

Baptism of Our Lord

January 7, 2024

Epiphany 1 (Year B)

At the Baptism of Jesus a new era began for God’s people. Through the waters of Baptism, new life is granted. We who are washed in the waters are drowned to our old selves and raised to new life in Him. This is one of the few places in Scripture where we see the entirety of the Trinity revealed simultaneously: the Father speaks, the Son is baptized, and the Spirit appears as a dove.



THIS WEEK’S SCRIPTURE TEXTS

First Reading: Genesis 1:1–5

Day and Night

Before God began his creative action of fashioning all that exists out of nothing, the Spirit of the Lord hovered over the waters. The first thing that the Lord God made was light to scatter the darkness. The light was good, according to the Creator, and thus the first day was completed.

Psalm 29

The Powerful Voice of the Lord

The psalmist described the voice of the Lord as it hovered over the waters. The Lord’s voice is one that thunders; it is powerful and majestic at the same time. It breaks down and it builds up; it creates and it blesses. He is worthy of praise!

Second Reading: Romans 6:1–11

Death Has Lost Its Power

Paul asked the rhetorical question, “Are we to continue in sin so that God can shower us with his abundant grace?” The answer was an emphatic, “Heavens, no!” We who have died to sin can no longer live in sin. Our old selves have been put to death through Christ’s death, and we have been raised to new life by his resurrection.

Gospel Reading: Mark 1:4–11

Baptism of Jesus

The Evangelist recalled the ministry of John’s baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. John proclaimed that one would come after him who was greater than him, and he would baptize with the Holy Spirit. As Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan River, the Spirit descended upon him and a voice from heaven proclaimed his sonship. “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”

Suggestions for the Day:

- Liturgical Color: White
- Use the Nicene Creed.
- Use the Litany for Baptism as a call to worship or in addition to the prayers for today. You can find this on the Seasonal page for Epiphany.
- There is a service for Holy Baptism on the Liturgies and Services page of SOWeR.
- What does it mean when the pastor says in the Baptismal Liturgy, “Child of God, you have been sealed by the power of the Holy Spirit and marked with the cross of Christ forever.”? Take some time today to explain some of the nuances between our Lutheran understanding of the Sacrament of Holy Baptism and other views of Baptism.

SUGGESTED HYMNS FOR WORSHIP

Hymn Titles:

	LBW	WOV	LSB	ELW	REC	Sola
Hail to the Lord’s Anointed	87	---	398	311	---	---
All Who Believe and Are Baptized	194	---	601	442	75	75
Shall We Gather at the River	---	690	---	423	275	275
Dearest Jesus, We Are Here	187	---	592	443	72	72
To Jordan Came the Christ, Our Lord	79	---	406	---	---	---
When Peace Like a River	346	---	763	785	224	224
Awake, My Soul, and With the Sun	269	---	868	557	60	60
Be Thou My Vision	---	776	---	793	230	230
Hark, the Voice of Jesus Calling	381	---	827	---	180	180
Thy Holy Wings	---	731	---	613	76	76

The hymn suggestions above can be found in: LBW=Lutheran Book of Worship, WOV=With One Voice, ELW=Evangelical Lutheran Worship (Augsburg Fortress); LSB=The Lutheran Service Book (Concordia Publishing), REC=The ReClaim Hymnal for Church and Home (ReClaim Resources), and “web” means you can find it on SOWeR at “Hymns and Music.”

CONTEMPORARY SONGS

Praise Song Titles:

- Baptism
(CCLI# 228410)
Living Waters
(CCLI # 7063743)
Beneath the Waters
(CCLI# 6179573)
Word of God Speak
(CCLI# 3912788)
Spirit of the Living God
(CCLI# 7035191)

The contemporary song suggestions above are noted by their CCLI number. To print these songs, a congregation must have a CCLI license.