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Mary of Magdala, ECC - January 12, 2025

Celebrating the Baptism of Our Brother Jesus

“Together Wherever We Are”

Mother Rosean Amaral Presiding

**Welcome and Announcements**

*Lynne Barnes, lector*

**Social Justice Reflection** *Tom Moos*

**Opening Song:** *Overflow (V1; V2; R; V3; R)*

*Mother Rosean Welcomes... from the Baptismal Font.*

Let us continue as one expression of God’s people in the name of our Creator God, the Eternal Son, and the Holy Spirit.

**All: Amen**

May the Love of God, the care and compassion of the Incarnation, and the Breath of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**All: And also with you.**

Welcome, and thanks for coming out to worship with us this afternoon. We are blessed by your presence among us.

My siblings in Christ, on this day when we remember the baptism of Jesus, it is fitting that we also remember our own baptism. The baptismal promise that we made on that day—or that was made for us by those who loved us—is to follow Jesus wherever Jesus leads us. We don’t know the road, but we know the guide. As we join together to renew our baptismal promises, let us pray that we, too, will hear the voice of God proclaim about us, “You are mine, whom I love. In you I delight.”

**Blessing of the water and renewal of baptismal vows.**

*Vows are renewed and then water is sprinkled.*

*Bill plays Gloria while sprinkling is happening. Need blue and green bowl with water in it: a second bowl; 3 sprigs of spruce branch; 2 assistants to sprinkle the congregation; Mother Rosean will sprinkle front row and musicians.*

Dear friends in Christ, let us renew the promises we made in baptism when we promised to serve God faithfully.



Do you embrace the God of unconditional love who created life to be enjoyed and celebrated as a gift and blessing, and do you promise to be Co- creators of God's dominion of love?

**All: I DO**

Do you renounce everything in the world that opposes the ethics of compassion, justice, and love as taught by Jesus of Nazareth, the Christ?

**All: I DO**

Do you accept the responsibility to proclaim by word and example love, justice, and compassion for all peoples of the world and God's creation?

**ALL: I DO**

This is the faith we celebrate, our faith in Christ Jesus!

**All: Amen.**

### **Blessing of the water:**

Loving God, in the waters of baptism you name us and claim us and make us your own. Thank you for the gift of new life and for the invitation to experience that life in the community of your church.

*(Invite all to raise their hands in blessing)*

We ask You, loving and compassionate God, to bless + this sacred gift of water. May water's life-nurturing gifts connect us with Your creation, Your loving grace, and Your reign of peace.     **All: Amen**

*(Mother Rosean Sprinkles Choir first.)*

**Glory to God**   *Mass of the Desert (sung while sprinkling community)*

*(Mother Rosean walks up to altar while sprinkling is happening. Bowls and branches can be taken out to the table in the narthex after sprinkling.)*

**Opening Prayer**   Let us pray...



Gracious God, As we celebrate today the mystery of Jesus' baptism in the river Jordan, renew in us in baptism:

Pattern our lives on Christ,  
the One You have specially chosen,  
the Chosen One on Whom Your favor rests,  
the beloved with whom you are well pleased.  
We ask this through Jesus, the Christ,  
Who lives and reigns with You in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
God, for ever and ever. **All: Amen**

## **LITURGY OF THE WORD**

Let us joyfully listen to the Word of God, the Good News in our midst.

**First Reading - Judith 8. 2-5; 7-17** *Lynne Barnes, Lector*

A reading from the book of Judith.

Judith's husband, Manasseh, came from her own tribe and family. Manasseh died during the barley harvest while supervising workers who were binding sheaves in the field. Judith remained in bereavement for three years and four months. She built a small tent on the roof of her house and lived there. She wore sackcloth. Judith was very beautiful. Manasseh left her an estate of silver and gold, attendants, livestock, and fields. She ran the entire estate. No one ever spoke a harsh word about her because she was very devout.

