

Baptism of the Lord - January 8, 2023

“In baptism, new Christians become part of a body of fellow believers who are called to spiritually encourage one another and hold one another responsible for consistent Christian living.” – *Tony Campolo*

“When Protestants speak of going to church... they are not thinking of a building but of a congregation. The congregation, not the building is holy... The church is holy because the congregation is the house of God.” - *Edmund Clowney*

PRELUDE

Mr. Cody Eckenrode

GREETING and ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Laura C. Baker

CALL TO WORSHIP¹

Pastor: In baptism, we are marked as God’s beloved ones.

Congregation: What have we done to deserve God’s amazing love?

Pastor: God’s love is God’s gift to us; it is free - always and forever.

Congregation: Even when we are difficult and turn away from God,

Pastor: God’s love never vanishes from us.

All: Thanks be to God, whose love endures forever.

Great is God’s faithfulness!

Thanks be to God. AMEN!

HYMN

Great is Thy Faithfulness²

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CALL & CONFESSION OF SIN³ (Based on Romans 5:5, 8; Hebrews 4:16 and Matthew 3)

Pastor: God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the gift of the Holy Spirit. The proof of God’s amazing love is this: while we were sinners Jesus died for us. Because we have faith in Christ, and are confident in God’s grace, we dare to approach God to confess our sins, praying:

All people: *Sky-shattering God, we confess that we have not always paid much attention to the baptism of Jesus but viewed it as a nice story, marking the start of Jesus' ministry. We don't always see ourselves as standing in that long line of those marked for service; and therefore, it is easy for us to dismiss this as a nice story and nothing more. Yet you have called us by name, knowing each of us, and loving us. We are humbled and astonished by this! We know that we have behaved in very unloving ways and our behaviors and choices have not always promoted your love and peace. Forgive us and turn us around. Help us to be people who not only recognize the light, but who are willing to live in that light, serving and loving others in your name. We pray this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.*

ASSURANCE OF PARDON (Based on Romans 8:34 and 2 Corinthians 5:17)

Pastor: Hear the good news! Christ died for us.

Christ rose for us.

Christ reigns in power for us.

Christ prays for us.

Anyone who is in Christ is a new creation.

The old life has gone; a new life has begun.

All: *We believe the good news of the gospel!*

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven.

Thanks be to God for the peace this affords.

¹ Townley, Nancy C. “(Adapted by Rev. Laura Baker) Call to Worship #2 – Worship Connection: January 9, 2022” *Ministry Matters website*. <https://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/3490/worship-connection-january-10-2016>.

² Public Domain. CCLI SONG #18723.

³ Townley, Nancy C. (Call to Confession written by Rev. Baker based on scripture) “Prayer of Confession – Worship Connection: January 9, 2022” *Ministry Matters website*. <https://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/3490/worship-connection-january-10-2016>.

HYMN OF PRAISE*Gloria Patri***Hymnal, #493**

*"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.*

PASSING THE PEACE

Pastor: An ancient gesture in worship is the Passing of the Peace. It is a tradition rooted in scripture that embodies our identity as peacemakers. It trains our hearts, hands, and tongues in the ways of peace. From the beginning, Christians have exercised this practice. For example, Jesus greeted his disciples by saying, "Peace be with you." and the Apostle Paul opened each of his letters with the words, "Grace and peace be with you." This morning, we continue this spiritual practice, turning to one another and speaking the words, "Peace be with you," and in turn, receive the words:

All people: "And also, with you!"

A SPECIAL TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN**HYMN***Breathe on me, Breath of God⁴***Bulletin, Page 8****OLD TESTAMENT READING - Isaiah 42:1-9****EPISTLE READING - Acts 10:34-43****GOSPEL READING - Matthew 3:13-17****SERMON & PASTORAL PRAYER***In Muddy Water***THE LORD'S PRAYER****SPECIAL MUSIC****OFFERING INVITATION**

Liturgist: The tithes and offerings you gave last week empowered ministry within our faith community, in response to some very specific needs in our local community. For example, some of your tithes and offerings were used to help pay the electric and gas bills. While at first glance, this may not seem much like ministry, it is because this building houses the primary food pantry for the entire Northeastern School District. It is also home to a Grief Share ministry, a ministry that supports people of various denominations and religious backgrounds. Both of these ministries provide hope and comfort to people who are in need of support and compassion – who need concrete expressions of God's love and presence with them. Thank you for giving of your financial resources, for understanding that you've been blessed to bless others, that through your sharing – you are really sharing God's life-changing love. Let us dedicate all we give this week with a song of praise and a prayer of dedication.

