

# Service of Holy Communion

## January 10, 2021 The Baptism of our Lord

### WELCOME

### PRELUDE

"How Lovely Shines the Morning Star" arr. Paul Manz

Organ

### LAMENTATION

#### *Introduction:*

2020 was a year of unexpected change. The pandemic brought social restrictions that separated us more than usual, and led to the loss - whether permanent or temporary - of beloved aspects of our lives. Great and sustained loss bids us to lament, to give voice to our hurts and griefs. During the season of Epiphany, worship will open with lamentation and response, rather than confession and forgiveness.

### LAMENTS AND RESPONSE

Gracious God, by day and night we pour out our hearts to you. Look and see what we have suffered. When will this hardship come to an end? Hear us as we cry:

**How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever?**

Loving God, we cry to you in the depths of our despair, in the chaos of our crisis, in the anguish of our agony.\*

**How long, O Lord, how long?**

We are weary and worn, broken, beaten, and hungry for justice, relief, healing, and love.\*

**How long, O Lord, how long?**

Hear us, Lord, as we place our sorrows and griefs before you; respond to us with your mercy and tender care.

*(silence for reflection)*

We lament today the loss of lives during this season. We grieve the deaths of our loved ones, the deaths of strangers, and the heartbreak of those who died alone. Look upon your people with compassion, Holy God, and ease our suffering. Give us the promise of new life, the hope of better days to come. Protect and uphold all those who are working to sustain life, bring healing, and end this pandemic.

**Hear us, O God, for the sake of Jesus, who was crucified and has risen from the dead. Amen.**

*\*Adapted from Prayer by Jenna Perinne*

**GATHERING SONG** *"Christ, When for Us You Were Baptized"*

- 1 Christ, when for us you were baptized,  
 God's Spirit on you came,  
 as peaceful as a dove, and yet  
 as urgent as a flame,  
 as urgent as a flame.
- 2 God called you, "My beloved Son";  
 you are God's servant true,  
 sent to proclaim the reign of heav'n,  
 God's holy will to do,  
 God's holy will to do.

Text: F. Bland Tucker, 1895-1984, alt.

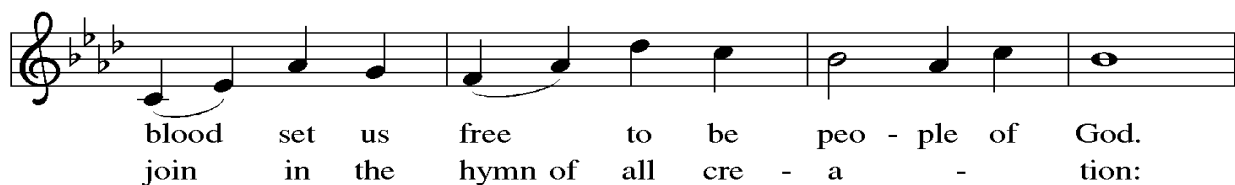
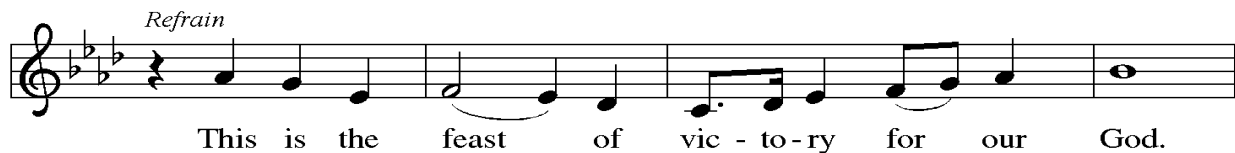
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**GREETING**

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

**And also with you.**

**HYMN OF PRAISE**



Pow - er and rich - es, wis - dom and strength, and  
Bless - ing and hon - or, glo - ry and might be to



hon - or and bless - ing and glo - ry are his.  
God and the Lamb for - ev - er. A - men.



3 For the Lamb who was slain has be -



gun his reign. Al - le - lu - ia.

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Holy God, creator of light and giver of goodness, your voice moves over the waters. Immerse us in your grace, and transform us by your Spirit, that we may follow after your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

## THE WORD

### FIRST READING: Genesis 1:1-5

*Out of chaos, God brings order. Out of the formless void, God brings light. This familiar story was good news for the Israelites, who experienced much chaos in their history. It remains good news for us. God created and continues to create new life.*

<sup>1</sup>In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, <sup>2</sup>the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. <sup>3</sup>Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. <sup>4</sup>And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. <sup>5</sup>God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

The Word of the Lord

**Thanks be to God.**

### PSALM: Psalm 29:1-6, 9-11

<sup>1</sup>Ascribe to the LORD, you gods, ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.

