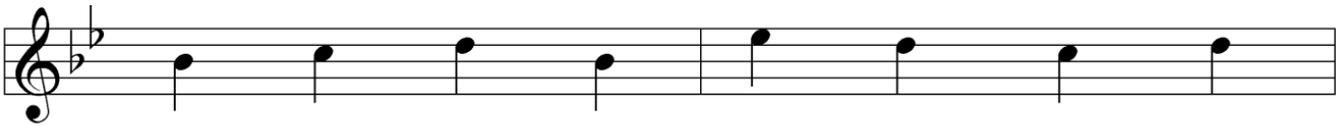
To Jordan's River Came Our Lord



1 To Jor - dan's riv - er came our Lord, The
 2 The Sav - ior came to be bap - tized— The
 3 As Je - sus in the Jor - dan stood And
 4 Then from God's throne with thun - d'rous sound Came
 5 The Fa - ther's word, the Spir - it's flight A -



Christ, whom heav'n - ly hosts a - dored, The
 Son of God in flesh dis - guised— To
 John bap - tized the Lamb of God, The
 God's own voice with words pro - found: "This
 point - ed Christ in glo - rious sight As



God from God, the Light from Light, The
 stand be - neath the Fa - ther's will And
 Ho - ly Spir - it, heav'n - ly dove, De -
 is my Son," was his de - cree, "The
 God's own choice, from A - dam's fall To



Lord of glo - ry, pow'r, and might.
 all his prom - is - es ful - fill.
 scend - ed on him from a - bove.
 one I love, who pleas - es me."
 save the world and free us all.

6 Now rise, faint hearts: be resolute!
This man in Christ, our substitute!
He was baptized in Jordan's stream,
Proclaimed Redeemer, Lord supreme.

Text: James P. Tiefel, b. 1949. © 1993 James P. Tiefel. All rights reserved. Used by permission.

Tune: WINCHESTER NEW (LM) *Musicalisch Hand-Buch der Geistlichen Melodien*, Hamburg, 1690, alt.

SERMON: *based on Acts 16:25-34*

“A Desperate Question; A Simple Promise”

God showed his power in the earthquake. But that display of power created only dread and terror in the heart of the jailor. It was the glory embedded in the gospel, the hidden power of the gospel in Word and sacrament, that brought the jailor life and joy in the forgiveness of his sins. Notice the silly question of the jailor: What must I do to be saved?—as though anyone could do anything to be saved from the God who has the power displayed in the earthquake. Paul's answer is not: This is what you must do ... His answer is: It has all been done; there is nothing for you to do; receive the benefit in faith and in baptism! For believing is not a doing, as Paul makes so clear in Romans 4; it is a receiving of a wage earned by another. Consider your baptism. The Trinity was there in grace and mercy to forgive you and receive you as a child and heir of eternal life; that display of power, so secret and mysterious, is revealed to you now and its benefits lasts forever.

²⁵ *About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the other prisoners were listening to them.*

²⁶ *Suddenly there was such a violent earthquake that the foundations of the prison were shaken. At once all the prison doors flew open, and everyone's chains came loose.*

²⁷ *The jailer woke up, and when he saw the prison doors open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself because he thought the prisoners had escaped.*

²⁸ *But Paul shouted, “Don't harm yourself! We are all here!”*

²⁹ *The jailer called for lights, rushed in and fell trembling before Paul and Silas.*

³⁰ *He then brought them out and asked, “Sirs, what must I do to be saved?”*

³¹ *They replied, “Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved—you and your household.”*

³² *Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all the others in his house.*

³³ *At that hour of the night the jailer took them and washed their wounds; then immediately he and all his household were baptized.*

³⁴ *The jailer brought them into his house and set a meal before them; he was filled with joy because he had come to believe in God—he and his whole household.*

Please Stand

PROFESSION OF FAITH: The Apostles' Creed *(read in unison)*

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his 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 into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS and BLESSING:

Luther's Morning Prayer *(in unison)*

I thank you, my heavenly Father, through Jesus Christ, your dear Son, that you have kept me this night from all harm and danger. Keep me this day also from sin and every evil, that all my doings and life may please you. Into your hands I commend my body and soul and all things. Let your holy angel be with me, that the wicked foe may have no power over me. Amen.

Special prayers and intercessions: optional, read by the minister

M: Hear us, Lord, as we bring you our private petitions.

Silent Prayer

M: Father in heaven, at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. Keep us who are baptized into Christ faithful in our calling as your children and make us heirs with him of everlasting life; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God,
C: Amen.

The Lord's Prayer *(in unison)*

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. Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.

M: Brothers and sisters, go in peace. Live in harmony with one another.
Serve the Lord with gladness.

The Lord bless you and keep you. The Lord make his face shine on you and be gracious to you. The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C: Amen.

Please Be Seated

CLOSING HYMN: CW Hymn 577 v1-2
“Rise, O Light of Gentile Nations”

577

Rise, O Light of Gentile Nations



1 Rise, O Light of Gen - tile na - tions, Je - sus, bright and
 2 Know - ing you and your sal - va - tion, Grate - ful love dare



Morn - ing Star; Let your Word, the glad - some ti - dings,
 nev - er cease To pro - claim your ten - der mer - cies,



Ring out loud - ly near and far, Bring - ing us
 Gra - cious Lord, your heav'n - ly peace. Let us



free - dom to the cap - tives, Peace and com - fort
 sound the gos - pel ti - dings To the earth's re -



to the slave, That the hea - then, free from
 mot - est bound That the sin - ner has been



bond - age, May pro - claim your pow'r to save.
 par - doned And for - give - ness can be found.

Text: Herman Fick, 1822–85, abr.; tr. *The Lutheran Hymnal*, St. Louis, 1941, alt.

Tune: O DU LIEBE MEINER LIEBE (87 87 D) *Erbaulicher Musicalischer Christen-Schatz*, Basel, 1745, alt.