

Sunday Worship at Home 10th January 2021 Christmas 1 Baptism of Christ.

Opening Prayers:

God our Father,
we thank you for our baptism, help us to remain faithful Christians all our lives.

Amen

Invitation to confession:

Jesus says, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand".
So let us turn away from sin and turn to Christ,
confessing our sins in penitence and faith.

Lord, for the times we fail to love you:

Lord have mercy

Lord, for the times we fail to love others:

Christ have mercy.

Lord, for the times we fail to follow in your footsteps:

Lord have mercy

God the Father:

forgive us our sins

and bring us to eternal life. Amen

The Collect (Special Prayer for the day)

Heavenly Father,

at the Jordan you revealed Jesus as your Son:

may we recognise him as our Lord and know ourselves to be your beloved children;

through Jesus Christ our Saviour. **Amen**

Gospel Reading: Mark 4: 1-11

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit. In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

This is the Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you O Christ.

Reflection on the Gospel.

Do you remember your Baptism, or like me, were you a child? I have witnessed many Baptisms, not only on family occasions but others within a church setting. I am Godmother three times over, which is an honour, and in my time here I have baptised two babies and an adult, all three a privilege. So what difference does baptism make to a person's life? The answer to that question is "It depends". If you were

baptised as a baby or very young child chances are you would have no recollection of it, but your parents and Godparents would have proudly made vows and promises on your behalf. If you were an older child, you may remember the occasion even though you didn't realise the significance of it. But if you were baptised as an adult, I probably envy you because you knowingly made your own choice and made your own promises. In our Gospel reading today we see that Jesus made his own choice to be baptised. He didn't have to, as a Jew, he was one of the chosen race so he did not need to be baptised. He was the Son of God with no blemish on his character so did not require baptism. However Jesus knew he was on the earth to bear the weight of our sins to bring people back to God, so he chose to be baptised, like along with others in the river Jordan; where was crowded, noisy and chaotic with people clamouring for baptism and repentance of sin. Not in a private place away from the crowds, keeping his love of God to himself. Jesus' baptism is a statement to us all, not because it makes us good, not because it makes us acceptable to God or makes God love us. Baptism makes a difference to our lives because it makes us aware that God knows us and loves us and our lives matter to him, and it is to that love of God that we can return for strength when times are tough, as they have been this year. The extra joy is that our faith is not our own private possession, our faith and love of God is ours to share with others so that they too can hear the wonderful words of God "You are my Son/Daughter, with you I am well pleased. Amen

The Creed

We believe in God the Father,
from whom every family in heaven and earth is named.
We believe in God the Son, who lives in our hearts through faith,
and fills us with his love.
We believe in God the Holy Spirit,
who strengthens us with power from on high.
We believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Amen

Be still and Pray: for the needs of the world and your family and community. The Government and opposition politicians to work together over the next months in the continued battle against Covid19. Give thanks for dedication of the Queen to country and commonwealth. Pray for comfort and peace for those who are ill or awaiting hospital appointments and operations, including Lesley Sainsbury and Vincent Grove. Pray for others known to you personally who are suffering at this time. Give thanks for doctors, physicians and nurses and all whose work is to make us well in body and mind. Pray for the souls of those who have died recently and those you have known and loved whose memories are precious.

The Lord's Prayer:

Our Father, which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come,
thy will be done, in earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses;
as we forgive those who trespass against us;
lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom,
the power and the glory, forever and ever.

Amen

Blessing:

The Lord bless you and watch over you,
the Lord make his face shine upon you, and be gracious to you
may he look kindly on you and give you his peace.

Amen

Reverend Irene