

The Gathering

1 - Welcome - [OLIVER]

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

Today's Gospel recounts Jesus' baptism. At it, he receives an affirmation from God. This reminder came at just the right time: the start of Jesus' public ministry. Maybe we need to hear a similar pronouncement as we navigate the start of something new—a new year. Let us listen for the reminders woven into this liturgy that speak of God's presence with us now.

3 - Collect for Purity - [RUTH]

**Almighty God,
to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known,
and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

5 - Confession

[KELVIN] God is love and we are God's children.
There is no room for fear in love.
We love because God loved us first.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith.

[Silence]

God our Father, we confess to you and to our fellow members in the Body of Christ that we have sinned in thought, word and deed, and in what we have failed to do. We are truly sorry. Forgive us our sins, and deliver us from the power of evil, for the sake of your Son who died for us, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

[OLIVER] God, who is both power and love, forgive you and free you from your sins, heal and strengthen you by the Holy Spirit, and raise you to new life in Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

7 - Gloria - [MORVEN - Lincoln Setting]

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

8 - Collect - [OLIVER]

Open the heavens, Almighty Father,
and pour out your Spirit upon your people.

Renew the power of our Baptismal cleansing,
and fill us with zeal for good deeds.

Let us hear your voice once again,
that we may recognize in your beloved son
our hope in inheriting eternal life.

Grant this through Jesus Christ,
your Word made flesh,
who lives and reigns with you
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
in the splendour of eternal light,
God, forever and ever.

Amen.

The Ministry of the Word

11 - GOSPEL: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22 – [BOB]

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Luke
Glory to Christ our Saviour.

As the people were filled with expectation, and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, 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. 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.'

Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, 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.'

Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious gospel
Praise to Christ our Lord.

12 - Sermon [KELVIN]

The Baptism of Christ.

If you really want to get a bunch of theologians arguing, put them in a room with this week's gospel and tell them that they've not to come out until they can give a brief, concise and comprehensive answer to the question why was Jesus baptised.

After all, it feels as though that is the task that preachers have when this gospel comes up and when we celebrate this feast, remembering Jesus being baptised.

John came with a baptism of repentance.

Jesus came and asked to be baptised.

And people ever after have asked why.

If he was without sin then what did he have to repent of.

If he was already the Son of God then how was he turning away from sin and turning to new life.

And theologians have wrestled with this for centuries.

It is one of those theological questions that almost seems to exist in order to tease out what people think.

Though they don't all agree.

When I was a theological student in St Andrews I was a member of a college which sat in a very beautiful quadrangle. It was a lovely place to debate theological truths.

There was a big tree and a small flock of doves which the college janitor fed every day at lunchtime.

There was an oft repeated story that one of the lecturers had been in full flight in one of the classrooms one year. A lecture that not everyone was entirely able to understand. And there came a tapping on the window.

Now this was several floors up so tapping on the window there should not have been.

The lecturer carried on. And the students became more distracted by the tapping and soon every eye was facing the window where one of the college doves was determinedly tapping away trying to get in.

The lecturer paused for breath for a moment and the gap was filled by one of the students.

“Look. Look. It is the holy spirit trying to get in”.

When we read the story of Jesus being baptised there's things that are familiar. There's water, presumably the River Jordan in which he can be plunged. And there's a rather firey sermon from John the Baptist who sees Jesus coming to sweep up the rubbish and burn it with unquenchable fire

The other people are baptised and then Jesus and he prays.

And something happens.

Not the tap, tap, tapping on a window.

But the Holy Spirit shows up. And takes the form of a dove which we are told descended on him and a voice from heaven says, “You are my Son the beloved, with you I am well pleased.”

And to me that's the key to this encounter.

If you want other explanations of what it meant for Jesus to be baptised you can find plenty of them in theological writings and even by looking at the many different ways that artists have portrayed this event.

For me, the holy spirit showing up and the voice from heaven we are told about are key to what's going on.

We often think about baptism marking a change in someone's life. When someone is baptised here we mark them with the sign of the cross and speak of the being marked as Christ's own forever.

The idea is that baptism is some kind of indelible sign of God's love and of the person belonging utterly to God.

For me, the holy spirit showing up and the voice from heaven don't change Jesus. I think it is that baptism as people knew it then was changed.

Baptism was baptised.

Baptism remains but it isn't baptism as John the Baptist was practising it.

The dove from heaven cools the fiery message considerably.

No more the talk of who is worthy. No more the talk of winnowing forks or clearing the threshing floor. No more talking of people as though some were chaff to be burnt and cast away.

Baptism changes when Jesus is baptised and that change is sealed by the holy spirit.

Now it is more a blessing than anything else.

You are my son.

You are the beloved.

With you I am well pleased.

I wonder what John made of it.

There is nothing wrong with calling people to repentance. I find myself doing it quite a lot when I'm watching the television news.

But the way of the baptised Lord that we follow is a way that isn't just about shouting at people that they are wrong. That isn't just about proclaiming that we know better – even if we do. That isn't just about being right.

You are my beloved. With you I am well pleased.

For me, the faith that we proclaim here is proclaimed as we dare to hope that God looks on every soul as being beloved. And that we all have the potential to be seen as well pleasing in God's sight.

And when we repent and turn around it isn't so much about a list of things we shouldn't do or people we must not be but more that we are turning to face a God who loves us very much indeed.

It is into that love that those who are baptised are plunged.

The baptism of John has been baptised and changed.

And it isn't just Jesus who is beloved.

In the name of the father and of the son and of the holy Spirit.
Amen.

14 - Intercessions [ROBERT]

Let us pray for the life of the world; that God's peace may be known and may prevail:

for our City Council and Borough Councils, for community councils, elected members & staff; may they decide and work for the good, blessed in God

Lord, hear us. Lord, graciously hear us.

