

The Kingdom of God

THROUGH THE GOSPEL OF
LUKE



Online Worship Resource (Sunday, January 9, 2022)

BOLD TYPE IS SPOKEN BY THE CONGREGATION

Prelude:

Ho, All Who Thirst

Alexander Peters

*Ho, all who thirst, come now to the water,
and all whose souls are parched and weary, come and drink!*

*Ho, all who thirst, come now to the water,
and from your heart will flow a never failing spring!*

Jane Kerr, Organist

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship

Gene Kendall Jr., Liturgist

Please stand as you are led and join me in our responsive Call to Worship:
The voice of God resounds upon the water.

The Spirit of the Lord hovers over the stream.

The Son of God is named, "Beloved."

And all who worship shout out, "Glory!"

Ascribe to the Lord majesty and honor and strength.

Let us worship God in holy splendor.

Opening Hymn:

"To God Be the Glory"

To God be the glory; great things He has done! So loved he the world that He gave us His son,

Who yielded his life an atonement for sin, and opened the life-gate that all may go in.

Refrain:

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord; let the earth hear his voice!

Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, let the people rejoice!

O come to the Father through Jesus the Son,

And give him the glory, great things he has done!

Great things he has taught us, great things he has done, And great our rejoicing through Jesus the Son;

But purer and higher and greater will be Our wonder, our transport, when Jesus we see. (REFRAIN)

Call to Confession

(Liturgist)

A prophet appeared in the wilderness, calling the people to repent, be baptized, and prepare the way of the Lord. We return to the water to confess our sins, giving thanks that we are eternally forgiven and infinitely loved. Let us pray. . .

Prayer of Confession

God of all glory, you look from heaven and see us as we are - not worthy to kneel at your feet, not ready to welcome your way. Forgetting our baptism vows, we believe and behave as if we belong to ourselves. We are sorry, Lord, and we want to change. In Christ, come to our aid to rescue us; loosen the ties that bind us to sin and set us free to love and serve you. In Jesus' name, we pray.

Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon

Hear the good news of the gospel: As a voice from heaven said to Jesus, so God says to each of us: You are my beloved child, and with you I am well pleased.

In Jesus Christ, I am forgiven! Thanks be to God. Amen.

Response: Baptized in Water

**Baptized in water, sealed by the Spirit, cleansed by the blood of Christ our King;
heirs of salvation, trusting the promise, faithfully now God's praises we sing.**

Passing of the Peace

May the Peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Children's Time

Prayer for Illumination

(Liturgist)

Let us prepare our hearts to hear God's Word by praying together the Prayer for Illumination:

Glorious God, when Jesus was baptized for your mission of healing and hope, 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.

Scripture Reading

Luke 3:1-22

¹ In the fifteenth year of the reign of Emperor Tiberius, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler^[a] of Galilee, and his brother Philip ruler of the region of Ituraea and Trachonitis, and Lysanias ruler of Abilene, ² during the high priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas, the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. ³ He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, ⁴ 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.

⁵ 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;

⁶ and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’”

⁷ 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?" ⁸ 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. ⁹ 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."

¹⁰ And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" ¹¹ In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." ¹² Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" ¹³ He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you." ¹⁴ 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."

¹⁵ As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, ¹⁶ 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 the Holy Spirit and fire. ¹⁷ 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."

¹⁸ So, with many other exhortations, he proclaimed the good news to the people. ¹⁹ 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, ²⁰ added to them all by shutting up John in prison.

²¹ Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, ²² 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 What Difference Does a little Water Make?

Middle Hymn: "Ho, All Who Thirst"

Refrain

Ho, all who thirst, come now to the water,

And all whose souls are parched and weary, come and drink!

Ho, all who thirst, come now to the water,

And from your heart will flow a never-failing spring!

Why forsake the Lord, the fount of living water,
Choosing broken cups that cannot be filled?
Refrain

All who come may take this gift of living water.
They will thirst no more, for they shall be filled.
Refrain

Call for offering (Liturgist)
As people who have passed through the cleansing, redeeming, renewing
waters of baptism, let us make our grateful offering to the God who loves us.
Please pray with me our prayer of dedication.

Prayer of Dedication

**O God, at his baptism, you acknowledged Jesus as your beloved Son, and
through him you opened to us a way to become your children by grace.
May these gifts we return to you be a sign of our dedication to live as your
faithful daughters and sons, born in the waters of baptism by the power of the
Holy Spirit. Through Christ, your Son, we pray. Amen.**

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.**

Closing Hymn: "They'll Know We Are Christians By Our Love"

We are one in the Spirit, we are one in the Lord (2x)
And we pray that all unity may one day be restored.

REFRAIN:

And they'll know we are Christians by our love, by our love;
Yes, they'll know we are Christians by our love.

We will work with each other, we will work side by side, (2x)
And we'll guard human dignity and save human pride. (Refrain)

All praise to the Father, from whom all things come, and all praise to Christ
Jesus, God's only Son;
And all praise to the Spirit who makes us one. (Refrain)

Benediction

Postlude: There's a Sweet, Sweet Spirit in this Place by Doris Akers

Today's Worship Participants:

Rev. Michelle Fincher, Jane Kerr, organist, David Maley, piano,
Gene Kendall, Jr., liturgist and technology team