DOXOLOGY*Praise God from Whom All Blessings Flow***Hymnal, #551****PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

All: *Good and gracious God, we know that all that we can offer, stems from your generosity. May the gifts we return to you today, become a blessing for many. May these tithes and offerings strengthen bodies and nourish spirits. May they support ministries that glorify you. Amen.*

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Pastor: Members and friends in Christ, we gather now to celebrate the gift of grace in the Sacrament of Baptism.

Congregation: **There is one body and one Spirit. There is one hope in God's call to us.**

Pastor: Jesus said, "Unless we are born anew, we cannot see the reign of God; unless we are born of water and the Spirit, we cannot enter God's new order."

⁴ Public Domain. CCLI SONG #99481

The Apostle Paul said: All of us who are baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into Christ's death. We were buried therefore with Christ by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead, to the glory of God, we too might walk in newness of life."

Baptism is the sacrament through which we are united to Jesus Christ and given part in Christ's ministry of reconciliation. Baptism is the visible sign of an invisible event: the reconciliation of people to God. It shows the death of self and the rising to a life of obedience and praise. It shows also the pouring out of the Holy Spirit on those whom God has chosen. In baptism, God works in us the power of forgiveness, the renewal of the Spirit, and the knowledge of the call to be God's people always.

Congregation: **This is the water of baptism. Out of this water we rise with new life, forgiveness of sin and are made one in Christ, members of Christ's body.**

QUESTIONS OF THE CANDIDATES

Pastor: Eric Manuel Ortega, do you desire to be baptized into the faith and family of Jesus Christ?

Candidate: **I do.**

Pastor: Denise Hopstetter, are you ready with God's help to guide and encourage Eric, by counsel and example, in prayer and with love, to follow the way of Jesus Christ?

Sponsor: **I am.**

Pastor: Eric, do you renounce the powers of evil and desire the freedom of new life in Christ?

Candidate: **I do.**

Pastor: Do you profess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?

Candidate: **I do.**

Pastor: Do you promise by the grace of God, to be Christ's disciple, to follow in the way of our Savior, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ, as best you are able?

Candidate: **I promise, with the help of God.**

Pastor: Do you promise by the grace given you, to grow in the Christian faith and to be a faithful member of the church of Jesus Christ, celebrating God's presence and furthering Christ's mission in all the world?

Candidate: **I promise, with the help of God.**

CONGREGATIONAL ASSENT

Pastor: Jesus Christ calls us to make disciples of all nations and to offer them the gift of grace in baptism. Do you, who witness and celebrate this sacrament, promise your love, support, and care to Eric, the one about to be baptized, as he lives and grows in Christ?

Congregation **We promise you our love, support, and care.**

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Pastor: Let us unite with the church in all times and places in confessing our faith in the Triune God, using the United Church of Christ, 1981 Statement of Faith:

All: *We believe in you, O God, Eternal Spirit,
God of our Savior Jesus Christ and our God, and to your deeds we testify:*

*You call the worlds into being,
create persons in your own image,
and set before each one the ways of life and death.*

You seek in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

*You judge people and nations by your righteous will
declared through prophets and apostles.*

*In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Savior,
you have come to us
and shared our common lot,
conquering sin and death
and reconciling the world to yourself.*

*You bestow upon us your Holy Spirit,
creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ,
binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.*

*You call us into your church
to accept the cost and joy of discipleship,
to be your servants in the service of others,
to proclaim the gospel to all the world
and resist the powers of evil,
to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table,
to join him in his passion and victory.*

*You promise to all who trust you
forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace,
courage in the struggle for justice and peace,
your presence in trial and rejoicing,
and eternal life in your realm which has no end.*

Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto you. Amen.

