



Dave Zelenka, Baptism of Christ

Silent Meditation

We make significant theological claims at baptism. We speak of rebirth, of moving from death to new life, of being named as a beloved child of God. These claims demand actions that demonstrate the significance of these events in our lives. Water is the primary component of baptism. Thus, it is important that ample amounts of water be used in the act of baptism to accompany the claims we make.

Water to wade in, water to pour, water to lift up, water that we see and hear prompts our imaginations to envision a new way of life.

Through the waters of baptism, we are given a birthright to live as witnesses to the good news that God's grace reaches out to all people. Or, as St. Francis of Assisi is reported to have said: Proclaim the gospel always; use words if necessary.

Paul Galbreath, Leading Through the Water

HOLY COVENANT UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
BAPTISM OF JESUS
WORSHIP SERVICE OF HEALING

January 7, 2018

Gathering Music

Jared Fischer

Welcome and Announcements

Barbara Thomas

One: May the peace of Christ be with you.

Many: And also with you.

*(Please pass the information pads so that all worshippers
might have the opportunity to sign them.)*

Opening Voluntary

Jared Fischer

* Call to Worship

Marylou lantosca

One: The days are beginning to grow longer,

Many: The Light of the world is Jesus.

One: Hopes for the New Year are blooming,

Many: The Light of the world is Jesus.

One: Arise; shine, for your Light has come!

Many: We are called out of our darkness into the Light.

One: The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot
overcome it!

All: We join together in worship to be light to the world!

* Passing of the Peace

Marylou lantosca

One: Come, let us now greet one another as a sign of God's peace,
for the peace of Christ is here to stay.

Many: Thanks be to God.

* *All rise in body or spirit* ☉ *Sing Response* ✕ *Hymnals located below pews*

* Hymn

“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”

Come, thou Fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet sung by flaming tongues above.
Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it, mount of thy unchanging love.

Here I raise mine Ebenezer; hither by thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God;
He, to rescue me from danger, interposed His precious blood.

O to grace how great a debtor, daily I'm constrained to be!
Let thy goodness, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee.
Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart, O take and seal it, seal it for thy courts above!

* Hymn 327

“Jesus Loves Me”

JESUS LOVES ME

Jesus love me! This I know, for the Bible tells me so.
Little ones to him belong; they are weak but he is strong.

Refrain: Yes, Jesus loves me! Yes, Jesus loves me!
Yes, Jesus loves me! The Bible tells me so.

Jesus loves me! This I know, as he loved so long ago,
Taking children on his knee, saying, “Let them come to me.” (*Refrain*)

Jesus love me! Still today, walking with me on my way,
Wanting as a friend to give, light and love to all who live. (*Refrain*)

Children's Message

The Baptism of Jesus

Cheri Dennis

(Following the Children's Message, pre-schoolers go to extended care and those in kindergarten through fifth grade to Children's Church.)

Hebrew Scripture

Genesis 1:1-5

Jim Hong

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

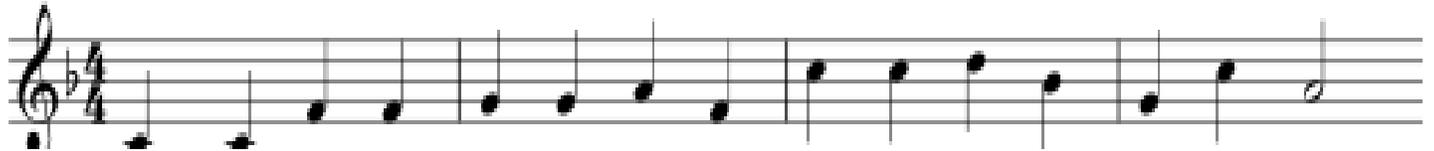
One: May we hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Many: Thanks be to God. Open our ears, our hearts, our minds.

