

Welcome to Worship at
Trinity Lutheran Church, Osceola, WI
Epiphany 1 - January 9, 2022

P: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Let the words of my mouth and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Your sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer. Amen.

Hymn #94 - "O Jesus, King of Glory"

**O Jesus, King of glory,
Both David's Lord and son!
Your rule endures forever;
In heaven is your throne.
Help that in earth's dominions,
From pole to farthest pole,
Your reign may spread salvation
To each benighted soul.**

**The eastern Magi, coming
Their gifts of love to bring,
Bear witness to your glory
And worship you, their King.
To you the star is pointing
And the prophetic Word;
So joyously we hail you:
Savior and our Lord.**

**You are a mighty monarch,
As by your Word is told,
And yet you care but little
For earthly goods or gold.
You do not come displaying
Your power and renown.
You dwell in no high castle;
You wear no jeweled crown.**

**Oh, look on me with pity
Though I am weak and poor;**

**Admit me to your kingdom
To dwell there, blest and sure.
I pray, Lord, guide and keep me
Safe from my bitter foes,
From sin and death and Satan;
Free me from all my woes.**

**Then let your Word within me
Shine as the fairest star;
Keep sin and all false doctrine
Forever from me far.
Help me confess you truly
And with all Christendom
Here hail you King and Savior
And in the world to come.**

Confession of Sins:

P: Beloved in the Lord, let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins to God our Father, asking Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.

C: **Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer, we poor sinners confess to You that we are by nature sinful and unclean and that we have sinned against You in our thoughts, words, and actions. Therefore we flee for refuge to Your infinite mercy, seeking and imploring Your grace and forgiveness for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ. O Lord, have mercy on us!**

P: Upon this your confession, I as a called servant of Christ and His Word announce to you the grace of God, and in the place of and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ, I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C: **Amen.**

First Lesson: 1 Samuel 16:1-13

The Lord said to Samuel, “How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king over Israel? Fill your horn with oil and go. I am sending you to Jesse of Bethlehem, for I see a king for myself among his sons.” Samuel said, “How can I go? If Saul hears about it, he will kill me.” The Lord said, “Take a heifer with you and say, ‘I have come to sacrifice to the Lord.’ Invite Jesse to the

sacrifice, and I will let you know what you are to do. You are to anoint for me the person that I point out to you.” So Samuel did what the Lord had told him to do and went to Bethlehem. Trembling with fear, the elders of the city came to meet him. They said, “Do you come in peace?” He said, “Yes, in peace. I have come to sacrifice to the Lord. Consecrate yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice.” He consecrated Jesse and his sons and invited them to the sacrifice. When they had come, he looked at Eliab and said, “Certainly this is the Lord’s anointed.” But the Lord said to Samuel, “Do not look at his appearance or at how tall he is, because I have rejected him. For the Lord does not look at things the way man does. For man looks at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart.” Then Jesse called Abinadab and had him pass in front of Samuel. But Samuel said, “The Lord has not chosen this one either.” Then Jesse had Shammah pass by. But Samuel said, “The Lord has not chosen this one either.” Jesse had seven of his sons pass before Samuel. Samuel said to Jesse, “The Lord has not chosen any of these.” Samuel said to Jesse, “Is that all of the young men?” Jesse said, “There still is the youngest, but he is tending the sheep.” Samuel said to Jesse, “Send for him, for we cannot sit down to eat until he comes.” He sent for him and brought him in. David had red hair and striking eyes, and was good-looking. The Lord said, “Get up! Anoint him, because this is the one.” So Samuel took the horn of oil and anointed him in the presence of his brothers. The Spirit of the Lord rushed on David with power from that day forward. After that Samuel set out and returned to Ramah. (EHV)

Psalm 2

Refrain: Great are the works of the Lord. Alleluia! Alleluia! Great are the works of the Lord.

**Why do the nations ‘conspire
And the peoples ‘plot in vain?**

**The kings of the earth take their stand and the rulers gather together
a’gainst the LORD
And against his A’noointed One.**

Refrain: Great are the works of the Lord. Alleluia! Alleluia! Great are the works of the Lord.

