



Mifflin Avenue United Methodist Church

Pastor Russel contact information:

Phone: (412) 735-5072 Email: Shulugarussel@gmail.com

Welcome Visitors: We are pleased you have chosen to worship with us today. If you have questions concerning the service, please feel free to ask an usher or a person sitting near you. If you do not have a permanent church home, please consider joining us. May God bless your experience in worship with us today. We are here to serve, so please let us know how we might better serve you.

JANUARY 8, 2023

SECOND SUNDAY AFTER THE EPIPHANY

.....
ORDER OF WORSHIP 11:15AM

CELEBRATION THROUGH CENTERING

PRELUDE

'How bright appears the morning star'

Dietrich Buctehude

GREETINGS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

CELEBRATION THROUGH ADORATION

*OPENING HYMN AND BRINGING FORTH THE LIGHT

'When Jesus Came to Jordan'

No. 252

(Sung to the Tune, 'The Church's One Foundation, No. 545)

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: When we pass through the water, God is with us. *Isa. 43:2*

People: Baptism is a gift to be celebrated and shared!

Pastor: Though the rivers rise, though the seas roar, we shall not be overwhelmed.

People: Baptism is God's act of snatching us from the jaws of death.

Pastor: All are God's beloved; in us God finds happiness. *Luke 3:22*

People: Baptism seals us in God's love and sends us forward.

Pastor: Come, let us remember our baptisms and worship God!

OPENING PRAYER

Bring us to the waters, God of our Baptism. Hold us as your children and claim us as your own. Guide us in our worship of you this day that we may feel the freedom that baptism gives us as well as the responsibility it places upon us to live as disciples of the Risen Christ. Amen.

INTROIT

'Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing'

No. 400, vs. 1 & 2

CHILDREN'S MOMENTS

CELEBRATION THROUGH THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Pastor: O Lord, open our eyes, our ears our minds, and our hearts.

People: **that we might behold wondrous things out of your word.**

CHORAL RESPONSE

'Thy Word'

No. 601 (Refrain only)

"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet and a light unto my path."

FIRST LESSON

Acts 10:34-43

Pastor: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

*GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

'Alleluia'

No. 186

"Alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia, alleluia"

Pastor: The Lord be with you,

People: **and also with you.**

Pastor: A reading from the Gospel of St. Matthew

People: **Glory to You, O Lord.**

*THE GOSPEL IS READ

Matthew 3:13-17

*THE GOSPEL RESPONSE

Pastor: The Gospel of the Living Christ.

People: **Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.**

*GLORIA PATRI

No. 70

**Glo-ry be to the Fa-ther
And to the Son and to the Holy Ghost;
As it was in the be-gin-ning,
Is now, and ev-er shall be,
World without end. A-men. A-men.**

CELEBRATION THROUGH PROCLAMATION

SERMON

'What God Has Joined Together'

Rev. Russel Shuluga

CELEBRATION THROUGH CONFESSION AND PARDON

CALL TO CONFESSION

Come to the waters, friends, and let us be cleansed of the sin that keeps us from serving God.

HYMN

'I Surrender All'

No. 354 (Refrain only)

***I surrender all! I surrender all!
All to thee, my blessed Savior,
I surrender all!***

LITANY OF CONFESSION

Sovereign God, in baptism you called us to turn from sin and to turn to Jesus Christ; but we stray from his ways and do not heed your call.

(Silence)

Lord, have mercy.

Christ have mercy.

In baptism, you joined us to Christ in his death that we might be raised with Christ in new life; but we cherish old ways and fail to embrace the risen life of righteousness, justice, and love.

(Silence)

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

In baptism, you united us with all the baptized who confess your name; but we foster division in the church. We refuse to live as one people, and so fail to witness to your reconciling love before the world.

(Silence)

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

In baptism, you call us to ministry in all realms of life, but we refuse the struggle to know your will; We do not nurture the ways of peace; We allow enmity to grow among us, setting neighbor against neighbor and nation against nation. We abuse the earth you entrust to our care, And live in discord with all you have made.

(Silence)

Lord, have mercy,

Christ have mercy.

In baptism, you sent us to serve with compassion all for whom Christ died; but we ignore the suffering of the oppressed and the plight of the poor. We take bread from the hungry and stop our ears to cries for justice.

(Silence)

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

In baptism, you give us the Holy Spirit to teach and guide us but we rely on ourselves

and refuse to trust your direction.
We spurn your eternal wisdom,
preferring, instead, the luring ways of the world.

(Silence)

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Remember the promises you made to us in baptism,

**forgive our sinful ways
and heal our brokenness.**

**Set us free from all that enslaves us,
and raise us to new life in Jesus Christ,
that we may be your faithful servants,
showing forth your healing love to the world,
to the glory of your holy name.**

Amen.

(Silence)

Lord, have mercy,

Christ, have mercy.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Hear the good news: Who is in a position to condemn? Only Christ, and Christ died for us, Christ rose for us, Christ lives in power for us, Christ prays for us. Anyone who is in Christ is of the New Creation. The old life is finished, gone. Behold, new life has begun. Brothers and Sisters, believe the good news:

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

HYMN OF ASSURANCE

'Because He Lives'

No. 364, vs. 1

*God sent his Son, they called him Jesus;
he came to love, heal and forgive;
he lived and died to buy my pardon,
an empty grave is there to prove my Savior lives.*

Refrain:

*Because he lives, I can face tomorrow;
because he lives, all fear is gone;
because I know he holds the future,
and life is worth living just because he lives.*

REAFFIRMATION OF THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT

INVITATION

We gather today to worship and praise the God of awe and majesty. We come to encounter the God who knows us each by name and who walks with us in intimate love. We come to reaffirm the blessing we have received through our baptism. In baptism, we remember God's saving actions throughout history, and we have the opportunity to answer yes as God whispers our names. As a community of God, we gather today at the waters of baptism to reaffirm our commitment to Christ and to experience anew the transforming power of the Holy Spirit.

