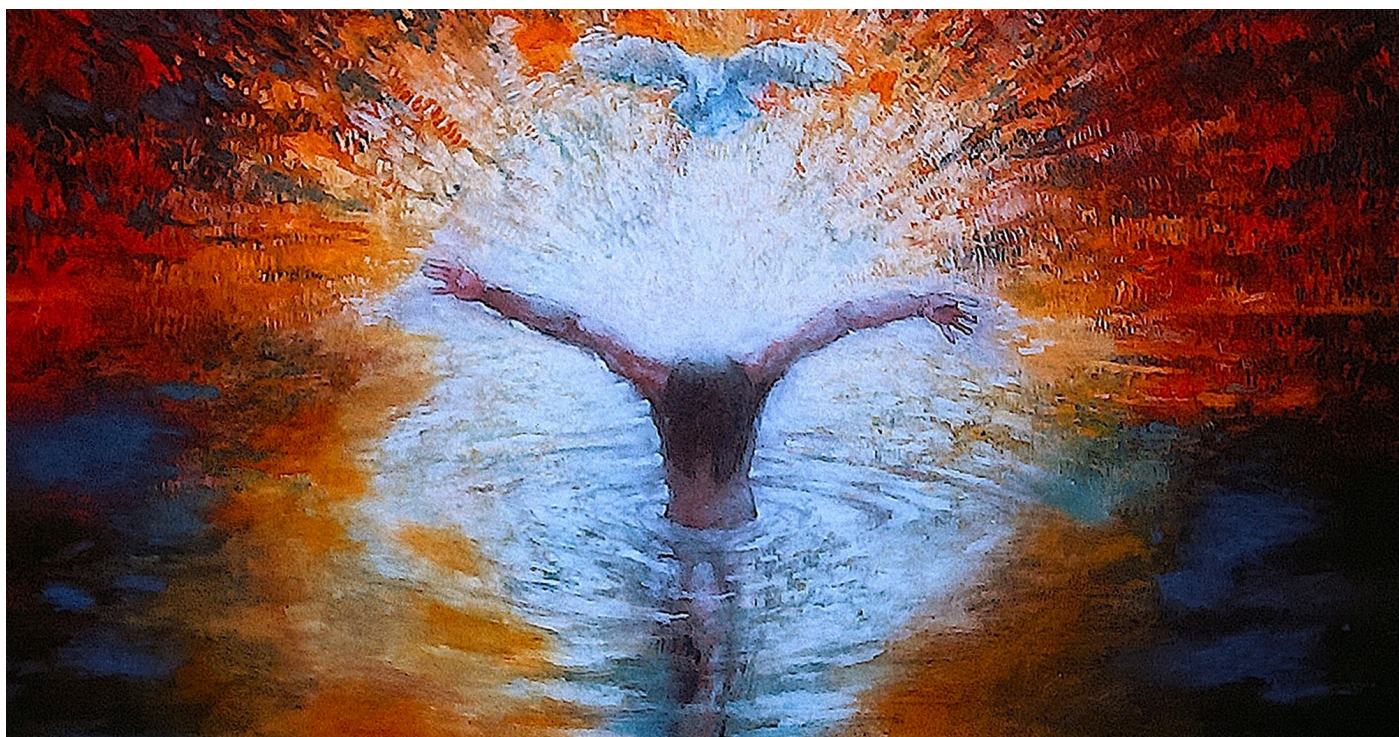


Sunday, 10 January 2021 (Baptism of Jesus)



BORONIA PARK UNITING CHURCH

SUNDAY WORSHIP SERVICE

Preparing for worship

Welcome to our online worship service today! In 2021, you may worship wherever you are with the people of God at Boronia Park UC together in the fellowship of the Holy Spirit.

This worship resources are prepared by one of ministry candidates of the Synod, Mr. Kyungtae Lee and also the people of Boronia Park UC. We give thanks to God for his gifts and talents in ministry that have nourished many and continue praying for his ministry and future journey within the Uniting Church and the world.

Acknowledgement for the first peoples

We would like to acknowledge and pay respect to the traditional owners of the land on which we meet; the Wallumettagal people of the Eora Nation. It is upon their ancestral lands that the Boronia Park Uniting Church is built.