<sup>2</sup>Ascribe to the LORD the glory due God's name;

**worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.**

<sup>3</sup>The voice of the LORD is upon the waters; the God of glory thunders;  
the LORD is upon the mighty waters.

<sup>4</sup>**The voice of the LORD is a powerful voice;  
the voice of the LORD is a voice of splendor.**

<sup>5</sup>The voice of the LORD breaks the cedar trees;  
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon;

<sup>6</sup>**the LORD makes Lebanon skip like a calf, and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.**

<sup>9</sup>The voice of the LORD makes the oak trees writhe and strips the forests bare.  
And in the temple of the LORD all are crying, "Glory!"

<sup>10</sup>**The LORD sits enthroned above the flood; the LORD sits enthroned as king  
forevermore.**

<sup>11</sup>O LORD, give strength to your people; give them, O LORD, the blessings of peace.

## SECOND READING: Acts 19:1-7

*In Ephesus, Paul encounters people who had received John's baptism of repentance but had never heard of the Holy Spirit or of baptism in the name of Jesus. After Paul baptizes them, the Holy Spirit comes upon them and empowers them with gifts of the Spirit.*

<sup>1</sup>While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. <sup>2</sup>He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?" They replied, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit." <sup>3</sup>Then he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They answered, "Into John's baptism." <sup>4</sup>Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus." <sup>5</sup>On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. <sup>6</sup>When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied—<sup>7</sup>altogether there were about twelve of them.

The Word of the Lord  
**Thanks be to God.**

## GOSPEL ACCLAMATION

Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia,  
al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

*Repeat alleluia*

Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of e - ter - nal life.

**GOSPEL READING: Mark 1:4-11**

The Holy Gospel according to Mark, the first chapter

**Glory to you, O Lord.**

*Mark's gospel reports the story of Jesus' baptism with some irony: the one on whom the Spirit descends is himself the one who will baptize others with the Holy Spirit.*

<sup>4</sup>John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>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. <sup>6</sup>Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>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. <sup>8</sup>I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

<sup>9</sup>In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup>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. <sup>11</sup>And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

The Gospel of the Lord

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**SERMON**

It's been said that water should always remind us of our baptism – tap water in the bathroom sink, rain on the windshield of a car, rushing rivers, endless oceans, a glass of water sitting on the table. All those things should prompt us to recall that water has been dribbled over our heads in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

I like that suggestion – that water should remind us of our baptism – but I confess that I rarely think about my own baptism when I see or feel water. I think "Oh, it's raining," or "I'm brushing my teeth" or "this bath feels good" or "that's a beautiful waterfall." I'd like to be more fully aware, in the moment, that every drop of water is precious, life-giving, sanctified even – a gift from God that we cannot live without. I'd like to see the connection between everyday water, and the water God used to claim us as beloved, to redeem us.

When Jesus stepped out of the Jordan River, water was running down his robe, his hair, and into his water-logged sandals. The Jordan River is not a big, thundering river; it's actually rather small. It's not clear and clean, but murky and muddy. That's the water Jesus rose from the day he was baptized, maybe with a stray leaf or some algae caught in his beard.

When I was in high school there was a pond on campus, back behind the science labs. Science classes used it to test things and look at stuff under a microscope, but those of us in the band used it as an initiation rite. Some unsuspecting under-classman would be loitering near the band hall at the end of the day, and three or four bigger people would tackle him, grab his arms and legs, carry him as he struggled to get away, and throw him in the pond. I was thrown in myself, a rather nasty experience because that was pond water, not lovely, clear, running water in a mountain stream. But there was something satisfying about having been tossed into the pond, as though from then on you really belonged.

According to today's gospel reading, lots of people were coming out to be baptized by John in the Jordan River. Mark 1 verse 4 says it was "a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins." The gospel reading claims that the whole Judean countryside, and all the

people – *all* the people – of Jerusalem were flocking to the Jordan River to receive the benefits of John's baptism. What would drive them to do that? What did they hope to receive, or maybe let-go-of – a burden or a grievance?

If the same thing took place today it would be like this: Some odd person wearing horse-hair shirts, his pants held up by twine, surviving berries and crickets, would be calling people to Woman Hollering Creek to be washed clean of their sins through a baptism of repentance. He wouldn't be gathering them in one of San Antonio's historic missions, or at the San Fernando Cathedral, or St. John or Grace Lutheran downtown or even beautiful Zion Lutheran in Helotes. The people wouldn't be going to Texas Lutheran University where there are renowned theology professors, or to the synod office to be blessed by the bishop. Just Woman Hollering Creek. And hundreds, thousands of people from San Antonio, Bexar county, Guadalupe and Comal counties, maybe even Wilson county, would rush to wade into those questionable waters.