Hymn 326

"Crashing Waters at Creation"

STUTT GART



1. Crashing waters at creation ordered by the Spirit's breath,
2. Parting water stood and trembled as the captives passed on through,
3. Cleansing water once at Jordan closed around the One foretold
4. Living water never ending, quench the thirst and flood the soul,



First to witness day's beginning from the brightness of nights death.
 Washing off the chains of bondage - channel to a life made new.
 Opened to reveal the glory ever new and ever old.
 Well-spring, source of life eternal drench our dryness, make us whole.

* Gospel Lesson

Mark 1:4-11

Barbara Thomas

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

One: May we hear what the Spirit is saying to the Church.

Many: Thanks be to God. Open our ears, our hearts, our minds.

Sermon

"Baptism ~ A Life Long Journey"

Cheri Dennis

Offertory Invitation

Barbara Thomas

(Parents are welcome to bring their children in from Children's Church to join them in receiving communion.)

Offertory Music

Jared Fischer

* Doxology

OLD HUNDREDTH

ϕ To God all glorious heavenly Light,
To Christ revealed in earthly night,
To God the Spirit now we raise
Our joyful songs of thankful praise. Amen.

* Offertory Dedication

Barbara Thomas

SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION
SERVICE OF HEALING & WHOLENESS

Confession

One: May the Light breaking forth this day be with you.

Many: **And also with you.**

One: Let us open our hearts to the Light of Christ, born long ago, and born again in our lives.

Many: **We open our hearts to God, to Christ the Light of the world, and to one another - our brothers and sisters in Christ.**

One: We celebrate the coming of the Light of the world; we have prayed for that light to enter our lives and our world.

Many: **Yet we confess that there have been times when we have obscured the light for others through insensitivity and prejudice, through the use of careless and hurtful words or selfish and destructive actions.**

(Silent Confession)

All: **Come Lord Jesus, be light for our darkness and empower us with your Spirit to be faithful bearers of your light into all the shadowy and clouded areas of people's lives.**

Prayers for Healing and Wholeness

Cheri Dennis

One: Living God, we are in need of your healing. Our minds and bodies are afflicted in many ways. You said to Israel, "I am your healer," and Israel was restored.

Many: **Renew us now, and make us whole in mind and body, heart and soul.**

One: O Christ, your earthly ministry touched the lives of people in their entirety. You healed the sick. You raised the dead. We give thanks for all agencies that provide health care. We pray for social ministry organizations that carry on your healing ministry in our day.

Many: **Raise us, Living Christ, we pray, to life and health, for work and play.**

One: Spirit of life, you give us faith and wisdom to trust you, and love others. Help us to care for our bodies and minds. We give thanks for people whose calling in life is to assist those in need of

healing or health care. Strengthen for service all those who are in the healing arts and sciences.

Many: Encourage those who bring healing. Renew their hearts and hands when they weary.

One: God of all creation, you suffer with all who long for health and wholeness but cannot afford care. Grant that our society may create a just system of health care so that all your children may rejoice in your healing.

Many: We wait your liberating deed, to signal hope and set us free.

One: Eternal God, you are the Sun of Righteousness who rises with healing in your wings to put to flight all enemies that assault us. We thank you for oil, used by prophets and apostles as a sign of your grace and favor. Send your Holy Spirit upon us, and on this medicine of mercy that through this anointing your servants may again know the health that comes from you; through Jesus Christ our Savior.

All: Amen.

Words of Institution

Barbara Thomas

Many: Pour out your Spirit, Holy God, upon these gifts, and bless them. Make them for us the oil of healing and wholeness, the Bread of Life, the Cup of our Salvation!

One: The gifts of God for the people of God. Come, for all things are ready.

(Communion is received by intinction. Take a wafer or bread and dip it into the cup to receive both elements. Gluten free wafers are available. Those who desire an anointing with water and prayer are invited to move to the baptismal font following the receiving of communion. Those who wish to receive communion only may return to their seats.)