**The One enthroned in ‘heaven laughs;
The Lord ‘scoffs at them.**

**Then he rebukes them in his anger and terrifies them in his wrath,
'saying,
"I have installed my king on Zion, my 'holy hill"**

**I will proclaim the decree 'of the LORD;
He said to me, "You are my Son; today I have become your 'Father."**

**Glory be to the Father and 'to the Son
And to the Holy 'Spirit,
As it was in the be'ginning,
Is now, and will be forever. 'Amen.**

**Refrain: Great are the works of the Lord. Alleluia! Alleluia! Great are the
works of the Lord.**

Second Lesson: Titus 3:4-7

But when the kindness and love of God our Savior toward mankind appeared, he saved us - not by righteous works that we did ourselves, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and the renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs in keeping with the hope of eternal life. (EHV)

Verse of the Day: Alleluia. You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased. Alleluia.

Gospel: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

The people were waiting expectantly and were all wondering in their hearts if John might be the Christ. John answered them all, "I baptize you with water. But someone mightier 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. His winnowing shovel is in his hand, and he will thoroughly clean out his threshing floor. He will gather the wheat into his barn, but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." When all the people were being baptized, Jesus was baptized too. While 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. I am well pleased with you." (EHV)

The Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, maker of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended into hell. The third day He rose again from the dead. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father almighty. From there He will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Christian Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Hymn #89 - *"To Jordan's River Came Our Lord"*

**To Jordan's river came our Lord,
The Christ, whom heav'nly hosts adored,
The God from God, the Light from Light,
The Lord of glory, pow'r, and might.**

**The Savior came to be baptized -
The Son of God in flesh disguised -
To stand beneath the Father's will
And all his promises fulfill.**

**As Jesus in the Jordan stood
And John baptized the Lamb of God,
The Holy Spirit, heav'nly dove,
Descended on him from above.**

**Then from God's throne with thund'rous sound
Came God's own voice with words profound;
"This is my Son," was his decree,
"The one I love, who pleases me."**

**The Father's word, the Spirit's flight
Anointed Christ in glorious sight**

**As God's own choice, from Adam's fall
To see the world and free us all.**

**Now rise, faint hearts; be resolute!
This man is Christ, our substitute!
He was baptized in Jordan's stream,
Proclaimed Redeemer, Lord supreme.**

**The Sermon: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22
"Jesus Removes All Doubt"**

One of the oldest tools the Devil has in his toolbox is the one labeled **doubt**. We first saw him **use** this tool in the Garden of Eden when he asked Eve, "*Has God **really** said, 'You shall not eat from any tree in the garden?'*" By successfully planting the seed of **doubt** in Eve's mind, the Devil was well on his way to winning her over **completely**. It's a tool he has successfully **continued** to use down through the ages - a tool which he **still** uses even today. We live in a society that **thrives** on **doubt**. Modern culture would have us believe that there is no such thing as **absolute** truth, but rather that truth is completely **subjective**. What may be truth to **one** person doesn't **need** to be truth to anyone **else**. The end **result** is a whole lot of **doubt**, and nobody seems to know where to turn, to find real **certainty** anymore. But our **text** for today will **help** us with that problem. Today we'll learn how **Jesus Removes All Doubt**.

We see from our sermon text today that **modern** society isn't the **only** society that has a problem dealing with **doubt** and **uncertainty**. The world that **Jesus** came into was a world **filled** with uncertainty. The Jewish people had been waiting for thousands of years for the **Messiah** to arrive. They were wondering **when** the time of His arrival would **come**, and **who** exactly this Messiah would **be**. Then John the **Baptist** came preaching in the wilderness. He became tremendously **popular**, and had large crowds of people **flocking** out to **hear** him, and to be **baptized** by him. John spoke with great **authority** about things like **repentance**, and the kingdom of **heaven**. The **result** of his preaching and baptizing was that many people wondered whether or not **he** might be the long-awaited **Savior** that they were seeking. You can imagine their **excitement** mixed with **doubt**. Luke put it **this** way: "*The people were waiting **expectantly** and were all **wondering** in their hearts if John might be the Christ.*" They **hoped** that John was the person they were **waiting** for, but they had their **doubts** - they just couldn't be **sure**.