Maybe people hurried to John for baptism because the world was as messed up then as it is today. Maybe they were looking for help or renewal that the government, the educational system, and the church structure wasn't providing. They seemed nearly desperate for something better, something that would make them whole, that would put things right.

Baptism – Jesus' baptism, our baptism: water pouring over our heads, words said on our behalf, and when it's done – new life, a new you, a new me, a new community of people who seek to live Jesus' way.

As I get older I wonder if I have lived up to my baptism, the promises made, the hope that, in you and in me, Jesus' compassionate attention, his truth and saving grace will expand and bless the world around us. Have I done that? Has that happened through me? I'm not sure.

The work of our baptisms is not simply, maybe not primarily, within the family of the church – it's meant to be out in the daily life of the world, among people who've been overlooked, people who are broken, people who are tired or lonely, people trapped by the obligations and expectations in their lives. Have I been 'like Jesus' among those folks and not just 'in church'? (By the way, I'm not looking for reassurance, but for you to ponder this with me.)

They say that water should always remind us of our baptism. Turn on the sprinkler in the backyard – baptism. Pour water in the coffee maker – baptism. Fill the washing machine with water – baptism. Wash the car – baptism. See rain dripping from your roof – baptism. But what, specifically, should we remember? Surely not simply the fact that we are baptized, but the essence of what baptism is and who it makes us.

A washing away of sin. A dying and rising with Christ, day after day. A new life and a promise of more new life to come. A pledge, from us, to "live among God's faithful people... proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, serve all people... and strive for justice and peace in all the earth." That is what our baptized lives are meant to look like, not perfectly of course, but clearly aiming in that direction. That is who we have been claimed and redeemed to be. That is who we are. People whose daily lives reflect the good news of Jesus.

I'm here by the baptismal font which is filled with water; if you're at home you might turn on a faucet. Look at this simple, necessary element of God's creation: water. So ordinary we hardly notice it; so powerful it changes the trajectory of our lives, the way we know ourselves

and others, how we move in the world. Water poured over our heads as God said, “You are my beloved child, joined forever to Jesus. I am pleased with you.”

Think of that: God is pleased with you. Through baptism, God leads us in the ways of Jesus: truth-telling that results in reconciliation, right living paired with forgiveness, and rejection of violence as we walk in the shadow of the cross.

Whenever you encounter water, water in any form, remember that you are baptized. You have died with Christ and you are raised to new life with Christ. Your baptism links you forever to Jesus and to Jesus’ people. Droplets of water on a leaf – God has claimed you in baptism. You are beloved. Puddles in the street after rain – baptism; God is pleased with you! Salty waters of the Gulf – your life is intrinsically bound up in the life of Jesus; the two cannot be separated. Receive and live-in the new life, the Jesus-life, God has given you.

### **HYMN OF THE DAY**    *“Baptized and Set Free”*

- 1 We are people created,  
chosen by God.  
Then we're washed, ever gently,  
in mercy and love.  
Sin has power no more.  
Jesus opened the door  
to a fountain bringing healing,  
and wholeness and more.
  
- 2 We are fed and we're nourished,  
filled and refreshed.  
Then our hunger returns and  
again we are blessed.  
For whatever the need,  
God is greater indeed:  
endless ocean, always deeper  
than all of our need.
  
- 4 Now with praise and thanksgiving,  
we join the song.  
All are welcome! We gather  
to sing loud and strong.  
Not enslaved, but set free!  
From now on, all will be  
one in Jesus, one in water,  
baptized and set free!

Text: Cathy Skogen-Soldner, b. 1956  
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### **APOSTLES’ CREED**

With the whole Church let us confess our faith.

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,**

**who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary,  
suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and buried;  
He descended to the dead.**

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

**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. Amen.**

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE**

Guided by Christ made known to the nations, let us offer our prayers for the church, the world, and all people in need.

*A brief silence.*

For the church throughout the world and its leaders, that guided by the Holy Spirit they proclaim the forgiveness of sins, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For wilderness and water, wind and wild beasts, and all living things on earth, that God's goodness is revealed through creation and faithful stewards care for all God has made, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For the nations of the world and their leaders, for laborers busy both day and night, and for peacemakers amid strife, that God inspire all people to use their strength wisely, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For the sick and those who provide medical care, for the imprisoned and those who show them mercy, for the lonely and those who provide companionship, for all who suffer, that God shower compassion, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

For the congregation gathered here, for students returning to school, for those seeking renewal in their daily work, that all the beloved of God experience grace and peace, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

*Here other intercessions may be offered.*

For the thanksgivings and concerns we raise to God now...

