



ABOUT THE PROPERS

An Explanation of the Variable Parts of the Divine Service



First Sunday after the Epiphany The Baptism of Our Lord January 9, 2022



In His Baptism, Jesus Takes His Place with Sinners

At his baptism Jesus was formally installed by God into his office as our Prophet, High Priest, and King. Our Lord Jesus is baptized “to fulfill all righteousness,” that he might be our substitute and bear the judgment we deserve. In the water, Jesus trades places with us. Our sin becomes his sin. His righteousness becomes our righteousness. Jesus is the chosen One sent from the Father to release us from sin and death. God the Father is well-pleased with his beloved Son and raised him from the dead. Baptized into Christ, we also become the chosen ones, beloved of the Father. As we share in Christ’s Baptism, we also share in his resurrection unto newness of life.

The Propers

The Propers are those portions of the service that change (or, are “proper” to) each Sunday or season of the church year. The Propers differ from the Ordinary (from the Latin ordo, which means “regular order”) portions of the liturgy, which do not change (e.g. the Lord’s Prayer). The Propers offer the variety to the worship service and emphasize particular worship themes throughout the liturgical calendar.

First Lesson¹ 1 Samuel 16:1-13

Young David is anointed by Samuel to Shepherd the Lord’s people, Israel. Centuries later would come fulfillment with the anointing of the Christ and the Lord’s royal priesthood of all believers.

Second Lesson¹ Titus 3:4-7

Baptism brings the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Christ and David were anointed with the Holy Spirit and with power. When we were baptized, the Spirit was poured out on us as well. It was a washing that brought rebirth for sin-deadened hearts and spiritual renewal for fleshly minds. Note how one-sided our baptism is! Like David, there was nothing in us that the Lord should choose us. But as young David was chosen over his older brothers and made into Israel’s king, so we who are worth nothing, become what God makes us: heirs having the hope of eternal life.

Gospel of the Day¹ Luke 3:15-17, 21, 22

The word of the Lord through John and the waters of his baptism powerfully proclaimed preparation for the arrival of the Messiah. For he would come with justice to rule the people with equity. At his own baptism, Jesus is anointed with the Holy Spirit and power as our Prophet, Priest, and King to the approval of the Father. Just as he who knew no sin was baptized, our baptism is also an anointing by the Spirit, but for the forgiveness of our sins. This is our connection to Christ and his redeeming work.

Psalm of the Day Psalm 2

The powers and authorities in this world plot and plan, but God has placed Jesus, his Anointed One, over all things.

Verse of the Day

Mark 1:11b

“You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased.” The voice of God the Father from heaven declares Jesus to be his beloved Son. The entire Trinity is revealed at Christ’s Baptism – reminding us that Father, Son, and Holy Spirit always work together for our salvation. As the Father’s beloved Son, Jesus fulfilled all righteousness, something that children – past, present, and future – fail to do.

Prayer of the Day

Father in heaven, at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan you proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. Keep us who are baptized into Christ faithful in our calling as your children and make us heirs with him of everlasting life; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Hymn of the Day

89 “To Jordan’s River Came Our Lord” (James Tiefel, b. 1949)

The hymn reminds us that Jesus Christ, as our substitute, took our place in the waters of baptism to fulfill the Father’s will to save us.

Church Year Season²

Epiphany

The twelve days of Christmas culminate at the celebration of the Epiphany of our Lord on January 6th. The season of Epiphany highlights the appearance of the Son of God as the Savior of the whole world— both Jew and Gentile. God revealed the mystery of his person and his mission through the words and works of the Father, through the anointing and empowering of the Spirit, and through the preaching and miracles of Christ.

This season of the Savior’s appearance is bracketed by two white Sundays: The Baptism of Our Lord and Transfiguration of Our Lord. Since he had come hidden in flesh, recognizing Jesus of Nazareth as the Son of God required revelation. From John’s Baptism to the Father’s booming voice, God revealed the truth about Jesus to the world: this son of Mary is the Son of God, come as the Christ. The Father’s testimony about Jesus bookends the season. From the glory of his baptism at the beginning of his ministry to the glory of his transfiguration at its culmination, the voice of the Father declares what flesh had hidden from the world: This is my Son!

Colors & Symbolism

The Baptism of Our Lord: White

White is the color of our Triune God and heaven. It also symbolizes joy, celebration, gladness, light, purity and innocence. We receive these blessings through faith because Christ, our righteousness Savior, has forgiven all our sins.

Traditions & Customs

The Baptism of Our Lord

Observed on the First Sunday after the Epiphany; the Festival of the Baptism of Our Lord is sometimes called the “Second Epiphany.” Jesus’ baptism marks the beginning of his public ministry and reminds worshippers of the cleansing of our sins in the water of baptism. On this occasion the Father and the Holy Spirit revealed themselves together with the Son. On this day, some chose to renew their baptismal vows, or hold some other tradition in remembrance of their baptism.

Nain Paraments

Christmas

Superfrontal: “Immanuel” is Hebrew for “God with us.” This name for Jesus Christ was revealed to God’s people through Isaiah in a prophecy of the Savior’s birth (7:14). The angel Gabriel announced to Joseph in a dream that the child in the Virgin Mary’s womb would be that promised Immanuel – God who had come to be with us (Matthew 1:23) in order to save us. Sometimes the name is spelled *Emmanuel*, which is the Latin alphabet transliteration of the Hebrew pronunciation of the same name.

The vines next to Immanuel represent the spiritual life that Jesus, the vine brings to God’s children, the branches (John 15:5).

Lectern antependium: *The Greek Cross*: distinguished by four arms of equal length.

Pulpit antependium: *The Celtic Cross*: similar to the Latin cross (†), but with a circle surrounding the center, which symbolizes the eternal nature of Christ and the gift of eternal life to all who believe in him.

¹ Courtesy of “Planning Christian Worship: Year C”. Joel J. Gawrisch, Author; Jonathan E. Schroeder, Editor.

² Courtesy of “Planning Christian Worship: Year A”. Jonathan E. Schroeder, Author and Editor.

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