PRAYER

Pastor: Bless by your Holy Spirit, gracious God, this water. By your Holy Spirit save those who confess the name of Jesus Christ that sin may have no power over them. Create new life in the one baptized this day that he may rise in Christ. Glory to you, eternal God, the one who was, and is, and shall always be, world without end. Amen.

ACT OF BAPTISM

Pastor: Eric Manuel Ortega, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

PRAYER FOR THE BAPTIZED

Pastor: Gracious God, you have filled the world with joy by giving us the gift of Jesus. Bless Eric. May Eric be filled with joy and may he never be ashamed to confess a personal faith in you.

All: Amen.

BAPTISMAL RENEWAL⁵

Pastor: All who are gathered for worship, whether in this place or across the miles and airwaves are invited to renew their baptismal vows and receive anew, the mark of baptism. Please have your individual vessels of water ready. Here now these words:

John the Baptist told his disciples that he baptized them with water but the One to come would baptize them with the Holy Spirit. As we receive the mark of our renewed baptismal vows, we recognize the movement of the Holy Spirit within us and among us. Let us pray.

⁵ Lindsay, Rev. Dr. Cheryl A. "Be Baptized: Service Prayers for the First Sunday after Epiphany." (Adapted by Rev. Laura Baker to suit our circumstances) [Epiphany 1A - January 8 \(Baptism Renewal\) - United Church of Christ \(ucc.org\)](#)

Pastor: Faithful God, we ask for your gracious blessing upon the waters that will be placed upon us as a memorial of our baptism. Graciously renew us too, that we may remain faithful to the Holy Spirit whom we have received.

All: *Amen.*

Pastor: To the remaining baptized members of the gathered faith community, I ask: Do you recommit yourself to the covenantal and baptized life and the cost and joy of discipleship, as a faithful member of the Body of Christ?

All: *I do, with the help of God.*

Pastor: Please dip your finger in the water or pour the water, from your vessel, into your hand and make the sign of the cross on your forehead repeating these words: I am God's beloved. I am baptized!

All: *I am God's beloved. I am baptized!*

Pastor: Let us pray. Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, we give thanks for the gathering of your people into a beloved faith community of belonging. By our baptism, we accept the invitation to public and faithful witness to the ministry of Jesus Christ in the world and to be instruments in God's kingdom work. May we live the baptized life in the Spirit as caring companions of one another, with accountability, support, and grace. Shelter us in your love, nourish us with truth, and sustain us in your Word.

All: *May it be so. Amen.*

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBER

Pastor: Eric, by your baptism you were made one with us in the body of Christ, the church. Today we rejoice in your pilgrimage of faith which has brought you to this time and place. We give thanks for every community of faith that has been your spiritual home, and we celebrate your presence in this household of faith, Starview United Church of Christ.

QUESTION ABOUT PARTICIPATION & WELCOME

Pastor: Do you promise to participate in the life and mission of this family of God's people, sharing regularly in the worship of God, and enlisting in the work this local church as it serves the community and the world?

Eric: **I promise, with the help of God.**

Pastor: Let us the members of Starview United Church of Christ, express our welcome and affirm our mutual ministry in Christ.

All: *We welcome you with joy in the common life of this church. We promise you our friendship and prayers as we share the hope and labors of the church of Jesus Christ. By the power of the Holy Spirit may we continue to grow together in God's knowledge and love and be witnesses of our risen Savior.*

GREETING OF CHRISTIAN LOVE

Representatives: **In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of Starview United Church of Christ, we extend to you the hand of Christian love, welcoming you into the company of this local church.**

PRAYER

Pastor: Almighty and everlasting God, may your and ever be over your servant, Eric, who made a commitment to membership here today. May your Holy Spirit always be with him. Lead him in the knowledge and obedience of your Holy Word that he may serve you in this life and dwell with you in the life to come, through Jesus Christ.

All: *Amen.*

BAPTISMAL BLESSING

Pastor: Eric Manuel Ortega, beloved child of God, go in the peace of Christ.

Eric: Thanks be to God.

Pastor: Beloved Body of Christ, may you too, go in peace to love and serve your Lord and Savior.