Judith heard the harsh words that the people, out of their weakness for lack of water, were speaking against their leaders. And she heard all that Uzziah, one of the leaders, said to the people; how he promised them under oath to surrender their town to the Assyrians after five days if God did not save them by then. Judith sent her attendant, who managed affairs of her estate, to invite the village elders to her home. Their names were Uzziah, Chabris, and Charmis.

When they arrived, she said to them, "Listen. You are supposed to be the leaders of the people here in Bethulia. But what you said to the people today was wrong. You



should never have sworn before God that you would surrender the village to our enemies if God did not come to our aid in five days.

“What gives you the right to put God to the test as you have done today? Who do you think you are to put yourself in God’s place in dealing with human affairs? It is the all-powerful God of the powerless that you are putting to the test! Will you never learn? No one can ever fathom the depths of the human heart or know what anyone is thinking. Yet you dare to read God’s mind and interpret divine matters? “No, my friends, you must not goad the anger of God. Even if we are not rescued in five days, God still has power to protect us at will, or even to destroy us in the presence of our enemies.\*

Do not try to force God’s hand or demand guarantees in this matter! God cannot be threatened like humans can be. God cannot be won over by pleading as humans can be.

So, while we wait for deliverance, we must continue to call upon God to help us. May our voices be heard.”

The Word of a Hellenistic Jewish writer.           **All: Thanks be to God.**

*\* This is a concept of God prevalent throughout biblical times. It is challenged by the Book of Job written centuries before Judith and is incompatible with the modern experience of life and God for many people.*

**Community Response**     *Rain Down (R; V1; R; V2; R; V3; R)*

**Second Reading**           **Acts 2: 1-14, 17, 27, 28, 41** Ralph Dorland, Lector  
A reading from the book of Acts.

On the day of Pentecost, Peter stood up to speak to all who had gathered in Jerusalem. He repeated the words of the prophet Joel: “In the last days, God says, I will pour out my spirit on all flesh...” Peter spoke of Jesus’ many wonders and signs performed during his life, and of his unjust death. Of Jesus’ resurrection, Peter quoted the Psalms:



“You, O God, do not abandon my soul to the netherworld. You have made known to me the paths of life; You fill me with joy in Your presence.”

Upon hearing this word, many believed Jesus was the Anointed of God, the Christ, the Messiah, and they were baptized. About three thousand people were added to their number that day.

Listen to the Spirit speaking to God’s people. **All: Thanks be to God.**

**Gospel Acclamation** *Alleluia (MOD, including verse)*

**Gospel** Luke 3:15-23

May the Love of God be with you. **All: And also with you.**

A Proclamation of the Good News attributed to Luke 3:15-23

*(with abbreviated mention of Lukan genealogy)*

**All: Glory to you, O God.**

All the people were filled with expectation. All were wondering in their hearts if John might be the Messiah. John answered them, “I baptize you with water. One who is more powerful than I is coming. I am not worthy to untie the thong of his sandals. That one will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire, with winnowing-fork in hand. The threshing floor will be cleared. The wheat will be gathered into the barn; but the chaff will be burned in unquenchable fire.”

John proclaimed the good news to the people with other exhortations too. John had rebuked Herod, the ruler. John had spoken out against Herod because of his marriage to his brother’s wife, Herodias. John also called out other evil things Herod had done. Herod added a further crime to them all: he threw John in prison. Before all this, when all the people were being baptized by John, Jesus was baptized too.

As Jesus was praying, the skies opened, and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. A voice came from the heavens. “You are Mine, whom I love. In you I delight.”



When Jesus began his work, he was about thirty years old. He was the child, as was thought, of Joseph. Joseph was of the lineage of David and Bathsheba, of Ruth and Boaz, of Seth, and of Adam and Eve.

The Good News of Jesus our Christ. **Praise to You, Jesus our Christ.**

**Homily** *Mother Rosean*

### **Prayers of the People**

Dear friends: Through Jesus, God has sent the Holy Spirit to remain with us, healing and reconciling. May the same Spirit breathe through us now, as we offer our prayers for all of Creation...

