



The Baptism of Christ

First Sunday after Epiphany
January 9, 2022

St. John United Church of Christ - Bellevue KY

Welcome

No matter who you are
or where you are on life's journey
you are welcome here!

Gathering Music and Lighting the Candles (10:20a)

Theo Baldwin, piano; Bennet Draper, Acolyte

"Breathe on Me, Breath of God" -Robert Jackson, arr. Victor Labenske

"Sweet, Sweet Spirit" -Doris Akers, arr. Don Wyrzten

"Come, Holy Spirit, Dove Divine" -H. Percy Smith, arr. Cindy Berry

Greeting and Call to Worship

Keith M. Haithcock

One: Siblings, today we recall: Jesus came to the waters of baptism.

All: In baptism, our Creator claims us and frees us from the power of hatred and death.

One: In baptism we are joined to Christ and we are joined together in unity, recalling

**All: "There is no longer Jew or Greek
there is no longer slave or free
there is no longer male or female
for all of you are one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3.28)**

One: In baptism, the Spirit of God anoints us for ministry and makes us signs of divine love. It is the mark of acceptance into the church and the beginning of our growth into full Christian faith and discipleship.

All: Therefore, on this day, the whole church remembers and celebrates.

One: Let us worship God!

Unison Prayer of Confession (based on Isaiah 43.1-2)

**Gracious God, we confess that too often we live
as though we are fearful, not faithful.**

**When we encounter the waters of chaos and confusion,
we don't easily pass through them,
but we obsess about the height of the water
instead of the sight of the other side.**

You promised to walk through the rivers with us.

Help us believe. And help our unbelief. (Silence is kept.)

Assurance of Grace

One: Thus says the God who created you and formed us in God's image:

“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;

I have called you by name, you are mine.” (Isaiah 43.1b)

All: I belong to God! Amen!

Opening Hymn

“How Firm a Foundation”

Jennie Malone, vocal

How firm a foundation for you has been laid,
by God in the Word, in the sacrifice paid!

What more can God say than to you has been said,
to you, who for refuge to Jesus have fled?

“Fear not, I am with you, oh, be not dismayed,
for I am your God, I will still give you aid;
I'll strengthen you, help you, and cause you to stand
upheld by my gracious, omnipotent hand.”

“When through the deep waters I call you to go,
the rivers of woe shall not over you flow;
For I will be with you, your troubles to bless,
delivering you from your deepest distress.”

“When through fiery trials your pathway shall lie,
my grace all-sufficient shall be your supply;
the flame shall not hurt you; for I have designed
your soul to make pure just as gold is refined.”

“The soul that on Jesus has leaned for repose,
I will not, I will not desert to its foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never forsake!”

Community Prayer

Keith M. Haithcock

Luke 3.15-17, 21-22 (Rise in body or spirit.)

Lonnie Fields

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

²¹Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened, ²²and 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."

One: Here ends the reading inspired by God.

May God grant to us wisdom and courage for interpretation.

All: Thanks be to God.

Homily

"HOLY SPIRIT AND FIRE!"

Keith M. Haithcock

Ministry of Music

Jennie Malone, voice

"Holy Ground" -*Geron Davis, arr. Lloyd Larson*

Installation of the 2022 Strategic Leadership Council

PRESENTATION

President:	Tim Smith	Treasurer:	Regis Nesbitt
President Elect:	Steve Howes	Member:	Louise Hall
Secretary:	Cherie Draper	Member:	Steve Phillips

Pastor: These people have been called by God, in accordance with the faith and order of this church, to serve among us. They have accepted their call and are before us in witness to their willingness to serve.

COVENANT

Pastor: Siblings in Christ, it is an honor to be entrusted with responsibility for particular service in the ministry of the church, whether gathered or scattered.

Having prayerfully considered the duties and responsibilities of your ministry, are you prepared to serve with the help of God in Christ's name and for the glory of God?

Council: I am.

Pastor: Do you promise to exercise your ministry diligently and faithfully, showing forth the love of Christ?

Council: I do, relying on God's grace.

Pastor: Members of this household of faith, you have heard the promises of our siblings in Christ who have answered God's call to service. Let us affirm our intention to live in covenant with them.

Will those who are able rise and witness to the commitment we now make?

All: We gather in celebration of the joy that is ours to be partners with you in the service of Jesus Christ. We promise to love you, honor your leadership, and assist you that together we may be a faithful church of Jesus Christ.

PRAYER

Pastor: Let us pray together.

All: Eternal God, you have called these people to serve you in this household of faith and in the world, which you have entrusted to our care and keeping. Send your Holy Spirit on them that they may serve among us with honor and faithfulness. Help them to be diligent in their duties that your church may prosper in the mission you place before it. May their example prove worthy for all of us to follow, as we are united in Christ's ministry, to the glory of your name. Amen.

DECLARATION

Pastor: In the name of Jesus Christ, and on behalf of the people of St. John United Church of Christ, I announce you are installed as the 2022 Strategic Leadership Council.

