

Trinity United Church

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Minister: The Rev. Diane Knowles
Director of Music: Kyung-A Lee
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Trinity United Church

~ The Heart in the Heart of Huntsville ~

January 15th, 2023 – 10 am

The Baptism of our Lord Sunday

*“Loving Hearts. Open Minds. Helping Hands.”
Come in and grow your souls with us!*

... **Bold** is read by everyone ...

We Gather as God’s Baptized People

Musical Prelude: Kyung-A Lee

Greeting: Jesus said: *“I have come that you may have life and have it abundantly.”*

All: **In our lives, may this be so.**

Welcome in Friendship! Welcome in Faith!

Welcome in God’s overflowing and inclusive Love!

We gather every week as followers of Jesus to grow our hearts and to aspire to be better humans in order to build a better world for ALL God’s people. If you’re visiting or shopping around for a new spiritual home, we are glad you’re here with us. May this service be a blessing to you and may you be a blessing to others this coming week.

Introit: “Find a Home Here” (just the refrain)

**Find a home here, live out faith here,
gather strength here, find family here.
Be yourself here, feel secure here,
celebrate here, be at home here.** (repeat)

This Week's Announcements

Joys and Concerns

Lighting of the Christ Candle

As we light the Christ candle today, we remember his baptism. We are also reminded that through our Baptism we are called to follow Jesus and his Way.

Moment of Meditation

Let's take a quiet moment now and prepare our hearts to celebrate God's presence together.

Call to Worship and Prayer of Approach

One: Beloved, come into this sacred space; come and bring your joys and your concerns.

All: We come from our busyness and we come seeking all that is good and true. We come to listen to John, the fearless Prophet.

One: Today we are taking a trip to the River Jordan, the place where Jesus was baptized by his cousin John.

All: We too come here today to be filled by the Spirit and to be refreshed by the life-giving water of Christ.

One: Let us open our hearts as we celebrate God's story of love.

Opening Hymn: "One Body in Christ"

**One Body in Christ,
called to share the Good News with the world.
Each of us gifted, made in God's image,
we have a story to tell, a story of love.**

**We have been baptized in Christ,
the love of our God poured into our hearts.
Called to share the mission of Christ,
the Spirit of God alive in our hearts.
To be a light of welcome in the darkness of exclusion,
an outstretched hand of love to everyone.**

**One Body in Christ,
called to share the Good News with the world.
Each of us gifted, made in God's image,
we have a story to tell, a story of love.**

Opening Prayer

God of new beginnings, by our baptism we are all spiritually united as one in the body of Christ. You have adopted us as your people in your unfolding story of love. In the waters of baptism, we make clear our commitment to follow in the path of our spiritual mentor Jesus. We come now with hearts ready to be filled with a sense of your presence. Be with us. We come seeking your healing and forgiving love. Fill us up to overflowing, with the life-giving power of your baptismal love.

In Jesus name we pray.

Amen.

Time with our Light Bearers

Our young people are taught the values and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth, his love and his compassion for all God's people. In turn, they learn to share this love with others at home, at school and in their communities.

Congregational Blessing

“May the peace of Christ be with you”.

All: **And also with you.**

Anthem

We Listen for God’s Life-Giving Word

Our Scripture reader today is Sally McClelland

Prayer of Illumination

Reader: Let us pray: God of new beginnings, may these words of ancient scripture show us how-to walk-in faith and how to act with kindness in our every day lives.

Old Testament Reading: Isaiah 43: 1-7

(When you pass through the waters, I will be with you. Do not fear in times of trouble, God is with us.)

Reader: God’s Word is a lamp to our feet.

All: **And a light to our path.**

New Testament Reading Matthew 3: 13-17

(Jesus, showing his humble heart, asks his cousin John to baptize him in the Jordan River.)

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to our hearts.

All: **Amen**

Minister’s Message: “*Baptism - What difference does it make?*”

We Respond to God’s Life-Giving Word

Offering Invitation

The season of gift giving may be over but as God’s people the season of giving never ends.

As a token of appreciation for our abundant blessings and for all that is, our morning tithes and offerings will now be received.

Offering Hymn (tune of Edelweiss)

**God of love, hear our prayer,
bless this offering we bring you.
May our lives do your will,
guide and guard us forever.
Give us the courage to stand for truth,
help us care for others.
God of love, hear our prayer,
Bless this offering we bring you.**

Offering Prayer

God of fresh starts, we bring these gifts so they too may provide fresh starts for other people, people who are struggling physically, financially or emotionally. Bless these our weekly gifts both given on the plate and electronically. May they do the work of this church and the wider church in lands far away. Thank you, God, for the gift of Jesus who came to show us your love and how to live in loving ways with one another. In Jesus name we pray. Amen.

Hymn: “Lord, Listen to Your Children Praying” (VU 400)

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer

An Alternate version of the Prayer of Jesus

**Eternal Spirit,
Pain bearer and Life giver,
Source of all that is and all that shall be.
With the bread we need for today, feed us.
In the hurts we absorb from one another, forgive us.
In times of temptation and test, strengthen us.
From trials too great to endure, spare us.
From the grip of all that is evil, free us.
For you reign in the glory of the power that is love- now
and forever.
Amen.**

(We will return to the traditional version. We are simply trying on other versions of this prayer to see if they resonate with others. Thank you for keeping your hearts and minds open.)

Closing Hymn: "Shall We Gather at the River" (VU 710)

Commissioning

May we go forth from here today feeling blessed and refreshed. And may we also go forth hearing the words of scripture ringing in our ears:

"You are my beloved with whom I am well pleased. You are precious in my eyes."

Benediction

May the vision of God's all-inclusive Baptismal love encourage you.

May the life of Jesus show you how to live.

And may the Holy Spirit fill you with joy and peace, this day and forever more. Amen

Musical Postlude: Kyung-A Lee



Come and be part of our growing spiritual community!
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Spiritual Thought to go



Even though God wants to dive deep into the waters of our life, we often are content to leave God standing on the shore. This week invite God into all the messiness of your life.

Rev. Diane