As we share our own knowledge, teaching, learning and Christian practice within this congregation may we also pay respect to the knowledge embedded forever within the Aboriginal Custodianship of Country.

Call to worship (Psalm 29:1-2)

God of creation

You were in the chaos before the beginning

You embraced nothingness by your creativity

Because of who you are

Because of what you do

**Honour the LORD,
you heavenly beings;**

God of life

You began to give lives to the world

by Your living breath

by Your living touch

You formed us and held us

**Honour the LORD,
for his glory and strength.**

God of good news
You invite us into your company again
From our agony, suffering, turmoil and sin
Into your water
Into your Spirit
**Honour the LORD,
for the glory of his name.**

God of who we are.
You are of who we are
We are of who you are
You came into our lives
We are united in the name
Because of who you are
Because of who we are
We are into one
**Worship the LORD
in the splendour of his holiness.**

Let us worship God.

Song 1 - Praise to the Lord, the Almighty (TiS 111)

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty,
the King of creation;
O my soul, praise him,
for he is your health and salvation.

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Come all who hear,
brothers and sisters draw near,
praise him in glad adoration.

Praise to the Lord who in all things
is wondrously reigning
and, as on wings of an eagle,
uplifting, sustaining:
have you not seen
all that is needed has been
sent by his gracious ordaining?

Praise to the Lord, who will prosper
our work and defend us;
surely his goodness and mercy
shall daily attend us:
ponder anew
what the Almighty can do
as with his love he befriends us.

Praise to the Lord, who when
darkness of sin is abounding,
who, when the godless do triumph,
our best hopes confounding,
sheds forth his light,
scatters the horrors of night,
saints with his mercy surrounding.

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Praise to the Lord!

O let all that is in me adore him!

All that has life and breath,
come now with praises before him.

Let the Amen

sound from his people again;
gladly for ever adore him.

Joachim Neander

tr. Catherine Winkworth and others

Prayer of confession

God, what you ask for is the giving of ourselves,
the refusing to let our fear of the storms around us.

But we have failed to trust you.

We try to limit you; we confine you in our thoughts.

Lord, have mercy

Lord, have mercy

God, when you have called us to leave our places of comfort,
we have ignored your call.

We have failed to go beyond our safety zone in your trust.

Lord, have mercy

Lord, have mercy

Merciful God,
when we put our foot outside the boat,
when we sank up to our knees,
we have failed to keep our sights on you,
and we have just seen the winds, waves and fears.

Lord, have mercy

Lord, have mercy

Words of affirmation

This is the Word of forgiveness given us today.

“If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.”

(Romans 10:9;13)

Hear then Christ’s Word of grace to us: “Your sins are forgiven.”

Thanks be to God.

The peace

The peace of the Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Bible Reading 1 - Genesis 1:1-5 (New Living Translation)

¹In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ²The earth was formless and empty, and darkness covered the deep waters. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the surface of the waters.

³Then God said, “Let there be light,” and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good. Then he separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light “day” and the darkness “night.”

And evening passed and morning came, marking the first day.

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

Bible Reading 2- Mark 1:4-11 (New Living Translation)

⁴This messenger was John the Baptist. He was in the wilderness and preached that people should be baptized to show that they had repented of their sins and turned to God to be forgiven. ⁵All of Judea, including all the people of Jerusalem, went out to see and hear John. And when they confessed their sins, he baptized them in the Jordan River. ⁶His clothes were woven from coarse camel hair, and he wore a leather belt around his waist. For food he ate locusts and wild honey.

⁷John announced: “Someone is coming soon who is greater than I am—so much greater that I’m not even worthy to stoop down like a slave and

untie the straps of his sandals. ⁸ I baptize you with water, but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit!”

⁹ One day Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee, and John baptized him in the Jordan River. ¹⁰ As Jesus came up out of the water, he saw the heavens splitting apart and the Holy Spirit descending on him like a dove. ¹¹ And a voice from heaven said, “You are my dearly loved Son, and you bring me great joy.”

This is the Gospel of the Lord
Praise to you Lord Christ.

