

# Worship Guide for January 10, 2021

## The Second Sunday After Christmas

### *PREPARING FOR GOD'S WORD*

#### PRELUDE

This is the day the Lord has made. **Let us rejoice and be glad in it!**

#### LIFE OF THE CHURCH

Rev. David Jones

##### **Bridging the Gap | One Roof Food Item of the Month**

Canned meat - this is the item of the month that we are collecting for One Roof and Bridging the Gap. You are welcome to drop off items to the Church Office during normal business hours. We are accepting financial donations for this project as well. We will be happy to shop for you! Make checks payable to NPC and designate them "January Canned Meat Project."

#### Stewardship Moment

Dr. Kay Crosby

#### OPENING PRAYER

##### **HYMN 151 We Three Kings of Orient Are, vv. 1 & 5**

Lalla McGee, Cantor

*We three kings of Orient are; bearing gifts we traverse afar,  
field and fountain, moor and mountain, following yonder star.*

Refrain:

*O star of wonder, star of night, star with royal beauty bright,  
westward leading, still proceeding, guide us to thy perfect light!*

*Glorious now behold him arise, King and God and Sacrifice:  
Alleluia! Alleluia! sounds through the earth and skies. (Refrain)*

#### CALL TO CONFESSION

Rev. Tyler Brock

God loves us and calls us each by name. Knowing we are eternally forgiven and infinitely loved, let us boldly confess our sins before God.

#### PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**We are precious in your sight,  
yet we often forget that we are your beloved.  
We confess that our love is fickle and inconstant.  
We follow selfish goals  
and deny that our way of life harms others and hurts your world.  
We are sorry and we want to change.  
Create in us a clean heart, strengthen our resolve, reconcile us one to another,  
and bless us with your peace...**

*We keep a moment of silence for personal confession.*

#### ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Beloved, God forgives your sins; know that you are pardoned and be at peace to love the Lord and serve the world. **Thanks be to God!**

## RECEIVING THE PEACE

As Christians, we are taught that peace is the opposite of fear. Fear is the basis of all that is being used to divide and limit us in today's world; the fear we are different and separate and not good enough or the fear that nothing is certain and we will not be okay. God's love shows us that we are more than good enough, for we are the fully loved children of God. We are assured that our needs are, and always will be, met by the One who is capable of more than we can imagine. We are not separate; we are one with God, and vitally connected to one another.

May Christ's peace which conquers fear be with you. **And also with you!**

## A TIME FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES

Rev. Darcie Jones

## GLORIA PATRI 581

*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen, amen.*

## LISTENING TO GOD'S WORD

### PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION

Glorious God, when Jesus was baptized for your healing mission the heavens opened in a flash of glory as vision and voice blazed upon the waters. May your Spirit so burn in us that we hear your word translated into deed and follow Jesus in paths of justice, right relationship, and peace. **Amen.**

### THE GOSPEL READING Luke 3:1-22 | The Proclamation of John the Baptist

<sup>3</sup> In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, <sup>2</sup> during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. <sup>3</sup> He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, <sup>4</sup> as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

“The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. <sup>5</sup> Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be made low, and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways made smooth; <sup>6</sup> and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

<sup>7</sup> John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup> Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor’; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>9</sup> Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.”

<sup>10</sup> And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” <sup>11</sup> In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” <sup>12</sup> Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” <sup>13</sup> He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” <sup>14</sup> Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

<sup>15</sup> As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, <sup>16</sup> John answered all of them by saying, “I baptize you

with water; but one who is more powerful than I is coming; I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. He will baptize you with<sup>[e]</sup> the Holy Spirit and fire. <sup>17</sup> His winnowing fork is in his hand, to clear his threshing floor and to gather the wheat into his granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire.”

<sup>18</sup> So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people. <sup>19</sup> But Herod the ruler, who had been rebuked by him because of Herodias, his brother’s wife, and because of all the evil things that Herod had done, <sup>20</sup> added to them all by shutting up John in prison.

<sup>21</sup> Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, <sup>22</sup> 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.”

This is the word of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## SERMON

### “Jesus’ Baptism”

There are a few things happening today. The first is the celebration of the Baptism of our Lord Jesus. At the end of our text, Luke treats us to a mere glimpse of Jesus’ baptism. According to Fred Craddock, far more critical to Luke is “to highlight the post-baptismal revelatory character of Jesus’ experience.” This revelation of Jesus as God’s beloved serves to inform the reader everything that happens in the life of Jesus is sanctioned by the God who claimed Abraham and his descendants as God’s own, the one who created all that is. In other words, Jesus has God’s approval and authority.

The second thing happening today is the movement from Christmastide into Epiphany and Epiphany into the adult life and ministry of Jesus. Last week, Darcie talked to the children about the star that led the wise men to find Jesus. That star was the revelatory experience that the wise men needed to trust that this was, in fact, the son of God. And in response to the gravity of the moment and the God made flesh nature of this child, the men, being wise, brought gifts. Because of the seriousness and the station of God’s son born on earth, they brought meaningful gifts.