All: Thanks be to God.

HYMN

Here, I Am, Lord⁶

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BENEDICTION ⁷

Pastor: As you go from here, remember this:
You have nothing to fear.

For God has created and shaped you.
God has chosen you and named you as God's own.

When you face rising waters,
God will be there.
When it seems as though you're walking through fire,
God will be there.

So go with joy and confidence,
knowing that the loving presence of God goes with you.

POSTLUDE

- ***Please remember to collect your STAR WORD, as you exit, if you did not do so last Sunday. Please do NOT turn them over and choose a word. Allow the Holy Spirit to direct your hand and attention to a particular star and trust God's leading.***
- ***Please head downstairs immediately following this worship service for a meal of Pork and Sauerkraut, Roast Turkey and Mashed potatoes and a variety of side dishes and desserts. It will be a wonderful way to start the new year as this family of faith called Starview United Church of Christ.***

⁶ One License # 5514.

⁷ Townley, Nancy C. "Benediction – Worship Connection: January 9, 2022" *Ministry Matters website*.
<https://www.ministrymatters.com/all/entry/3490/worship-connection-january-10-2016>.

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

1 Great is thy faith - ful-ness, O God my Fa - ther, there is no
 2 Sum - mer and win - ter, and spring-time and har - vest, sun, moon and
 3 Par - don for sin and a peace that en - dur - eth, thy own dear

shad - ow of turn - ing with thee; thou chang - est not, thy com -
 stars in their cours - es a - bove join with all na - ture in
 pres - ence to cheer and to guide; strength for to - day and bright

pas - sions they fail not; as thou has been thou for - ev - er wilt be.
 man - i - fold wit - ness to thy great faith - ful - ness, mer - cy and love.
 hope for to - mor - row, bless - ings all mine, with ten thou - sand be - side!

Refrain

Great is thy faith - ful - ness! Great is thy faith - ful - ness!

Morn - ing by morn - ing new mer - cies I see; all I have need - ed thy

WORDS: Thomas O. Chisholm (1866-1960)

MUSIC: William M. Runyan (1870-1957)

Words and Music © 1923, Ren. 1951 Hope Publishing Company

FAITHFULNESS

11.10.11.10.Ref.

Breathe on Me, Breath of God 420

1. Breathe on me, Breath of God, fill me with life a - new,
 2. Breathe on me, Breath of God, un - til my heart is pure,
 3. Breathe on me, Breath of God, till I am whol - ly thine,
 4. Breathe on me, Breath of God, so shall I nev - er die,

that I may love what thou dost love, and do what thou wouldst do.
 un - til with thee I will one will, to do and to en - dure.
 till all this earth - ly part of me glows with thy fire di - vine.
 but live with thee the per - fect life of thine e - ter - ni - ty.

The musical score consists of two systems, each with a treble and bass staff. The key signature is one flat (B-flat) and the time signature is 3/4. The melody is primarily in the treble clef, with the bass clef providing harmonic support. The lyrics are printed below the treble staff of each system.

WORDS: Edwin Hatch, 1878 (Jn. 20:22)
 MUSIC: Robert Jackson, 1888

TRENTHAM
 SM

Here I am, Lord

Daniel Schutte

Daniel Schutte

VERSES



1...I, the Lord of sea and sky, I have heard my peo - ple cry.
 2...I, the Lord of snow and rain, I have borne my peo - ple's pain.
 3...I, the Lord of wind and flame, I will tend the poor and lame.



All who dwell in dark and sin my hand will save.
 I wept for love of them; they turned a - way.
 I will set a feast for them. My hand will save.



I who made the stars of night, I will make their dark-ness bright.
 I will break their hearts of stone, Give them hearts for love a - lone.
 Fin-est bread I will pro - vide till their hearts be sat - is - fied.



Who will bear my light to them? Whom shall I send? _____ Here I
 I will speak my word to them
 I will give my life to them.

REFRAIN



am, Lord. _____ Is it I, Lord? _____ I have heard you call-ing in the night.
 go, Lord, if you lead me, I will hold your



I will
 peo - ple in my heart.