*Ralph Dorland, Lector*

Our response to the prayers will be: Loving God, receive our prayers.

**All: Loving God, receive our prayers.**

For all Christians who renew their Baptismal promises today, that we might reach out in generosity of service to all of God's people, we pray...

**All: Loving God, receive our prayers.**

As our faith was strengthened during our observance of Advent, in the New Year, may we be strong as we witness Christ's presence in our world, we pray... **All: Loving God, receive our prayers.**

May we continue to be inspired by the dedicated service of former President Jimmy Carter, as we honored him in his death and his being laid to rest this week, we pray... **All: Loving God, receive our prayers.**

For the prayers offered by those in the sanctuary... **All: Loving God, receive our prayers.**

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For the prayers of those attending on Zoom... **All: Loving God, receive our prayers.**

For all of those on our prayer list and all those prayers we hold in our hearts, we pray... **All: Loving God, receive our prayers.**

*Mother Rosean:*

God of all, You call us to share in Jesus' mission. May our prayers be in harmony with Your will and may our service to others be generous. In Jesus' name we pray.  
**All: Amen**

### **The Peace**

Celebrating God's endless faithfulness, may the peace of Christ be with you always. **All: And also with you.**

Let us turn to the camera and share with our siblings at home, and here in the sanctuary, a sign of Christ's peace.

## **LITURGY OF THE EUCHARIST**

As we prepare our tables, offering food and drink here and in our homes, we are reminded that our offerings of time, talent, and treasure, sustain the mission of God's church. Please continue to give as you are able.

Let us sing together. . .

**Offertory Song**    *Come To the River (R; V1; R; V2; R; V3)*

### **Preparation of the Gifts** *(during Offertory Song)*

Blessed are you, Loving God of all Creation, through your goodness we have this bread to place on your table. Work of earth and human hands. May it become our spiritual food.    *All: Blessed be God forever.*



Blessed are you, Loving God of all Creation, through your goodness we have this wine to place on your table. Work of earth and human hands. May it become our spiritual drink. *All: Blessed be God forever.*

By the Mystery of this water and wine may we come to share in the Divinity of Christ as he humbled himself to share in our humanity. +Wash away my iniquity, cleanse me.}

Pray my siblings in Christ, that our sacrifice may be acceptable to God, our Almighty Mother and Father.

**All: May God accept the sacrifice at our hands, for the praise and glory of God's name, for our good and the good of all God's creation.**

**Eucharistic Prayer** (please stand, if you are able)

The Love of God is with you.

**All: And also with you.**

Let us open up our hearts.

**All: We open them up to God.**

Let us give thanks to our Loving God.

**All: It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Loving God, in this blessed Christmas season, we give you thanks and praise.

At the very beginning of time, you spoke the word that replaced the darkness of chaos with life-giving light, a light which has nurtured generations of people, plants and creatures, great and small.

A light which also revealed the fear of powerlessness caused by corrupt and evil actions. And so You created the Word which would once and for all dispel the darkness of chaotic and clouded lives.

Through Your love for the world the Word became flesh and lived among us. As the angels caroled glory to You in the highest heavens and peace to all the earth, so we join with them and with all people to praise your name, as we sing:



**Holy, Holy, Holy** (MOD)

As you, O God, Shared Your love and Yourself with us, in the person of Jesus, so He shared Himself with us in loving us and giving Himself for us.

Send the power of your Holy Spirit upon us and these gifts, that we may experience + the presence of the Word-made-flesh, + Jesus, the Christ.

Breathe Your Spirit in us that we may be one body with Christ, faithfully following and serving Christ, and awaiting with expectation the coming kin-dom.