An Invitation to Share our Gifts

Lonnie Fields

When we give our gifts: tithes and offerings, talents and time,
we are witnesses to the transforming love of God in Christ.
You are invited to give as generously as you have received.

Offering plates are available at both the front and back of the Sanctuary. You may place your offering there as you leave. May God continue to bless you as you give generously.

An Offering of Music

"On the Wind of Spirit" -Mark Hayes

Theo Baldwin, piano

Unison Blessing of our Gifts

Lonnie Fields

Accept these gifts, we humbly pray, O God.

Let them give you honor and glory as we serve the needs of your people.

And let the called and redeemed of God say, Amen.

Remembrance of Our Baptisms

Remembering Our Baptismal Promises

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

All: We do!

Pastor: And do you promise, according to the grace given to you, to grow in your faith and to be a faithful member of the church, celebrating Christ's presence and furthering God's mission in all the world?

All: We do!

Reaffirmation Our Baptism

Pastor: We come today as followers of Jesus the Christ:
to feel the refreshing waters
to remember our devotion to Christ
to recall our promises to Christ and Christ's church
to rekindle our walk with Christ.

Remember who you are and whose you are.

All: "I am God's beloved!"

Unison Prayer of Recommitment

By your Spirit, Almighty God, Grant us:

love for others,
joy in serving you,
peace in disagreement,
patience in suffering,
kindness toward all people,
goodness in evil times,
faithfulness in temptation,
gentleness in the face of opposition,
self-control in all things.

Then strengthen us for service in your name. Amen

Closing Song

“Take Me to the Water”

Jennie Malone, voice

Take me to the water, take me to the water, take me to the water to be baptized.

I love Jesus, I love Jesus, I love Jesus, yes, I do.

Jesus is my Savior, Jesus is my Savior, Jesus is my Savior forever more.

Send Out

Keith M. Haithcock

One: Remember

“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you.” (Isaiah 43.2)

Go with the peace of Christ.

All: **Thanks be to God!**

Going Forth Music

Theo Baldwin, piano

“I’m Gonna Sing When the Spirit Says Sing (Every Time I Feel the Spirit)” -*Spirituals*, arr. Hayes

Welcome to St. John Church!

For more information about St. John Church go to: www.StJohnChurch.net.

To receive *The e-Weekly* let us know at Office@StJohnChurch.net.

To meet with the Pastor call: 859.261.2066, ext.202; email: Pastor@StJohnChurch.net.

Contact Tracing Information

In an effort to keep everyone healthy, contact the Church office at 859.261.2066 ext. 201 or Office@StJohnChurch.net if you are diagnosed with COVID after this service.

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Call to Worship (Reproduced with adaptation from *Praising God: The Trinity in Christian Worship* edited by Ruth Carolyn Duck and G. Ronald Kastner. © 1999 Westminster John Knox Press); **Luke 3.15-17, 21-22** from the *New Revised Standard Version of Holy Scripture*, © 1989 by The Division of Christian Education, National Council of Churches; **Opening Hymn and Closing Song** from *The New Century Hymnal*, © 1995 The Pilgrim Press (p. 407, 322); **Unison Prayer of Confession, Assurance of Grace, An Invitation to Share Our Gifts, Unison Blessing of our Gifts, Remembrance of our Baptisms, Send Out**, written by the Rev. Dr. David Bahr, pastor of Park Hill Congregational United Church of Christ in Denver, Colorado slightly adapted by Keith M. Haithcock; The questions, affirmations and recommitment of the Remembrance of Baptism have been adapted from *Book of Worship United Church of Christ* (© 1986 Office of Church Life and Leadership) © 2018 Justice and Local Church Ministries, Faith INFO Team, United Church of Christ, 700 Prospect Avenue, Cleveland, OH 44115-1100.

IGNITE Book Study

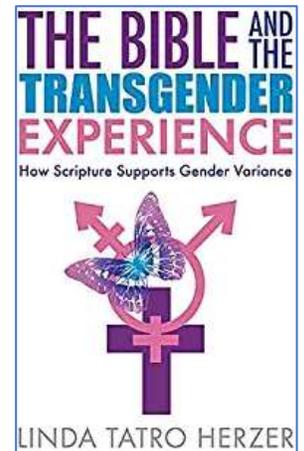
You may have heard about Ignite 2022. One of our goals is to educate ourselves during the first few months of the year on what it means to be a community of justice, diversity, and inclusion.

Our first Ignite 2022 opportunity begins January 6th! We're going to dig deeper into what it is to be an open and affirming church with "The Bible and the Transgender Experience" by Linda Tatro Herzer.

It's going to be a safe place to admit what we don't know, ask awkward and uncomfortable questions, learn, and share a few laughs. Please join us!

4-sessions on Zoom Thursdays at 6:30p - January 6, 13, 20, and 27

Facilitated by Cherie Draper & Sue Jelinek - Call 859-261-2066 to register.



Ignite 2022 is an initiative grounded in justice, diversity, and inclusion to extend love and extravagant welcome to all of God's children without judgment, no matter who they are or where they are on life's journey. Everyone is invited and encouraged to engage in this effort to transform St. John Church in service to Christ.