The third thing happening on this first Sunday of the Epiphany season; our response to the Epiphany, to the revelation that he is the son of God incarnate revealed this day as God’s beloved following his baptism. What will be our response to this joy to the world?

Luke’s response to the life, ministry, and sacrifice of Jesus Christ was to record his gospel “so that [we] may know the truth.” And in these first verses in chapter three that lead us to the water as Jesus is baptized are John’s words about our response to God. Luke tells us that John goes into the wilderness to prepare the way of the Lord. Fred Craddock reminds us that “the desert [- the wilderness -] is not simply a place designation; it recalls Israel’s formation as God’s covenant people and hence implies a return to God.” So John is in the wilderness around the Jordan River, just as the prophet Isaiah claimed, where all flesh shall see the salvation of God. And in the fashion of the Old Testament prophets, John delivers scathing instructions to the people who flock to him to be baptized.

Fred Craddock points to the much shorter preambles to Jesus’ baptism in Mark and Matthew’s gospel as a signifier that Luke’s much longer preamble - much more detailed account of John the Baptist’s ministry - signifies how vital repentance is to the gospel of Jesus. Our response then to God’s grace in our lives is indeed the sharing of the gospel, is indeed building up the kingdom of heaven, is indeed loving our neighbor. But first, our gratitude for God’s salvation must be repentance. For only in repentance can we accomplish John’s directive to bear good fruit, fruit that is worthy of true repentance.

And John the Baptist here is precise - he says to the people who want to be baptized in verse 8, "don't tell me that you're special because you are among God's chosen people, for God could create more people out of these rocks if God so chose. To respond to God, you have to be honest about your sin, about your hatred, about your selfishness and greed. True repentance cannot take the form of a snake, slithering back and forth around the truth, biting with poison fangs any who get close. No, true repentance looks like sharing what you have with those who need it. True repentance looks like not stealing or swindling money from those who have no choice but to pay. True repentance looks like not using force to shake down those with less power than you and be satisfied with all you have.

As John says all of this, the people begin to understand, and they start to wonder if he is the messiah, for what he is saying rings with the truth they long to hear. The truth for which all who seek repentance search. The truth that their leader, King Herod, cannot abide. The truth that God is working right now to gather up all of the wheat. For as Fred Craddock warns, "when repentance and forgiveness are available, judgment is good news. We hear this in verse 18. Judgment is not scary news, for repentance is the seed that allows us to bear good fruit. It is this message of the truth of the gospel, this message of repentance for which the leader of the people imprisoned John the Baptist. Repentance is possible, and God's grace is within reach. But those who turn away, those that would remain a viper, will be cut down and thrown into the fire. And so we are led then, to Jesus' Baptism. A baptism, unlike Mark's and Matthew's story. John is not present, but instead, the spotlight of Luke's gospel shifts away from the prologue of repentance toward the plot of the transforming power of the Spirit of God. This is the same Spirit that embodies Jesus, blesses Jesus, and shares the truth of our salvation with the world. Jesus' coming out party is complete. He has been announced by a prophet in the wilderness in the words of Israel's most influential prophet, thus fulfilling and affirming his authentic lineage from God's chosen people. He has now been baptized alongside everyone else, bridging the idea that God's Spirit is not merely on him but on each one who participates in a baptism of repentance.

My friends, we have each been baptized in the same ritual cleansing as our Lord Jesus. And in our baptism, we have been called to repent of our sin and acknowledge our failings that we might be set free to bear excellent and worthy fruit. Like a dove, the Holy Spirit has landed on each of us, inspiring us to share what we have with those in need. God calls each of us beloved and desires for us to participate within a community of kingdom-building Jesus followers who refuse to settle for the world's standards but instead insist on setting the example of Jesus as our standard for love, truth, and humility.

So let us repent that we might be bearers of good fruit, that we might believe that we are loved, that we might be inspired to love others because God first loved each of us.  
Amen.

*A moment of silent reflection follows the sermon.*

### **SERMON HYMN 163 Wild and Lone the Prophet's Voice**

*Wild and lone the prophet's voice echoes through the desert still,  
calling us to make a choice, bidding us to do God's will:  
"Turn from sin and be baptized; cleanse your heart and mind and soul.  
Quitting all the sins you prized, yield your life to God's control.*

*"Bear the fruit repentance sows: lives of justice, truth and love.  
Trust no other claim than those; set your heart on things above.  
Soon the Lord will come in power, burning clean the threshing floor:  
then will flames the chaff devour; wheat alone shall fill God's store."*

*With such preaching, stark and bold, John proclaimed salvation near,  
and his timeless warnings hold words of hope to all who hear.*

*So we dare to journey on, led by faith through ways untrod,  
till we come at last like John to behold the Lamb of God.*

## **RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD**

### **SACRAMENT OF THE LORD'S SUPPER**

Invitation to the Table

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you. **And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts. **We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

Sung Sanctus Hymn 562

Therefore, with all creation, we sing your praise:

*Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, (2x)*

*heaven and earth are full, full of your glory.*

*Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.*

*Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.*

*Hosanna in the highest, hosanna in the highest.*

Words of Institution

Memorial Acclamation

Great is the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died, Christ is risen, Christ will come again.**

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

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.**

**Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.**

**And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.**

Receiving of the Elements

Jesus said: "I am the bread of life."