Anointing & Sharing the Bread and Wine

I was there to hear your borning cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized,
to see your life unfold.
I was there when you were but a child,
with a faith to suit you well;
In a blaze of light you wandered off
to find where demons dwell."

When you heard the wonder of the Word
I was there to cheer you on;
You were raised to praise the living Lord,
to whom you now belong.
If you find someone to share your time
and you join your hearts as one,
I'll be there to make your verses rhyme
from dusk 'till rising sun.

In the middle ages of your life,
not too old, no longer young,
I'll be there to guide you through the night,
complete what I've begun.
When the evening gently closes in,
and you shut your weary eyes,
I'll be there as I have always been
with just one more surprise.

I was there to hear your borning cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized,
to see your life unfold.

Prayer after Anointing

Cheri Dennis

One: Living God, through this anointing, grant comfort in suffering to all who are in need of healing. When they are afraid, give them courage; when afflicted, give them patience; when dejected, give them hope; and when alone, assure them of the support of your holy people. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

All: Amen.

Prayer after Communion

Barbara Thomas

One: Loving God, you have given us a share in the baptism of your spirit and of the one bread and one cup. You have made us one with You.

All: Help us to bring your salvation and joy to the world. Amen.

Hymn

“Baptized in Water”

BUNESSAN

**Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit,
Cleansed by the grace of Christ who saves;
Heirs of salvation, trusting the promise
Faithfully now God’s glory we praise.**

**Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit,
Freed from the tomb by Christ who saves;
One with his rising, healed and forgiven
Thankfully now God’s glory we praise.**

**Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit,
Marked with the sign of Christ who saves;
Named God’s beloved, we are true children
Joyfully now God’s glory we praise.**

* Benediction

Cheri Dennis

Postlude

Jared Fischer

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT HOLY COVENANT

WELCOME TO HOLY COVENANT

We welcome all who worship with us at Holy Covenant. Guests and members, we invite you to sign our friendship pads so that we may have a record of your worshipping with us and be in touch with you during the week. Members, please indicate any changes in your contact information. We invite our visitors and members to linger following worship and join us in light refreshments and conversation.

ALL ARE WELCOME TO CHRIST'S TABLE

Jesus made it a practice to eat with those identified as both saints and sinners. Because each of us carries that dual identity: saint and sinner, we welcome all to Christ's table of celebration. Communion is received by intinction; we invite you to take a piece of bread or a gluten free wafer and dip it into the communion cup (containing juice) to receive both elements.

ANNUAL GIVING STATEMENTS have been mailed through the US Postal Service for your use in 2017 taxes preparation. If you have any questions regarding your statement, please contact Dawn in our church office. Your generosity in sharing your gifts in support of our ministries are helping to transform our community and beyond. Thank you!

ROOM IN THE INN, JANUARY 14

Thanks to all who have signed up! The first RITI of the season was a big success! **To complete our needs for the second neighbor hosting, we're in need of drivers to return neighbors to UMC Monday morning and cleanup crew for Monday, to be complete by 9am.** Contact Suzanne Lamorey TODAY, suzlam@yahoo.com if you are able to assist.

CAMPING GEAR COLLECTION FOR URBAN MINISTRY CENTER

UMC is seeking donations for clients who are unsheltered, whether they are camping somewhere or sleeping in Uptown. Any item that would be useful for campers is helpful- sleeping bags, sleeping pads, tents, tarps, backpacks, etc. Also, warm coats and socks! Look for the collection area in the gathering room. Questions? Contact Suzanne Lamorey, suzlam@yahoo.com or 704-654-7267.

CELEBRATE FOUNDER'S SUNDAY, JANUARY 21

The First Reformed Church of Charlotte met for its first Sunday of worship on January 16, 1916. We celebrate this anniversary with a special guest preacher, Rev. Julie Peebles, Pastor of Congregational UCC in Greensboro.

