

**Church of the divine love**  
**THE FIRST SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY**  
**THE BAPTISM OF OUR LORD**  
**JANUARY 12, 2025 10:15 AM**  
**HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II**

*Please observe silence*

Prayer for the New Year – on insert

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn #76 – **On Jordan’s bank the Baptist’s cry**

Opening Acclamation page 355

Collect for Purity page 355

Gloria (sung)

Collect of the Day - lectionary sheet insert

First Lesson: **Isaiah 43:1-7**

Psalm 29

Second Lesson: **Acts 8:14-17**

Gradual Hymn #616 – **Hail to the Lord’s Anointed**

Gospel: **Luke 3:15-17, 21-22**

Sermon – The Rev. Jean Lenord Quatorze

The Nicene Creed page 358

Prayers of the People, Form IV page 388

The Confession of Sin page 360

The Peace

Welcome and Announcements

THE HOLY COMMUNION

Offertory Hymn #135 – **Songs of thankfulness and praise**

Doxology (sung)	
The Great Thanksgiving:	
Eucharistic Prayer C	page 369
Sanctus (S-130 in hymnal)	page 367
The Lord's Prayer	page 364
The Breaking of the Bread, Anthem & Prayer	page 337
The Communion of the People	
Communion Hymn #121 – <b>Christ, when for us you were baptized</b>	
Post Communion Prayer	page 365
Prayer for Peace – on insert	
Prayer For the Parish	page 817
Prayer of St. Francis	page 833
Dismissal Hymn #608 – <b>Eternal Father, strong to save</b>	
Dismissal	

### **Sermon Sunday January 12, 2025**

Isaiah 43: 1-7; Psalm 29; Acts 8: 14-17; Luke 3: 15-17,21-22.

#### **Sisters and brothers in Christ,**

A priest-friend of mine tells this story about a family he knows. It seems a young boy had been at home all day with his mother. He had been a terror all day long. With each incident the mother responded, "You just wait until your dad gets home." Evening came and the dad got home from work. The mother began telling him about their son's behavior. The dad looked at his son and before he could say anything the boy cried out, "You can't touch me. I've been baptized!"

I wish it was that easy, that clear, that simple. I wish I could say to the sorrows and losses of my life, you can't touch me. I've been baptized! I wish I could say to the struggles and difficulties of my life, you can't touch me. I've been baptized! I wish I could say to the changes and chances of life, you can't touch me. I've been baptized! But that is not how baptism seems to work. Despite my baptism I have, like every one of you, suffered sorrows and losses of life, encountered difficulties and struggles, had to face the changes and chances of life I would rather have avoided. And despite his baptism that little boy in the

story still went to time-out. And yet he speaks a deep truth. He is absolutely right; he is untouchable. At some level he knows that his existence, identity, and value are not limited to time and space; to the things he has done or left undone. He knows himself to be more than his biological existence. He knows himself as beloved. He knows the gift of baptism.

Baptism does not eliminate our difficulties, fix our problems, take away the pain, or change the circumstances of our lives. Instead, it changes us and offers a way through those difficulties, sorrows, problems, and circumstances and ultimately, a way through death. Baptism transcends our biological existence and offers us a vision of life as it might be. Baptism offers us a new way of being – one that is neither limited by nor suffers from our createdness. Through baptism we no longer live according to the biological laws of nature but by relationship with God, who through the Prophet Isaiah says, “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine” (**Isaiah 43:1**). That means when we pass through the waters of sorrow and difficulty God is with us. The rivers that can drown will not overwhelm us. That means when we walk through the fire of loss and ruination we are not burned. The flames that can destroy will not consume us. For he is the Lord our God, the Holy one of Israel, our Savior. (**Isaiah 43:1-7**) To know this, to trust this, to experience this is the gift of baptism and baptism always takes place at the border of life as it is and life as it might be. That border is the river, Jordan. Geographically, symbolically, and theologically the Jordan River is the border on which baptism happens. It is the border between the wilderness and the promised land; the border between life as survival and a life that is thriving; the border between sin and forgiveness; the border between the tomb and the womb; the border between death and life. We all stand on that border at multiple points in our lives. Some of you stand there now. Some of you experience that border as a place of loss, fear, pain. For others it is a place of joy, hope, and healing. In reality it is both at the same time.

The only reason we can stand at the border of baptism is because Jesus stood there first. We stand on the very same border on which his baptism took place. 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.” (**Luke 3:21-22**). Jesus’ baptism is for our sake and salvation. His baptism makes ours possible. The water of baptism does not sanctify Jesus. Instead, he sanctifies the water for our baptism. The water that once drowned is now sanctified water that gives life. Jesus received his baptism in the wilderness. He had not yet performed any miracles. People barely knew who he was, but God knew him full well and was well pleased with him. God is not well pleased because of what we do. It is just God’s nature to love humanity. The wilderness is the place Jesus will be tested/tempted, the place where the outcasts, those on the margins, and the decentered reside. Since his birth, Jesus had learned to live on the run. His foray into ministry is no different. Although he received treasured gifts from the Persian elite (the Magi) as a child, his task as an adult would be to challenge classism and imperial regimes. What better way to accompany the left-out than to dwell where they dwell?