Message

Kyungtae Lee

What do you remember from your baptism? What is your image, impression or memory of your baptism?

I do not have any memory from my baptism because I was an infant when I was baptised. However, something else came to mind while I was preparing this message. When I was in year 10 at school in Korea, I went to a church youth camp. As part of the camp activities, my youth pastor baptised all the participants in the river. A fully immersed baptism. It was not an official. It's just an activity. But I could recall the moment and feeling when I came out of the water after immersion. I didn't understand at that time, but now I know what it was like. I felt not only cleaned or washed but also felt something refreshed. Please don't misunderstand me.

I'm not an anabaptist or denying my infant baptism. I'm saying the experience was precious.

In the Uniting Church, we regard baptism as one of the important Sacraments. We acknowledge that Christ incorporates people into his body by baptism. In other words, by baptism, Christ's body initiates people into Christ's life and mission in the world, so that they are united in one fellowship of love, service, suffering and joy, in one family of the Father of all in heaven and earth, and in the power of the one Spirit (Basis of Union 1992 #7).

What is celebrated in the baptism of Jesus is something greater than we think. Mark's Gospel extends the meaning of baptism in describing the coming of Jesus Christ into the world's chaos. It shares in the coming of the Lord to his creation. God's granting of life to all creation and awakening our true identities is what God wanted to give. He has come to bring life to those who have been through the waters of baptism. Then, Jesus baptises them with the creative spirit of God. Into the formlessness and chaos of our lives will come redemption and the divine creative purpose.

When we read Genesis 1, we can see chaos before God commences the act of creation. It is described in watery terms - 'the deep' and 'waters'. This not only links with the waters of baptism but specifies creation in Genesis 1 as a matter of bringing order to watery chaos. The baptism of Jesus by John and the baptism of new Christians in the name of Jesus is

thereby connected back to creation. Baptism into the community of Jesus is a fulfilment of God's intent in creation.

While some might interpret John's baptism as occurring chiefly in service of an elevated individual spirituality whipped up by tumultuous times, its location is more meaningful with the promise of a new beginning in Israel's history: The very place where wondrous transformation happened.

It is on the River Jordan banks - 'the border between the wilderness and the land of milk and honey'. Its crossing played a crucial role in the formation of Israel's identity and within its history. At the crossing of the Jabbok, a tributary of the Jordan, Israel first received its name. The miraculous crossing of the Jordan under Joshua's leadership marked Israel's definitive entry into the Promised Land after their period of wandering in the wilderness. At the Jordan river, the transformation was begun - old became new, wandering became settling, and chaos became an order.

Moreover, in Jesus' baptism, the heavens are splitting apart. All creation in the moment of Jesus' baptism is altered. Out of that, rupture comes the Holy Spirit in a form that is described as a dove. That dove does not simply descend on Jesus. It also can be translated to have come into him in Greek. It means that Jesus is infused with the Spirit from God, and the voice confirms who he is: the Son of God. The title Son of God attributes of pre-existence and equality with God. Therefore, in Mark, baptism is more like a coronation. Jesus' special status, his special identity is

revealed. A new reality has come into the world, transforming all things. The place where Jesus was baptised is where Jesus' original identity was declared and where we are called to come back to the original identity from the first creation. God wants to restore us.

I didn't want to use this word again in my preaching. But I cannot help using this, Covid-19. I just want to say, "you did a good job", "you have suffered more than enough, and you've endured well", "Thank you Boronia Park Uniting Church" under the difficult situation by Covid-19. Fortunately, we have heard some vaccines approved, and some countries already started inoculating. We all are hoping that the vaccines work well, and everyone has it soon. After we all are vaccinated, our lives will be back to so-called 'normal' as we wanted.

God declared the creation is good in the beginning. The God we serve plans and prepares good things. God has already been at work as God did things even before the creation starts. Please don't forget. God continues to act so that plants, animals, and humans will come into real being.

There is a place in chaos on the one side, and there is a place where our identities are renewed and restored in order on the other side. We are called to come to that place. The place is where our king Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit and the presence of God is. We need to continue to trust our God. We need to stay where the presence of God is. We need to cross over from where I was seized. We have to remember that baptism is a starting point that our spirituality and humanity become true and real.