For all who suffer injury, death or loss: for Gill and her family; for those who struggle with the covid pandemic; for refugees driven from home by climate change; that we may know the hope to which God calls us.

Lord, hear us. Lord, graciously hear us.

For all who exercise rule and authority: for the leaders of the USA, Russia and Eastern European countries; for those with power in Myanmar; that they may act with wisdom, justice, compassion and integrity:

Lord, hear us. Lord, graciously hear us.

For the Church which is Christ's body; that it may live for the praise of God:

for the Iglesia Anglicana de Chile; for Bishop Kevin and the churches of St Ninian's, Castle Douglas, and Christ Church, Dalbeattie; within St Mary's for the finance group & the treasurer.

Lord, hear us. Lord, graciously hear us.

For those who have died, especially those whose lives have spoken to us of the will of the father; for those we name, for Dale.

May they rest in peace, And rise in glory.

Holy God , may we be servants of the Beloved one in prayer and in work, that we may be embraced as daughters and sons of yours. Amen

Communion

17 - Offertory - [OLIVER]

Baptism—like so many religious rites—is a sign. One of the things it signifies is dedication and commitment. It's a sign people make to show faithfulness.

Many people also signal their commitment with the money they donate to the things they support. If you'd like to learn more about sustaining this place through a demonstrative act of giving, visit www.thecathedral.org.uk and click DONATE TO ST MARY'S CATHEDRAL.

Let us present our offerings to the Lord.

**Yours, Lord, is the greatness, the power, the glory,
the splendour, and the majesty; for everything in
heaven and on earth is yours.**

All things come from you, and of your own we give you.

18 - Eucharistic Prayer

[OLIVER] The Lord be with you.

[KELVIN] **And also with you.**

[OLIVER] Lift up your hearts.

[KELVIN] **We lift them to the Lord.**

[OLIVER] Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

[KELVIN] **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

Worship and praise belong to you, Father,
in every place and at all times.

All power is yours.

You created the heavens and established the earth;
you sustain in being all that is.

In Christ your Son our life and yours
are brought together in a wonderful exchange.
He made his home among us
that we might for ever dwell in you.

Through your Holy Spirit
you call us to new birth
in a creation restored by love.

As children of your redeeming purpose
for whom Christ Jesus humbled himself
and became poor to make us rich,
we offer you our praise,
with angels and archangels
and the whole company of heaven,
singing the hymn of your unending glory:

SANCTUS & BENEDICTUS - [MORVEN - Lincoln Setting]

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord,
God of power and might.
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Glory and thanksgiving be to you,
most loving Father,
for the gift of your Son born in human flesh
He is the Word existing beyond time,
both source and final purpose,
bringing to wholeness all that is made.
Obedient to your will he died upon the Cross.
By your power you raised him from the dead.
He broke the bonds of evil
and set your people free
to be his Body in the world.

On the night when he was given up to death,
knowing that his hour had come,
having loved his own,
he loved them to the end.
At supper with his disciples
he took bread and offered you thanks.
He broke the bread,
and gave it to them, saying:
"Take, eat.
This is my Body: it is broken for you."
After supper, he took the cup,
he offered you thanks,
and gave it to them saying:
"Drink this, all of you.
This is my Blood of the new covenant;
it is poured out for you, and for all,
that sins may be forgiven.
Do this in remembrance of me."

**We now obey your Son's command.
We recall his blessed passion and death,
his glorious resurrection and ascension;
and we look for the coming of his Kingdom.**

**Made one with him, we offer you these gifts
and with them ourselves,
a single, holy, living sacrifice.**

Hear us, most merciful Father,
and send your Holy Spirit upon us
and upon this bread and this wine,
that, overshadowed by his life-giving power,
they may be the Body and Blood of your Son,
and we may be kindled with the fire of your love
and renewed for the service of your Kingdom.

**Help us, who are baptised into the fellowship of Christ's Body
to live and work to your praise and glory;
may we grow together in unity and love
until at last, in your new creation,
we enter into our heritage
in the company of the Virgin Mary,
the apostles, and prophets,
and of all God's children living and departed.**

Through Jesus Christ our Lord,
with whom, and in whom,
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
all honour and glory be to you,
Lord of all ages,
world without end.

Amen.

19 - Breaking of the Bread - [OLIVER]

The living bread is broken for the life of the world.
Lord, unite us in this sign.

20 - Lord's Prayer - [KELVIN]

As our Saviour has taught us,
so we pray:

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those
who sin against us.
Do not bring us
to the time of trial
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power
and the glory are yours,
now and for ever.
Amen.**

21 - Communion - [OLIVER]

God is with us wherever we are.

As we gaze in adoration we feed on God in our hearts and minds
that we may in turn feed the world.

O God, even as this broken bread was scattered over the hills, and
was gathered together and became one, so let Your Church be
gathered together from the ends of the earth into your kingdom; for
yours is the glory and the power through Jesus Christ for ever.
Amen.

24 - Post Communion Prayer - [JIM]

Light eternal, you have nourished us in the mystery of the body
and blood of your Son. By your grace keep us ever faithful to your
word, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

25 - Blessing - [OLIVER]

A voice from heaven told Jesus, 'With you I am well pleased.'
Encouragement like that is good to hear every now and then ...
so here it is: you are a beloved child of God, and like Jesus, God
has chosen and marked you with God's love. Take confidence in
this new year to begin with hope.

Christ the Son of God gladden your hearts with the good news
of his kingdom; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the
Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you
always.

Voluntary - [STEVEN]

Wie schon leuchtet der Morgenstern - Pachelbel