People **today** are **also** looking for some kind of **certainty** in our world. But it's hard to know what's **real** out there, and what has just been **made up** or is **wishful thinking**. It seems like just about **everyone** has their own interpretation of what the **truth** is. There are the Muslims, the Mormons, the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Christians - and now in this post-modern age, the **Nones** - N-O-N-E-S - people who don't identify with **any** organized religion at all. Even within the umbrella of Christianity, there are so many different denominations: Roman Catholics, Presbyterians, Methodists, Lutherans, Non-denominational. Who's **right**, and how do we **know** they're right? Perhaps you've found yourself having some of the same **questions** and **doubts**. How do we **know** that we're on the **right path**? After all, there are all kinds of very **sincere** and **well-intentioned** people who believe something completely **different** from what **we** believe.

Unfortunately, when we have all these **doubts**, the end **result** is often **inactivity**. If we aren't really **sure** about what we **believe**, then it's not very likely that we're going to **promote** those beliefs, or **share** them with others. Jesus wants just the **opposite** from us. He calls for a life of **self-denial** and **cross-bearing**. But why? Why should we deny **ourselves**, and bear a **cross**, if we're not even **sure** that Jesus is who He **says** He is? Even **worse** than not actively **sharing** our faith, would be **losing** that faith completely. Most of us probably fall somewhere **between** two extremes. On the **one** hand maybe we've **never** had any **doubt** in our minds at all, and on the **other** hand maybe we doubt **so much** that we're in danger of **losing** our faith and **rejecting** Jesus altogether. **All** of us have our **doubts** from time to time, and doubting our God and His Word is **sin**. How can we be **sure** about what we believe?

Let's see what **John** had to say to that crowd of uncertain people gathered around **him**. He said: *"I baptize you with water. But someone **mightier** 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**. His winnowing shovel is in his hand, and he will thoroughly clean out his threshing floor. He will gather the **wheat** into his barn, but he will burn up the **chaff** with unquenchable fire."* In essence, John was telling the people that he is **not** the Christ, and that when the Christ **comes**, they will **know** it, because of the great **power** which the Christ will display. John didn't **have** that kind of power - like the power to send the **Holy Spirit** into their hearts. But the Christ **would** have that power, along with the power to **judge** all people. Following His **judgment**, Jesus would gather His **believers** into **heaven**, and He would throw the **unbelievers** into hell. This is the kind of **power** that only **God** possesses. When the people **saw** these things happening, they would know **for sure** that the person **doing** them was the **Christ**. And that's **exactly** what they found in **Jesus**.

Now we're going to switch over to the scene of Jesus' **baptism**. It's really an **extraordinary** event, where we have the Son of **God** stepping into the Jordan River to receive the same **baptism** that **sinful** human beings received. Jesus Himself didn't **need** to wash any **sins** away, because He didn't **have** any sins. But He **submitted** to being baptized as our **substitute**. That day, in the Jordan River, Jesus identified Himself with the entire **human race** - with each and every **sinner** which He had come to **save**. And what happened **after** His baptism took place was nothing short of a **miracle**. Luke tells us, *"While 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. I am **well pleased** with you.'"*

Everyone who witnessed the baptism of Jesus could clearly **see** that this was no **ordinary** baptism. All three persons of the **Trinity** were there to affirm the fact that this was the baptism of **God's own Son**. There was no room for **doubt** any more. The one they saw standing before them in the Jordan River was the **Christ** - the long-awaited **Savior** of the world. John the **Baptist's** doubts had certainly been removed. The **disciple** John tells us later in his **Gospel**, *"John also testified, 'I **saw** the **Spirit descend** like a dove from heaven and **remain** on him. I myself did not **recognize** him, but the one who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'The one on whom you see the **Spirit descend** and **remain**, **he** is the one who will baptize with the **Holy Spirit**.' I **saw** this **myself** and have testified that **this is the Son of God**.'" John was **convinced**. Jesus is the **Son of God**, and **Jesus Removes All Doubt**.*

We find **our** certainty in exactly the same place. All we need to do is look at **Jesus**, and we can clearly see that **He** is the **Christ**. And where do we **find** Jesus? We find Him in God's **Word** and **Sacraments** - the Means of **Grace**. It's through these means that God **strengthens** our faith, and **removes** our doubts. God's Word and Sacraments are far more **reliable** than our ever-changing **feelings** and **emotions**. In the Means of Grace we are able to **taste** and **see** that Jesus is God's **Son**. Every **day** we have the opportunity to **read** the Scriptures, and to be **reminded** of all the things Jesus has **done** for us. Every **week** we have the opportunity to receive the **Lord's Supper**, and to receive Jesus' **body** and **blood** in, with, and under the bread and wine. And although it's not likely that most of us **remember** it, already at the time of our **baptism** we could **feel** the water wash over our head, and we could **hear** the Word spoken to us as God brought us into **His family**.