In this period of global uncertainty and anxiety, we continue to live through, wondering and fearing what may come next. However,

if we see the way Jesus has revealed in his baptism,
if we see the truth God is already working for us even before creation,
if we see the life God wanted to restore and give to us,
it will be good news for us and others for a new identity and a new world.

Amen.

Song 2 - On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry (TiS 270)

On Jordan's bank the Baptist' cry
announces that the Lord is nigh;
come then and hearken, for he brings
glad tidings from the King of kings.

Then cleansed be every heart from sin;
make straight the way for God within;
prepare we in our hearts a home
where such a mighty guest may come.

For you are our salvation, Lord,
our refuge and our great reward;
without your grace we waste away
like flowers that wither and decay.

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To heal the sick stretch out your hand,
and bid the fallen sinner stand;
shine forth, and let your light restore
earth's own true loveliness once more.

To him who left the throne of heaven
to free us all, let praise be given;
and praise be to the Father done,
and Holy Spirit, Three in One.

Charles Coffin
tr. John Chandler

Prayers of the People

Joshua Yeon

Dear heavenly Father,

I thank You for the all the wonderful things You have done in the past year of 2020. As we head into a new year, I pray that You do the same, to help the people around us and the people around the world.

Lord, we have loved ones around us and there are always difficult times. We pray that You will provide us with the love, care and support for our loved ones around us.

Going into the new year, covid-19 has grown once again. We pray that you will bring health and safety to our country and heal the ones who have been diagnosed with it.

Lord God, we pray for our congregation that we will always be protected by You and share only good memories together. We pray for our minister Seungjae and his family that they continue to grow our faith and lead us to You even in these troubling times. Please bless him as the workload is not easy, and is difficult to manage. Bring peace upon him so that he can minister Your Word to the fullest.

In the Inter-Church Council prayer, we pray for Glades Hill Presbyterian Church and Kalos Church. Lord, all of Your churches are undergoing the same difficulties, and as we progress through the year please give us an easier road ahead and pour out Your blessings upon their minister and their congregation.

In the World Cycle of Prayer, we pray for Iran, Iraq and Syria. We pray for their peace, safety, health and well-being. Please give them Your protection especially the ones who are affected for no particular reason.

Lord, we pray all these things in your name,

Amen.

Lord's prayer

Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.

Give us today our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.

Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever.

Amen.

Offering

The offering will be used for the congregation's continuing mission and ministry including young people and youth ministry in these changing times. Please make your offering through a Bank Deposit or a personal cheque whichever is convenient to you.

Sunday, 10 January 2021 (Baptism of Jesus)

Account Name: Boronia Park Uniting Church

BSB: 634-634

Account: 100023784

Reference: Offering

Please contact Robyn Harvey, Treasurer on 0418 783 290 or robyn.49@bigpond.net.au for more information about how to make Direct Debit.

Song 3 - Guide me, O thou great Redeemer (TiS 569)

Guide me, O thou great Redeemer,
pilgrim through this barren land;
I am weak, but thou art mighty;
hold me with thy powerful hand:
Bread of heaven, bread of heaven,
feed me now and evermore,
feed me now and evermore.

Open now the crystal fountain
whence the living waters flow:
let the fiery, cloudy pillar
lead me all my journey through:
strong deliverer, strong deliverer,
be thou still my strength and shield,
be thou still my strength and shield.

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When I tread the verge of Jordan
bid my anxious fears subside;
death of death, and hell's destruction,
land me safe on Canaan's side:
songs of praises, songs of praises
I will ever give to thee,
I will ever give to thee.

William Williams

Benediction and dismissal

May God give you more strength
physically and spiritually
May God bring more care and cure
into this chaotic world
May God bless you with peace

The blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit
Be upon you and remain with you always.
Amen.

Our service has ended. But our mission has started.
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord
In the name of Christ.
Amen.

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Sung blessing - Shalom to You Now (TiS 778)

Shalom to you now, shalom, my friends.

May God's fun mercies bless you, my friends.

In all your living and through your loving,

Christ be your shalom, Christ be your shalom.

Elise Shoemaker Eslinger

CCLI #260394