Ritually we are baptized only once. Yet throughout our life we return to the waters of baptism. Daily we return to the baptismal waters through living our baptismal vows. We confess our belief in God, Father,

Son, and Holy Spirit, because God first believed in and chose us. We continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers because the Holy Spirit has descended upon and filled us. We persevere in resisting evil, and whenever we fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord because the heavens have been opened to us and we have seen our true home. We proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ because we have heard the voice from heaven declare us beloved children in whom he is well pleased. We seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving our neighbor as ourselves; striving for justice, peace, and dignity for every human being because that is how God has treated us and how could we do any less for another one of his children. One of our tasks is to provide the space for people to be who God has called them to be. Jesus, while knowing who Judas was, provided the space for him to do his work. He was not focused on someone's failure but on his own mission. Jesus is inviting us to be focused on our mission which is to offer to one another the grace he extended to all.

Beloveds, we are not baptized for the same reason as Jesus or to follow step by step what Jesus did. We cannot. Can we go to the cross and be crucified? The answer is No. Can we let someone spit in our faces and embrace our destiny without a fight? No. Jesus did not need grace or repentance, although he went to John to be baptized. This baptism is not the same as Jesus'. We should receive the church's baptism at any time and no matter our age. We are baptized to die and resurrect with Christ. We are baptized to receive Jesus' grace. We are baptized to offer ourselves or be offered to God.

Sometimes our own body provides the waters of baptism, tears. St. Ephrem the Syrian spoke of our eyes as two baptismal fonts. Tears are the body's own baptismal waters that cleanse, heal, and renew life. Other times the circumstances of life, things done and left undone by us and others, the ups and downs of living, push us back to the waters of baptism. We return in order to again be immersed into the open heavens, to be bathed by God's breath, the Holy Spirit, and to let the name beloved wash over us.

John's baptism is a call to repentance, a preparatory step in restoring one's relationship with God, that is, to become righteous again. Jesus, therefore, was not coming for baptism for his own sins, but he came in solidarity with the sinners whom God had sent him to save. Apart from being God's eschatological agent of salvation, Jesus was, at the same time, the Davidic King and representative of the Jews before God. So, he humbled himself alongside his people to wait for God's mercy. Because of Jesus' mediatory role, John finally consented to baptize him. Baptized like Jesus? No, but baptized in Jesus? Yes, definitely! **Amen.**

***All baptized Christians, regardless of age, are welcome to receive communion in the Episcopal Church.***

1 EPIPHANY/THE BAPISM OF OUR LORD

10:15 AM HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II  
COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS

MONDAY – THE EPIPHANY OF OUR LORD

8:30 PM AA MEETING

WEDNESDAY 7:00 PM AL-ANON MEETING

THURSDAY 10AM-2PM THRIFT SHOP

7:00 PM VESTRY MEETING

8:30 PM AA MEETING

SATURDAY 10AM-2PM THRIFT SHOP

2 EPIPHANY 10:15 AM HOLY EUCHARIST, RITE II  
COFFEE HOUR FOLLOWS

	Today	Next Week
Eucharistic Minister	Deb Giordano	Roe Prosser
Coffee Hour	Prossers	Dana Kenn

**PARISH PRAYER LIST**

Loving God, comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind or spirit. Give them courage and hope in their troubles and bring them the joy of your salvation. Especially we remember before you:

Sister Eddie	Betty Curley	Jess
Bob Curley	Steve Curley	Art
Chris Dickson	John Rocco	Deb P.

John Mulligan	Marjorie Guerrier	Lynette
Manetta Family	Robert Hosey	Ryan
Christopher	Bernie Walther	Celeste
Beverly Noel	Phil Ryder	Warren
Anthony Paribello	Barbara Curran	Del
Donna Amundsen	Kate Jones	Aidan
Sally & Roger	Sophia	Ciara
Mary & Family	Wendy	Jan
Nathan Treadwell	Gladys Hadija	Vincent
Michael & Family	Matthew Treasure	Mo
Michelle & Baby	Joseph	Annie
Jerry & Family	Shannon & Family	Donna A.

All people and countries suffering from violence, hatred and natural disaster.

The homeless and food insecure. The victims of the California Fires

Help us speak words of encouragement and offer deeds of kindness to them.

Bring us with them, into the unending joy of your kingdom. Amen.

To add or make changes to prayer list during the week, email

Janet Croft at [jmc220@optonline.net](mailto:jmc220@optonline.net).

Prayer for the New Year:

O God, our Creator, you have divided our life into days and seasons, and called us to acknowledge your providence year after year. Accept our praise and thanksgiving for this past year and hear our prayers for the new year. Plant in every heart, we pray, the love of him who is the Savior of the world, Jesus. Grant that we who begin this year in his Name, may complete it to his honor and glory. Pardon our transgressions of the past and guide us by your Holy Spirit that we may turn our feet into your paths, serve you in peace, and live in your presence. All this we ask in the holy name of your Son, Jesus, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, One God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

Hymn to be sung during the consecration:

Father I adore you,  
Lay my life before you,  
How I love you.

Repeat twice with second verse starting with Jesus

And third verse starting with Spirit.

## Prayer for Peace

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn  
but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So  
mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that  
all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince  
of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominions  
and glory, now and for ever. Amen

PARISH ANNUAL MEETING – SUNDAY, JANUARY 26<sup>TH</sup>

Nominations to the Vestry:

Dana Kenn – Special one year term to remain on the Vestry

Jess Berbeck – 2<sup>nd</sup> tow year term as Senior Watden

SUPPORT THE FOOD PANTRY – DROP-OFF IN THE KITCHEN