Jesus said: "I am the vine, you are the branches.

Come to me and never be hungry; believe in me and never thirst."

These are the gifts of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

### **SPECIAL MUSIC**

Star in the East Heber/ The Southern Harmony, 1854

*Lalla & John McGee, vocals and Roy Barbee, percussion*

*Hail, the blest morn, see the great Mediator, down from the region of glory descend!*

*Shepherds, go worship the babe in the manger, lo for his guard the bright angels attend.*

*Refrain: Brightest and best of the sons of the morning!*

*Dawn on our darkness, and lend us thine aid;*

*Star in the east, the horizon adorning,*

*guide where our infant Redeemer was laid.*

*Cold on his cradle the dewdrops are shining; low lies his bed, with the beasts of the stall;  
Angels adore him in slumbers reclining, wise men and shepherds before him do fall.*

*Say, shall we yield him, in costly devotion,  
odours of Eden, and offerings divine,  
Gems from the mountain and pearls from the ocean,  
myrrh from the forest and gold from the mine?*

*Vainly we offer each ample oblation, vainly with gold we his favour secure.  
Richer by far is the heart's adoration: dearer to God are the prayers of the poor.*

Post Communion Prayer

### ***GOING FORTH TO SHARE GOD'S WORD***

#### **HYMN 484 Out of the Deep, Unordered Water, VV. 1 & 2**

*Out of deep, unordered water God created light and land,  
world of bird and beast and, later, in God's image, woman, man.  
There is water in the river bringing life to tree and plant.  
Let creation praise its giver: there is water in the font.*

*Water on the human forehead, birthmark of the love of God,  
is the sign of death and rising; through the seas there runs a road.  
There is water in the river bringing life to tree and plant.  
Let creation praise its giver: there is water in the font.*

#### **BENEDICTION**

#### **POSTLUDE**

#### ***Worship Participants***

Rev. David Jones, Pastor

Rev. Tyler Brock, Associate Pastor

Cliff Brock, Choirmaster

Lalla McGee, Cantor

Rev. Darcie Jones, Children's Coordinator

Worship A/V Support Team

<b>Giving Report</b>	<b>Total Giving 2020</b>	<b>Total Giving 2019</b>
<b>Pledged</b>	\$400,536.08	\$391,208.56
<b>Unpledged</b>	\$31,980.00	\$69,254.49
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$432,516.08</b>	<b>\$460,463.05</b>

Members and visitors alike, please plan to give today in whatever way you are able, either online through Realm, through your bank account, using the QR code below, or by mailing a check to the church. Thank you for your generosity.



## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Pastor David Jones will be on vacation beginning January 11-January 18. If you need pastoral assistance, please contact the Church Office at 770-253-4405.

Beginning **Tuesday**, January 26 at 7:00 pm, Rev. Jones will offer a weekly Bible Study, via ZOOM, on the Gospel of Luke. The book to be used in the study is N.T. Wright's "Luke for Everyone" and may be purchase on Amazon for \$12.79. The book is helpful for the study, but not required. Please contact [david@newnanpres.org](mailto:david@newnanpres.org) to sign up. *Please note that we are moving this study to Tuesdays, rather than Mondays.*

Meet our New Elders & Deacons

### **Elders**

#### **Class of 2021**

Kate Davis – Senior Adult  
Debbie Krauth – Christian Education  
Melanie Smith – Outreach  
Audrey Spragins – Clerk  
Ashley Vasconcelles – Membership

#### **Class of 2022**

Hasco Craver - Connections  
Judy Davis - Communications  
Jon Moss – Long-Range Planning  
Lissa Rand - Personnel

#### **Class of 2023**

Jennifer Eriksen – Fellowship  
John McGee – Property  
Tom Moynahan – Worship  
Nan Newman – Finance  
Chris Rice - Youth

### **Deacons**

#### **Class of 2021**

Jane Anderson  
Lane Dugger  
Greg Shivers (Co-Chair)  
Judy Tokarsky (Co-Chair)

#### **Class of 2022**

Maegan Brass  
Wynn Griffin  
Melanie Harkleroad  
Jacob Story

#### **Class of 2023**

Ann Beegle  
Buzz Flannigan  
Gwyn Kozma  
Virginia Stanley