On that never-to-be-forgotten night, as He sat at the table, Jesus took the bread, broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying:

**All: Take this all of you, and eat it. This is My Body, which will be given up for you.**

Taking the cup, Jesus praised You Creator of the fruit of the vine, and gave it to his disciples saying:

**All: Take this, all of you, and drink from it. This is the cup of My Blood, the Blood of the new and everlasting covenant. It will be shed for you and for all so that sins may be forgiven. Do this in memory of Me.**

Let us proclaim the Mystery of our faith.

**Acclamation - MOD**

May Jesus' coming in glory find us ever-watchful in prayer, strong in love, and faithful in the breaking of the bread.

Rejoicing in the Holy Spirit, Your whole church offers thanks and praise with all who bring hope to the world. We pray for our presiding Bishop, Pablo, our Regional Bishop Kae, and for all who shepherd Your holy people.

God of the living and the dead, awaken to the undying light of pardon and peace those fallen asleep in faith. (pause)



Gather them all into communion with Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and all Your saints. Then at last will all creation be one and all divisions healed, and we shall join in singing Your praise through your Son, Jesus, the Christ.

Together now we say...)

**All: Through Christ, with Christ, in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, for all glory and honor is yours self-emptying/life-giving God, forever and ever.**

**Great Amen** *MOD*

### **The Prayer of Jesus**

Please turn to the camera as we pray together with our siblings. Let us join our hearts together and pray in the words that Jesus taught us.

**All: Abba/Amma, God in heaven, Holy is your name. Your kin-dom come Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kin-dom, the power, and the glory are Yours, now and forever. Amen**

### **The Shared Table**

**Lamb of God** *MOD*

Behold the true Light of the world, the Beloved of God, anointed by the Spirit. This is the Body and Blood of Christ. This is the One who transforms the world. Blessed are we who are called to this meal.

**All: Jesus, I am ready to receive you and by your invitation, I am here.**

### **Invitation to Communion**

As we partake of the sustenance laid before us, let us affirm together:



**All: In this we are a Eucharistic people, the Body of Christ incarnate, the Blood of Christ poured out for the life of the world.**

May the mystery of our participation in the sacred mystery, enliven our faith, inspire our service, and incarnate God's compassionate love where-ever we may be.

Whether partaking here, or at our home tables, this food from God is offered to the people of God, without exception. You are each a precious child of God. All are welcome at this table where our brother Jesus is the Host.

*(Gluten-free wafers are in front of altar in the center.  
And there is wine and grape juice in the metal cups)*

**Communion Song:** I Will Choose Christ (R; V1; R; V2; R)

### **Prayer after Communion**

Let us pray... Steadfast God,  
You have enriched and enlightened us by the revelation of your eternal Christ. Through this sacred banquet, comfort us in our weakness and strengthen us to walk the paths of your desire, so that by word and deed we may manifest the gracious news of your faithfulness and love.

We ask this through Jesus, the Christ. **All: Amen**

### **Blessing of Dori**

**All: Heavenly Father, Master of the Universe, we ask your blessing upon Dorias she discerns her call to be ordained as Deacon. May her deep faith and servant heart be open to clarify her call to ministry. May this process deepen the harmony of her heart and soul into right action. Mary, Mother of God, continue to be a beacon of light and hope for Dori. We, members of Mary of Magdala, promise to hold Dori in prayer and in our hearts as she makes this journey—a journey ever ancient and ever new.**

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**Dori, be blessed with the flow of grace from our hands and hearts to you—knowing wisdom, wonder, and insight flow to strengthen you on your journey. May it be so.**

The love of God be with you. **All: And also with you.**

### **Concluding Rite and Dismissal**

Let us open our hearts as we ask for God's blessing...

May God be your protection and your strength; May Christ baptize you with his Holy Spirit. And may the Spirit be with you to empower you and give you peace. We ask for this blessing now in the name of Amma/Abba God, Jesus, our brother, and the Holy Spirit. **All: Amen**

### **Dismissal**

Enlightened by Christ and anointed by the Spirit, go in peace to love and serve God and God's people. **All: Thanks be to God.**

**Closing song** *Send Your Glory Down (V1, R; V2, R; V3, R)*