JOIN OUR NEW MEMBER - INQUIRER'S CLASSES THIS JANUARY

If you would like to learn more about our congregation and the United Church of Christ, we would encourage you to attend our Inquirer's Classes Sundays at 9:30AM. **January 21: Who We Are & What We Believe, January 28, History of UCC & Holy Covenant, February 4: Organization & Opportunities for Involvement.** We will welcome new members on February 11. Please contact Debbie Davis, debbiekdavisnc@gmail.com, if you are interested in joining the church and/or attending these classes.

CONSISTORY RETREAT, JANUARY 26 & 27

Our Consistory will gather the weekend of January 26 & 27 to begin discussing ways to best serve Holy Covenant. If you have any concerns you would like to share with the leadership team, please feel free to contact one of them. Consistory members include: Jeff Edwards Knight, Cheryl Milam, Michael Baldonado, Faye Humphrey, Debbie Davis (Lynn Chavarria's term), Joe Behr-Stenzel, Sally Duffy, Kathleen Smith, Martha Bomely, and James Hong, Robert Shepherd, Suzanne Lamorey, Diane Rogers & Gregg Walker.

CONSISTORY ORDINATION AND INSTALLATION, JANUARY 28

We will ordain our new elders and deacons of the Class of 2020 and install our officers during worship on January 28, 2018.

5 WEEKS TO A BETTER RELATIONSHIP

Sundays 9:45 - 10:45, **Jan. 14 to Feb. 11.** For couples and singles that want to improve their relationship. Prepare yourself for Valentine's Day in 2018! For more information, contact Kevin Decker, Certified Relationship Coach, Marriage Educator and Speaker. 704-579-1693 or kevin@kevindecker.com

CHRISTIAN-MUSLIM WOMENS GROUP

HCUCC women are invited to join a group of Christian and Muslim women meeting to share the joys and hardships of our daily lives and how our faith guides each of us. Our next meeting is Thursday, **Jan. 11, 7pm** at Wedgewood Church, 4800 Wedgewood Dr, Charlotte, NC. For more information, contact Cheri Dennis, 704-519-6016, cdennis2@carolina.rr.com.

WE COULDN'T PROVIDE OUR WARM WELCOME WITHOUT THE HELP OF:

Elder for January:

Michael Baldonado, michaelbaldonado@hotmail.com or 502-541-5957

Deacons for January: Debbie Davis, Joe Behr-Stenzel

Greeters: Sue Pascucci

Ushers: Kelly Gimlin, Jill Gregg, JP Griffin, Barb Schneller,

Media: Brian Hankins, Debbie Davis, Olivia Carney

Tabulators: Terry Raley-Dennis, Kelly Gimlin

Refreshments: Debbie Davis

Recyclers: Kristin Andes, Tom Magraw

PLEASE REMEMBER IN PRAYER

Members

Susan Bennett Stiles, Gail Bushman, Frank & Charlotte Carbone, Donna Collins, Linn Finger, Eileen Howe, Carl & Phyllis Johnson, Helen Lambert, Irene Mikkelson, Isabelle Reedy Powell, Yami Senturias, Ed Sharp, Caroline Utz, Kathleen Wagner

Friends & Family Members

Ray Adams (Linda Burby), Marj Carmine (Donna Collins), Bill Funderburk, Chuck McAllister (Donna Collins), Beth Poyer Meyer, Aldo Sanchez (Alice Phelan), Jessie Sharp (Terry Raley-Dennis), Cynthia & Tommy Simpson, Becky Neese Smith (Diane Neese), Luz Soto (Aida Marcial), Doris Storie (Garrett Barlow), Gary & Wanda Gilbert West (John Rapp), Elizabeth Wilson (Donna Collins), Larry & LuAnn Weidner and their granddaughter Anna (Dawn Simmons)

Holy Covenant United Church of Christ

Rev. Nancy Ellett Allison, Ph.D., Pastor

Rev. Barbara Thomas, Interim Minister for Church & Family Life

Mrs. Cheri Dennis, Ministry Intern

Mr. Jared Fischer, Director of Music

Mrs. Dawn Simmons, Executive Assistant

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