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**The Baptism of Our Lord**

“Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on Him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, ‘You are My beloved Son; with You I am well pleased.’” *Luke 3:21-22*

**AS WE GATHER**

The “epiphany,” the showing forth or manifestation of Jesus as the Messiah, the Savior of the world, began with the coming of the Magi from the East. This “epiphany” now continues as our Lord’s active earthly ministry begins at the hands of His predecessor John the Baptist and His Baptism in the Jordan River. As the Holy Spirit comes upon His human flesh and the voice from heaven declares Him to be the Son of God, so our Baptism gives us “the right to become children of God, who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God” (John 1:12–13). To be thus “born again” is nothing less than to have heaven opened to us with the power of God’s gifts of faith, hope, love, and the perseverance to live as God’s children now albeit as “strangers and exiles on the earth” (Hebrews 11:13), yet as “fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God” (Ephesians 2:19). “I’m but a stranger here,” says the hymn, “Heav’n is my home” (*LSB* 748:1).

**Psalm** 29

**+ PREPARATION +**

**INVOCATION and OPENING SENTENCE**

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit.

**People: Amen.**

Pastor: With these words you are baptized into Christ and given the new birth of water and the Spirit.

**People: So shall we stand in faith without fear now and forever.**

**CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

Pastor: Yet even as God’s people in this world, when we examine our hearts and consciences, we find that we daily struggle against our weakness and sin that so easily besets us. Therefore, let us confess our sin to God, our merciful Father.

**People: God our Father, though You have made us Your own possession by our Baptism into Christ, still we struggle to live as Your redeemed children in this fallen world. Therefore, we confess our sin and weakness to You and in repentance pray You of Your mercy to forgive our sins and grant us Your grace and strength.**

Pastor: Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins. As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the +Son and of the Holy Spirit.

The almighty God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given you the new birth of water and the Spirit and has forgiven you all your sins, strengthen you with His grace to life everlasting.

**People: Amen.**

**+ SERVICE OF THE WORD +**

**HYMN** *“Beautiful Savior”* (*LSB* 537)

**COLLECT OF THE DAY** *(bulletin insert)*

**OLD TESTAMENT** Isaiah 43:1-7

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**GRADUAL** *(bulletin insert, below Collect of the Day)*

**EPISTLE** Romans 6:1-11

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**HOLY GOSPEL** Luke 3:15-22

Pastor: This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**People: Praise to You, O Christ.**

**HYMN** *“Father Welcomes”* (*LSB* 605)

**SERMON *“What Baptism Is”***

# THE NICENE CREED *(LSB*,back inside cover)

**OFFERING**

# PRAYER OF THE CHURCH

*(after each petition):* Pastor: Lord, in Your mercy,

 **People: hear our prayer.**

**LORD’S PRAYER, SUNG** (*LSB*,front inside cover)

**+ SERVICE OF THE SACRAMENT +**

**Divine Service and the Close Fellowship of Holy Communion**

*Our Lord speaks and we listen. His Word bestows what it says. Faith that is born from what is heard acknowledges the gifts received with eager thankfulness and praise. The gifts include the Holy Supper in which we receive His true body and blood to eat and drink. Those welcome to the table acknowledge the real presence of the body and blood of Christ, confess their own sinfulness, and in true faith wish to receive the forgiveness and strength promised through this Holy Sacrament, as* ***instructed*** *… and* ***in unity of faith*** *… with God’s people here in this congregation. It is our sincerest desire that you join in the intimacy of this fellowship. However,* ***if you are not, yet, an instructed and confirmed member-in-good-standing of a congregation of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, please visit with the pastor about such a fellowship before communing****. If you wish to come forward for a blessing, you are welcome to join us at the rail to receive such. Please cross your arms in front of you to indicate that desire.*

**DISTRIBUTION**

*“O Blessed Spring”* (*LSB* 595)

**POST-COMMUNION THANKSGIVING**

Pastor: Let us pray. Gracious God, our heavenly Father, You have given us a foretaste of the feast to come in the Holy Supper of Your Son’s body and blood. Keep us firm in the true faith throughout our days of pilgrimage that, on the day of His coming, we may, together with all Your saints, celebrate the marriage feast of the Lamb in His kingdom which has no end; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**People: Amen.**

### BENEDICTION

**HYMN** *“We Know That Christ Is Raised”* (*LSB* 603)

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 **All are welcome …**

 **… Christ is honored.**