

LEAVE THE WATER RUNNING

WORSHIP FOR GEORGE WHITEFIELD UMC
JANUARY 16, 2022

Good morning!

Today we are celebrating
Baptism of the Lord Sunday.
I have included the beginning of
the Congregational Reaffirmation
of our Baptismal Covenant
Service as the call to worship.
May we remember our baptisms
and be thankful!

Order of Worship

Call to Worship

Song- *"I was There to Hear Your
Borning Cry"*

Scripture

Message

Prayer

Song- *"God Claims You"*

Benediction



CALL TO WORSHIP

**Brothers and sisters in Christ:
Through the Sacrament of Baptism we are initiated into
Christ's holy church.**

**We are incorporated into God's mighty acts of
salvation and given new birth through water and the
Spirit.**

All this is God's gift, offered to us without price.

**Through the reaffirmation of our faith we renew the
covenant declared at our baptism, acknowledge what
God is doing for us, and affirm our commitment to
Christ's holy church.**

SCRIPTURE - LUKE 3: 15-17, 21-22

15-17 The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might possibly be the Messiah. John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But one who is more powerful than I will come, the straps of whose sandals I am not worthy to untie. 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 barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire."

21 -22 When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

LESSONS FROM THE FARM: THE OXEN SAY LEAVE THE WATER RUNNING!

by Pastor Sandy

Today's scripture lesson is Jesus being baptized by John with water and it reads, "Heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in the form like a dove." And a voice came from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased."

I love this picture of Jesus rising from the water and a dove descending. As Methodists, we believe that the Baptismal Covenant is a gift from God and a promise that the Holy Spirit will be working in our lives. In the ritual of baptism the pastor asks that the "The Holy Spirit work within you, that being born through water and the Spirit, you may be a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ." It is the beginning of a life with Christ and our moment to choose to continue that journey whether we were baptized as infants or as adults.



I have always enjoyed taking part in baptismal services. I remember one hymn in particular, "God Claims You", which one minister had the congregation sing as he carried the baby through the aisles. He did this after making the sign of the cross on their forehead with water and asking us to welcome our new brother or sister in Christ. It is a beautiful song where the church says the name of the child being baptized with the words... God claims you... and it is a reminder for us to be part of that child's growth in faith. As I read the words aloud, I decided to include this hymn in today's service for ourselves so we can reaffirm that God claims each one of us. Whether infant or adult, God wants us to be confident in the fact that we are His child, part of the family of Christ and that it is our job to help each other grow in the faith, and when someone may be hurting, to proclaim to them that God loves and claims them.

When thinking further about baptism and the importance of water as a means of sustenance and necessity, I was reminded of having to water the oxen. Water is such an important part of all creation and required for all living things. Our own bodies are made up of 60% water which is also similar for these large creatures. Our pair of oxen actually required 25-30 gallons a day! We had a 100-gallon tank for them, and it would require running over 120 feet of hose across the road from the barn to fill the tank every week. This hose would get battered, bruised, crushed, and spring leaks as it was driven over by all sorts of vehicles. No matter how long it took to fill the tank for the oxen's needs, we had to leave the water running until it was full. This task is reminiscent of baptism and God's gift of the Holy Spirit in that we must also leave it running over us every day, no matter how life batters, bruises, crushes, or makes us spring leaks, until we are full to overflowing and nourishing those around us with His grace!

One way to help us continue to recall the grace of God given to us at our baptisms is enclosed in your bags today! It is a tag which is meant to be placed over your showerhead to remind you as you cleanse your body to also pray to be washed by the grace of God, to be filled with His Spirit, and to be renewed in soul to live as His child. I want God to leave the water running and for His Spirit to be continually poured out on me so that I may live as a faithful disciple. My hope is that this practice will also serve as a reminder for you that God continues to claim you.

As the water is running may you remember your baptism and be thankful!

Prayer: May the Holy Spirit flood us with you grace and peace so that we may be renewed to go forth in love and support your kingdom ministry here with our prayers, our presence, our gifts and our service.

Benediction: May the Holy Spirit flow through you filling the world with love!



I WAS THERE TO HEAR YOUR BORNING CRY

"I was there to hear your borning cry, I'll be there when you are old. I rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold. I was there when you were but a child, with a faith to suit you well; In a blaze of light you wandered off, to find where demons dwell."

"When you heard the wonder of the Word I was there to cheer you on; You were raised to praise the living Lord, to whom you now belong. If you find someone to share your time and you join your hearts as one, I'll be there to make your verses rhyme from dusk 'till rising sun."

In the middle ages of your life, not too old, no longer young, I'll be there to guide you through the night, complete what I've begun. When the evening gently closes in, and you shut your weary eyes, I'll be there as I have always been with just one more surprise."

"I was there to hear your borning cry, I'll be there when you are old. I rejoiced the day you were baptized, to see your life unfold."

GOD CLAIMS YOU

Please insert your name instead of mine when you sing or read this hymn!



Sandy, Sandy, God claims you, God helps you, protects you, and loves you too. We this day do all agree a child of God you'll always be.

Sandy, Sandy God claims you, God helps you, protects you, and loves you too. We your family love you so, we vow to help your faith to grow.

Sandy, Sandy God claims you, God helps you, protects you, and loves you too. We are here to say this day that we will help you on your way.

Children of Promise, God claims you, God helps you, protects you, and loves you too. And if you should tire or cry then we will sing this lullaby.

IMMERSED IN BLESSING (TUNE: JOYFUL, JOYFUL WE ADORE THEE)

Baptized in your grace with Jesus, loving God, we sing your praise. Echoing your own delight, with joy and thanks our song we raise. Your beloved children, birthed anew and rising from your womb, God, we bear your love through all our living, and beyond the tomb.

God you heal, forgive and nourish, and revive us breath by breath; you restore our broken trust and save us from our fear of death. Like a dry and withered plant revived by water at its root, we are saved by streams of grace, for flourishing and bearing fruit.

Bathed in grace, immersed in blessing, joined with your Beloved Son, how can we not love each other?— for your Spirit makes us One. Carried on a stream of mercy, springs beneath and rain above, may we flow with peace and in your Spirit flood the world with love.

Lyrics by Steve Garnaas-Holmes, set to the tune of Joyful, Joyful.