



Quote for Meditation:

*“The place God calls you to is the place
where your deep gladness and the
world’s deep hunger meet.”*

—Frederick Beuchner

**First Presbyterian Church
of Newton**

Baptism of the Lord

10:30 AM January 12, 2025

** indicates when to rise in body or in spirit*

GATHERING IN GOD’S NAME

WORDS OF WELCOME AND THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

PRELUDE

*** CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: We carry different burdens, different worries, and different lives,

People: But we meet each other at the waters of baptism.

Leader: There, we find the same grace, same hope,
same love of God in which we are all plunged.

People: In our baptisms, we are set free to live as one people with one
calling, while being different people with different gifts.

Leader: People of God, live in the liberty and assurance of your baptisms.
Let us worship God!

*** HYMN PH #409** “Wild and Lone the Prophet’s Voice”

CALL TO CONFESSION

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (in unison)

Almighty God, you command us repeatedly to love one another, living as a community you call beloved. You ask us to share our possessions with the poor; our food with the hungry; our compassion with the needy; and our regard with the lowly. Even still, we ask “what should we do?” and struggle to know how to act. Forgive us when we overcomplicate your gospel. Forgive us when we oversimplify your gospel. Through the power of your Spirit, help us drink from your living water, which never goes dry, and which always satisfies us and your world.

(Silent time of prayer...)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

Leader: Believe in the good news of the Gospel:
In Christ we have been baptized
From death into new life,
A new creation,
And a new community of people.

In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

People: Thanks be to God!

* SONG OF JOY PH #171 “The King of Love My Shepherd Is”

verse 2

Where streams of living water flow
My ransomed soul God leadeth,
And where the verdant pastures grow,
With food celestial feedeth.

* SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION (in unison)

O Holy Spirit, submerge us in the Word – not merely the words of Scripture, but the Word that is revealed in Jesus Christ, alive and at work today. Give us patience to hear; openness to listen; and willingness to enact your Word within us; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

RESPONSIVE READING Luke 3:1-6

In the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, when Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, and Herod was ruler of Galilee... the word of God came to John son of Zechariah in the wilderness. He went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, as it is written in the book of the words of the prophet Isaiah,

Leader: “The voice of one crying out in the wilderness:

People: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord;
make his paths straight.

Leader: Every valley shall be filled,
and every mountain and hill shall be made low,
and the crooked shall be made straight,

People: and the rough ways made smooth,
and all flesh shall see the salvation of God.’ ”

TIME WITH CHILDREN OF ALL AGES AND BUCKET BRIGADE

SCRIPTURE READING Luke 3:7-16, 21-22

John said to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him, “You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, bear fruits worthy of repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our ancestor,’ for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; therefore every tree that does not bear good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.”

And the crowds asked him, “What, then, should we do?” In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none, and whoever has food must do likewise.” Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.”

As the people were filled with expectation and all were questioning in their hearts concerning John, whether he might be the Messiah, John 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 strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

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

SERMON

“The End of the Rope”

*** AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

There is but one baptism in the Church of God;
it is sufficient to be once baptized or consecrated unto God.

For baptism once received continues for all of life,
and is a perpetual sealing of our adoption.

For inwardly we are regenerated, purified, and renewed
by God through the Holy Spirit;
and outwardly we receive the assurance of the greatest gifts in the water.

We, therefore, confess our faith when we are baptized,
and obligate ourselves to God for newness of life.

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| <p>RESPONDING TO THE WORD WITH OUR LIVES</p> |
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*** HYMN PH #492** "Baptized in Water"

CALL TO OFFER OUR GIFTS TO GOD'S SERVICE

*** SONG OF GRATITUDE PH #591**

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Christ, all people here below;

Praise Holy Spirit evermore;

Praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.

*** PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

SHARING OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

JOYS AND CONCERNS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and THE LORD'S PRAYER

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

GOING OUT TO SHARE THE GOOD NEWS OF CHRIST

- * HYMN PH #343 “Called as Partners In Christ’s Service”
- * CHARGE AND BENEDICTION
- * POSTLUDE

We thank our Worship Leader, Olivia Clark
and our Usher/Greeters this morning
Daele Phlegar and Laureen Armstrong.

Liturgical Sources:

Affirmation of faith: Adapted from the Second Helvetic Confession, §5.186, 5.187, 5.189, *Book of Confessions* (Louisville, KY: Office of the General Assembly of the PCUSA).

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As always, we thank you for your generosity and support!

Our Staff

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Church Office Hours:

Monday through Thursday 8:00 am - 4:00 pm

Friday 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

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www.youtube.com (Search for: "fpcnewtonnj")

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE
AT FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF NEWTON
The week of January 12, 2025

- Sun. 1/12 **9:00 am Adult Study followed by Prayer Time** (Adult Study Room)
9:00 am Faith Formation Classes
9:00 am Worship Service (Chapel)
9:45 am Family Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
10:30 am Worship (Sanctuary)
Child care for infants and toddlers is available on the second floor
Bucket Brigade:(monthly loose change collection to support local mission)
Coffee Hour following worship (Parlor)
12:45 pm - 2:45 pm Girl Scouts
12 Noon - 2:00 pm Youth Group
- Mon. 1/13 **10:00 am Wired Word** (via Zoom)
- Tues. 1/14 **5:00 pm - 6:30 pm Manna House Spaghetti Dinner**
7:00 pm Deacons'
- Wed. 1/15 **8:00 pm Midweek Vespers** (via Zoom)
- Thur. 1/16 **1:30 pm - 3:00 pm Reader's INK Book Club**
7:00 pm Bell Choir Rehearsal
- Fri. 1/17 **1:00 pm - 3:00 pm Hearts and Hands Craft Group** (Adult Study)
- Sun. 1/19 **9:00 am Adult Study followed by Prayer Time** (Adult Study Room)
9:00 am Faith Formation Classes
9:00 am Worship Service (Chapel)
9:45 am Family Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
10:30 am Worship (Sanctuary)
Child care for infants and toddlers is available on the second floor
Coffee Hour following worship (Parlor)
4:00 pm Installation Service of Rev. Michael Cuppett