

Baptism of our Lord- Week of January 10, 2021

Begin your devotion time by praying this prayer: Holy God, through the Baptism of Jesus you remind us that we are beloved, too. Help us turn toward you and your love in the coming year. Amen.

Reflect on the Way of Love together: This week's practice in the **Way of Love** is **TURN**. The waters of baptism invite us to turn toward Jesus and follow him. As you engage in your devotion time, discuss: how will you turn toward Jesus and better follow him this year?

Adult and Small Child

Read: [Mark 1:4-11](#)

Reflect: In this story, we hear about Jesus' baptism. I wonder: what you think Jesus' baptism looked like? What do think the voice sounded like? What do you think people thought when they saw the dove descend from the sky? How would you feel if you were there? When I think about Jesus' baptism, I also think about all of the baptisms that I've seen at church, too. Baptisms are special times when we celebrate how much God loves us, and when we become followers of Jesus who share that love with other people, too.

After coming up out of the water, a voice tells Jesus that he is beloved (Mark 1:11.) To be "beloved" means to be loved *so much!* We are all beloved to God, too. We are all members of God's family, and the waters of baptism remind us of that. How does it make you feel to know that you are beloved to God?

Respond: This week, take a moment before going to bed each night to remind your little that they are loved by God and by you. Grab a small cup or bowl of water and make the sign of the cross on their forehead. Say to them with these words: *Remember you are loved by God, and I love you, too!* If your child is old enough, invite them to do the same to you.

- **Victoria Hoppes**

Adult and Elementary

Read: [Mark 1:4-11](#)

Reflect: Have you ever eaten a locust? A locust is a grasshopper, if you didn't know. I bet it would be crunchy and a little weird in your mouth. Have you petted a camel? I wonder if it feels smooth and soft or is it rough and scratchy and itchy? Have you tasted honey? Most likely, it was sweet and sugary. Did some of it get onto your lips or fingers? Did you feel the sticky, gooeyness of it? Have you dunked your head into a bathtub full of water? When you came out of the water, did you feel it roll down your body? Did you shake your head and feel the water drops being tossed everywhere?

Jesus had a kind-of-sort-of bathtub experience. You may not be in a river like Jesus. You may not hear an out-loud voice. But you know what it felt like to Jesus. Coming up out of the water, the water rolling down your body, the water drops flying everywhere as you shake them off. You know what it felt like when Jesus heard that God loves him. Next time you feel water on your body like that, remind yourself that God loves you.

Respond: Pay attention every time you have a bathtub experience this week. When taking a bath or a shower, pause, feel the water on your body and say to yourself in your head or out loud, "God loves me." You could do it even when washing your hands saying it a few times, "God loves me. God loves me. God loves me."

- **Patrick Kangrga**

Adult and Youth

Read: [Mark 1:4-11](#)

Reflect: Today, we celebrate and remember Jesus' baptism. Just recently, we celebrated the season of Christmas. I'm sure you received gifts of varying shapes and sizes and even with different meanings behind them. Some items old, some new. I'm sure you even gave several gifts to other close friends and family members. Just like a gift you receive at Christmas or your birthday, Baptism is a gift. However, this gift comes from God. It is a symbol of the gift of grace. Think about the best gift you have ever given to someone else. When we give a gift, it usually has little to do with anything that we want or need. It's all about the other person. In the same way, baptism is God inviting us into a life that is not ruled by sin, suffering, and death. It is a life of joy and happiness and acceptance into the community of believers we call the Church.

Respond: Do you remember your baptism? Did it take place when you were a tiny baby or maybe when you were older? If you do not remember your baptism, talk to your parents about it. Ask them what it was like and who was there. What made it special? Do you still have anything from your baptism? Maybe a special gown that you wore, or candle, or a banner your church made for you? Find out. Today is the day to celebrate, turn, and reflect and remember your baptism just as Jesus did.

- **Lauren Wainwright**

Adult and Adults

Read: [Mark 1:4-11](#)

Reflect: In our time of climate-controlled churches and indoor baptismal fonts, it's easy to forget how revolutionary baptism is. Born of the Jewish *mikveh/tevilah* tradition, baptism is the process by which, according to the catechism, we gain citizenship in the Covenant, membership in Christ, and redemption by God. Baptism is when it is declared that we needn't strive to be good enough for God, because God is already good enough for us. Everything we do for the rest of our lives as Christians is a response to our baptism. In Jesus' case, his cousin John, widely considered mad by his neighbors, leads Jesus into the river and submerges him. When he emerges from the water, he is reborn and so are we. As we navigate this new year, I invite us into examining what in our lives is in need of a new birth. Where is God calling us to turn away from what which is holding us captive and live more fully into our baptismal promises?

Respond: As you ponder the blessing and wonder of the Baptism of Jesus, each day this week, set aside 5 minutes to read a section of the baptismal service in the **Book of Common Prayer** online (or on page 299 if you have a physical copy of a book) and use water to make the sign of the cross on your forehead. Ask God to help you be reborn this and every day and to assist you in living out your baptismal joy, grace, and promises. Just as we need sponsors at our baptism who promise to assist us in our lives of faith, we need help as adults that do the same. Choose 2 trusted confidants and ask for their help in whatever you've identified that would help you live your baptismal promises more fully.

- **Jessica Davis**

About our Contributors



Victoria Hoppes

