

**Lessons for 1st Sunday after Epiphany****January 12, 2025**

Psalm 29 - *Praise to God the Creator is sung by all the creation.*

Isaiah 43:1-7 - *God promised eternal support to His family, all who are called by His name.*

Romans 6:1-11 - *All who are baptized into Christ are joined to His death and resurrection.*

Luke 3:15-22 - *When Jesus was baptized, the Spirit affirmed John's witness; Jesus is the stronger One.*

**GATHERING THE TEXTS:** Baptized in His Name

This morning we celebrate a Baptism and a coronation. Jesus came to the Jordan River as the obedient Son and Servant of God. The heavens opened, the Spirit descended, and the Father announced: "This is my Beloved Son." Years later Saint Paul described what Jesus' baptism means for us when we are connected to His death and resurrection; we are dead to sin, and alive to live for God. Isaiah proclaimed that this faithful Servant would come to bring justice through gentleness to all who are baptized in his name.

**PRAYER BEFORE THE SERVICE:** O Holy Spirit, present with your power at Jesus' baptism and at mine, as you have made me a child of God, so continue to make the mercy and forgiveness won by the Christ, the Servant of the Father, powerful in my life that I may be merciful and forgiving to others. Amen.

**STEWARDSHIP THOUGHT:** The days, skills, and goods God has given us are like precious grain on the threshing floor to be gathered up and used for God's purpose as He calls His scattered children home. What kind of lives must we live to show them the love of the Father and the redemption we have in Christ Jesus?

**OFFERING PRAYER:** Our worthless chaff and wasted deeds,  
now dead in Christ and swept away,  
leave righteous lives like precious seeds  
to show God's mercy every day.  
Lord, use these gifts to gather those who roam  
far from the grace of God our Father's home. Amen.

**CONVICTION AND COMFORT:** We are sons and daughters who have been scattered far from the family of God, and we live in a land of death. But the Lord who created us has called us by name and carried us through the waters of chaos to bring us to the waters of our Savior's baptism. Baptized in Christ, we are joined to His death as far as our sin is concerned and to His resurrection that we may live for Him. Gathered from the ends of the earth, we rejoice to be united to the One who is more powerful than sin and death. In the cross of Christ we are dead to sin; through His empty tomb we are alive in His righteousness!

**QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER:** see the back

**Questions to Consider:** What makes Baptism a power for salvation?

- How can we claim to belong to God's family?
- What does Baptism have to do with death?
- What is the difference between John's baptism and Jesus' baptism?
- Who is the stronger One? Stronger than whom? (Luke 11:21; Mark 3:27)

**BONUS:** The power of Baptism to rescue and to claim -- A poem:

### **In Memory of Alex**

My little child, today my heart is torn!  
So many plans and dreams already lay  
Before you in my thoughts when you were born!  
Those hopes would never know the light of day.  
As glistening droplets fell upon your breast,  
And God spoke words of promise to your soul,  
The grace of Christ too quickly gave you rest  
From your short struggle in this sinful world!  
But even if for just a moment's span  
Your little lungs inhaled the breath of life,  
I thank the Lord, I took you in my hand  
To touch with water and the Spirit's Life.  
You are a gift from God, so willingly  
We give you back to Him who set you free.

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