INTRODUCTION

Brothers and sisters in Christ:
Through the Sacrament of Baptism
we are initiated into Christ's holy Church.

We are incorporated into God's mighty acts of salvation and given new birth through water and the Spirit. All this is God's gift, offered to us without price. Through the reaffirmation of our faith we renew the covenant declared at our baptism, acknowledge what God is doing for us, and affirm our commitment to Christ's holy Church.

RENUNCIATION OF SIN

On behalf of the whole Church, I ask you:
Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of your sin?
I do.

Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?
I do.

Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior, put your whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as your Lord, in union with the Church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations, and races?
I do.

According to the grace given to you, will you remain faithful members of Christ's holy Church and serve as Christ's representatives in the world?
I will.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Let us join together in professing the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

Do you believe in God the Father?

I believe in God, the Father Almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

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 to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, is seated at the right hand of the Father, and will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
[the holy catholic* church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.]**

THANKSGIVING OVER THE WATER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Eternal Father:

When nothing existed but chaos,
you swept across the dark waters
and brought forth light.

In the days of Noah

you saved those on the ark through water.

After the flood you set in the clouds a rainbow.

When you saw your people as slaves in Egypt,
you led them to freedom through the sea.

Their children you brought through the Jordan
to the land which you promised.

****Sing to the Lord, all the earth.**

Tell of God's mercy each day.

In the fullness of time you sent Jesus,
nurtured in the water of a womb.

He was baptized by John and anointed by your Spirit.

He called his disciples

to share in the baptism of his death and resurrection

and to make disciples of all nations.

****Declare Christ's works to the nations,**

his glory among all the people.

Pour out your Holy Spirit,

and by this gift of water call to our remembrance

the grace declared to us in our baptism.

For you have washed away our sins,

and you clothe us with righteousness throughout our lives,

that dying and rising with Christ

we may share in his final victory.

****All praise to you, Eternal Father,**

through your Son Jesus Christ,

who with you and the Holy Spirit

lives and reigns for ever. Amen.

(During the singing of the hymn, you are invited to come and touch the waters of baptism as you give thanks for your baptism.)

*I was there to hear your borne cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized,
to see your life unfold.*

*I was there when you were but a child,
with a faith to suit you well;
In a blaze of light you wandered off
to find where demons dwell.
When you heard the wonder of the Word.*

*I was there to cheer you on;
You were raised to praise the living God,
to whom you now belong.
If you find someone to share your time
and you join your hearts as one,*

*I'll be there to make your verses rhyme
from dusk 'till rising sun.
In the middle ages of your life,
not too old, no longer young,*

*I'll be there to guide you through the night,
complete what I've begun.
When the evening gently closes in,
and you shut your weary eyes,*

*I'll be there as I have always been
with just one more surprise.*

*I was there to hear your borne cry,
I'll be there when you are old.
I rejoiced the day you were baptized,
to see your life unfold.*

PRAYER

The Holy Spirit work within you, that having been born through water and the Spirit, you may live as faithful disciples of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

THANKSGIVING

Let us rejoice in the faithfulness of our covenant God.

**We give thanks for all that God has already given us.
As members of the body of Christ
and in this congregation of The United Methodist Church,
we will faithfully participate in the ministries of the Church
by our prayers, our presence, our gifts,
our service and our witness
that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.**

The God of all grace,
who has called us to eternal glory in Christ,
establish and strengthen you
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
that you may live in grace and peace.

CELEBRATION THROUGH COMMITMENT

INVITATION TO THE OFFERING

THE LORD'S PRAYER

THE OFFERTORY

'Aria'

G.F. Handel

*DOXOLOGY

No. 95

*"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow. Praise God, all creatures here below.
Praise God above, ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. AMEN.*

*OFFERTORY PRAYER

Gracious God, we come today with joy for your baptism; we come with praise for your glory; we come with gratitude for your love. As we offer these gifts to you, send your Spirit upon us, that our hands and our hearts may do your work in the world. As we offer our lives to you, bless us with your strength that we may join with you to work for the blessing of peace throughout the world. Amen.

CELEBRATION THROUGH SENDING

*BENEDICTION

Pastor: Go forth and proclaim the good news: God calls us by name and fashions us for glory.

People: We go as people washed clean in the waters of our baptism,

Pastor: Go forth and live the good news: the Holy Spirit blesses us and seals us in God's love.

People: We go as people blessed by God, that we might be a blessing

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE

"Danish Amen"

No. 898

A-men, a-men, a—men.



*RECESSIONAL HYMN

"Child of Blessing, Child of Promise"

No. 611, vs. 1 & 4

**1. Child of blessing, child of promise,
Baptized with the Spirit's sign:
With this water God has sealed you
Unto love and grace divine.**

**4. Child of God, the loving parent,
Learn to know whose child you are.
Grow and laugh and sing and worship,
Trust and love God more than all.**

POSTLUDE

'In thee is gladness'

J.S. Bach

WE TAKE THE LIGHT OF JESUS INTO THE WORLD