Through His Word and Sacraments **Jesus Removes All Doubt** from our minds. We can be absolutely **sure** that Jesus is our **Savior**. We can be absolutely **sure** that our sins have all been **forgiven**. We can be absolutely **sure** that we **have** eternal life in heaven. And because we have that **certainty**, it will **show** itself in our **words** and **actions** as we strive to **share** that certainty with others. And remember, when those doubts try to come **creeping back** into our mind, we have a **Savior** who will never **leave** us or **forsake** us. **Jesus Removes All Doubt**. Thank God for **giving** us **Jesus** to be our Savior, and for providing us with the **faith** to put all our trust in **Him**. Amen.

Prayers:

Dear Savior, Jesus Christ, we are thankful for the great gift of **love**, which You poured out for us in sacrificing **Yourself** for our sins. We also thank You for the gift of **faith**, by which we **receive** Your redemptive work, and make it our own. Lord, it is Your will that **none** should perish, because You are the Lord of **all**. Therefore, give us a love for souls that will cause us to **reach out** to others with the **Gospel**, that we may be useful **servants** in Your Kingdom. Help us to tell them about the sacrifice **You** made for their sins. Make us devout and able **messengers** for You, by filling us with Your **Holy Spirit**.

Through that **same** Spirit, cause the words of salvation, which we offer to others, to be received in their hearts by **faith**, that they too may know the **joy** and **gladness** that fills our souls. May we never become **disheartened** in our efforts to speak the Gospel to others, nor be **ashamed** to declare and defend Your name. Help us recognize and seize **every** opportunity to testify of the **only** way to salvation - Your **cross**.

Destroy the power of every **evil** force which works **against** the Gospel, and remove every **hindrance** to the swift movement of salvation's message in the world. Help us see our **personal** responsibility to **support** the Gospel work being done on our behalf by our **missionaries**, wherever they labor in this sin-burdened world. Give us **generous** hearts to pour out **abundantly** from our earthly means for their support, and also remind us to **pray diligently** for Your rich blessings on their message.

Make us **bold** and **faithful** fishermen in Your kingdom. Help us to use our time, talents, and treasures to win souls for **You**. Through Your Holy Spirit, provide us with whatever courage, zeal, love, and abilities we need to **carry out** our tasks. Amen.

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 trespasses
As we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation;
But deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory
Forever and ever. Amen.**

Hymn #294 - *"Baptized into Your Name Most Holy"*

**Baptized into your name most holy,
O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,
I claim a place, though weak and lowly,
Among your saints, your chosen host,
Buried with Christ and dead to sin.
Your Spirit now shall live within.**

**My loving Father, there you took me
To be henceforth your child and heir.
My faithful Savior, there you let me
The fruit of all your sorrows share.
O Holy Spirit, comfort me
When threat'ning clouds around I see.**

**My faithful God, you fail me never;
Your promise surely will endure.
Oh, cast me not away forever
If words and deeds become impure.
Have mercy when I come defiled;
Forgive, lift up, restore your child.**

**All that I am and love most dearly -
Receive it all, O Lord, from me.
Let me confess my faith sincerely
And help me your own child to be!**

**Let nothing that I am or own
Serve any will but yours alone.**

P: Lord, now let Your servant depart in peace, according to Your Word, for my eyes have seen Your salvation, which You have prepared before the face of all people, a light to lighten the Gentiles and the glory of Your people Israel. Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit! As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.

The Blessing:

P: The Lord bless you and keep you,
The Lord make His face shine on you and be gracious to you.
The Lord look on you with favor and give you peace.

C: Amen.

Hymn #299 - *“All Who Believe and Are Baptized”*

**All who believe and are baptized
Shall see the Lord’s salvation;
Baptized into the death of Christ,
They are a new creation.
Through Christ’s redemption they shall stand
Among the glorious, heav’nly band
Of ev’ry tribe and nation.**

**With one accord, O God, we pray:
Grant us your Holy Spirit.
Help us in our infirmity
Through Jesus’ blood and merit.
Grant us to grow in grace each day
That by this sacrament we may
Eternal life inherit.**