

WELCOME TO...
The Presbyterian Church of
Saint David

January 18, 2015



Call to Worship *God says: Look! See my chosen servant, the One in whom I utterly delight; I have placed my Spirit on him, he will bring true justice to the nations. When Jesus was baptised, the heavens opened up, and Spirit came down like a dove; and there was a voice from heaven saying: "This is my dearly loved Son, with whom I am delighted." The joy of the Lord be with you all. And also with you.*

Opening Prayer *Most wonderful God, foolish and flawed though we are, we too delight in your beloved Son. As in his name we gather in the house of many praises, may the heavens be opened for us, that we may catch a glimpse of*

that Light and Love that transforms our common days with a beauty not of our making. Through Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen!

Hymn: Christ whose glory fills the sky

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Searching the Scriptures **Mark 1:4-11** 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."

'When you pass through the waters, I will be with you...' *God of many names we give ourselves into the hand of your care; Our past, with its joys and triumphs, its failures and regrets, Our present, with its struggles and accomplishments, its hopes and setbacks, Our future, with its fears and freedom, its pain and possibility, trusting the Spirit that breathes life, trusting the love that will not let us go, trusting the promise of the Word made flesh.*

A different perspective: The Difference

John pointed ahead. His baptism offered people a chance to make a new beginning of repentance and forgiveness. That's a great start by any standards, but he did not see it as the end point. He pointed ahead to the coming of One who would be more powerful, and whose baptism would not be with water only, but with the Holy Spirit. Just as people would be immersed in the water of the Jordan, they would be immersed in the life of God. Only God can make God real to people. Only God can bring God's life to us. That's the big difference. (Peter Neilson, Mission Consultant, Church of Scotland)

Focus Questions

1. How does a sense of who and whose we are come alive in baptism?
2. How often do you think about your baptism? When you do, do you imagine yourself as beloved?
3. How would you see baptism differently if it meant being baptized into a renewal movement?
4. Have baptisms become for many people an occasion for gifts and parties rather than a bold statement of faith?
5. What does baptism mean to you?

Hymn: Servants of the Saviour

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John the Baptist uses the language of baptism to describe Jesus giving the Holy Spirit. He is standing in the middle of a river where people are being immersed in water. Through the Holy Spirit we are introduced to a new God-filled environment that surrounds and envelops us. Jesus invites us to live in that new environment where God's Spirit surrounds us and envelops us.

Stop and notice your breathing. The air surrounds us and envelops us. Without it we would die. Instinctively we take it into our lungs in order to stay alive.

The Celtic Caim

(The prayer of encircling – a prayer of presence and protection)

Imagine a circle round yourself. God is with you in the circle.

God our Creator, keep faith in and doubt out.

Imagine a circle round us as a group. God is with us in the circle.

Jesus, Son of God, keep love in and fear out.

Imagine a circle round a person for whom you are concerned today. God is with them in the circle.

Holy Spirit of God, keep hope in and despair out.

Imagine a circle round the planet earth – in all its beauty and tragedy. God is with us in the circle.

Father, Son and Holy Spirit, our God, keep goodness in and evil out. In the name of Jesus, Emmanuel, God with us. AMEN.

Invitation prayer: *All who have entered the covenant of baptism, who have freely chosen Jesus and his church as the center of their lives, come, remember and renew that covenant.*

Eat the bread and drink the wine of the new covenant,

*Allow the Holy Spirit to reveal to you the many signs of the kingdom of God among us, and to lead you into ever greater participation in that kingdom. We are invited to come together around this table as those who belong to the household of Christ, brothers and sisters who in our baptized lives live out the death and resurrection of Jesus. The family of the reborn and the reconciled, who inhabit a universe of grace. **Remember, renew and be renewed.** Let us all partake in this feast with thankful hearts.*

Hymn: Draw us in the Spirit's tether

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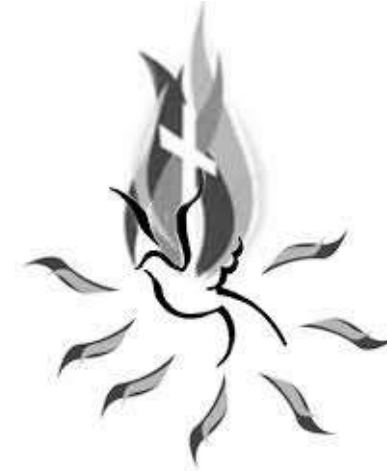
Great Prayer of Thanksgiving:

Celebrating the Sacrament

Prayer after Communion *God of joy, you have called us to serve you. Grant that we may walk in your presence: your love in our hearts, your truth in our minds, your strength in our wills. **Until, at the end of our journey, we know the joy of our homecoming and the welcome of your embrace. in Christ's spirit, Amen***

Hymn: Lead me Lord

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*Christ has no body now on earth but ours, no hands but ours, no feet but ours. **Ours are the eyes through which Christ's compassion looks out to the world, Ours are the feet with which Christ goes about doing good and ours are the hands with which Christ blesses us now.** Grace mercy and peace, from the Creator, Saviour and Counsellor, will be with you now and ever more. Amen!*