Let us pray, **Have mercy, O God.**

In thanksgiving for the faithful departed who now rest from their labors, that their witness inspire us in our baptismal vocations, let us pray. **Have mercy, O God.**

Merciful God, hear the prayers of your people, spoken or silent, for the sake of the one who dwells among us, your Son, Jesus Christ our Savior.  
**Amen.**



## THE PEACE

The peace of Christ be with you always.  
**And also with you.**

## THE DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;  
 praise him, all creatures here below;  
 praise him above, ye heav'nly host;  
 praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

Text: Thomas Ken, 1637-1711

## OFFERING

Thank you for your faithful giving to the ministry of Jesus at Shepherd King. Your generosity not only sustains this congregation, but also supports the larger Lutheran Church in efforts like combating hunger through the World Hunger Appeal. If you wish to give to Shepherd King, please see our website: [www.skllcsa.org](http://www.skllcsa.org)

## OFFERING PRAYER

Gracious God, you came to us as one unknown, bringing joy and salvation to the earth. Nourish us at your banquet table, that with all who welcome your birth we may proclaim your peace, revealed in Jesus Christ, our Savior.  
**Amen.**

*(Please have the bread and wine/juice ready for Holy Communion)*

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you. And al - so with you.

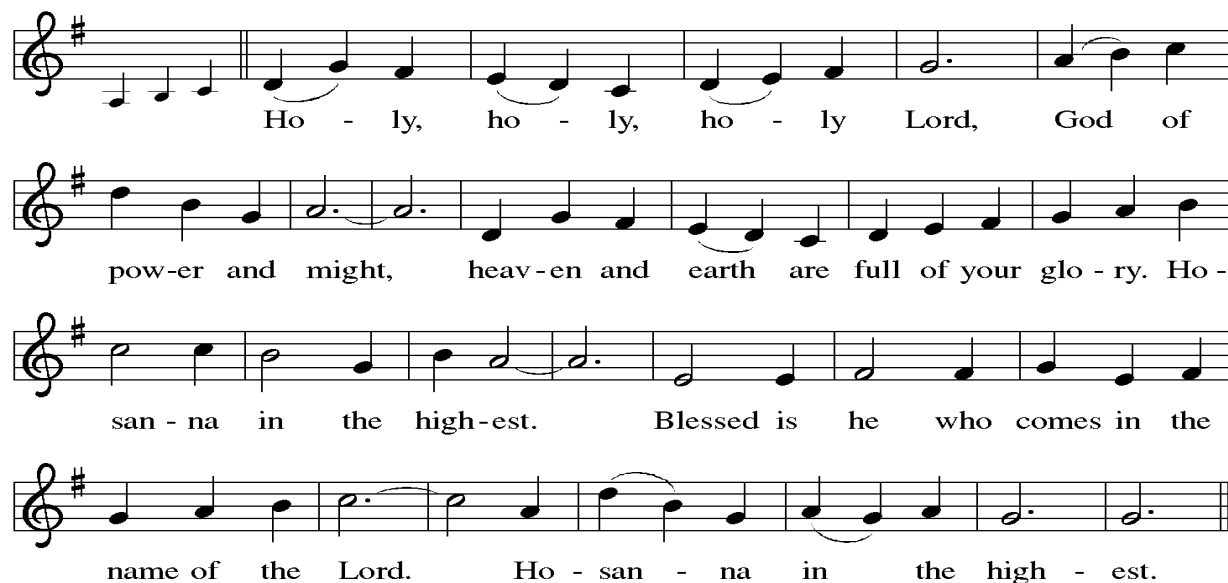
Lift up your hearts. We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

## PREFACE FOR EPIPHANY

It is indeed right, our du - ty and our joy,  
 that we should at all times and in all places give thanks and praise to you,  
 al - mighty and merciful God, through our Sav - ior Je - sus Christ.  
 By the leading of a star he was shown forth to all na - tions;  
 in the waters of the Jordan you proclaimed him your be - lov - ed Son,  
 and in the miracle of water turned to wine he re - vealed your glo - ry.  
 And so, with all the choirs of an - gels,  
 with the church on earth and the hosts of heav - en,  
 we praise your name and join their un - end - ing hymn:

*Holy, Holy, Holy*


Ho - ly, ho - ly, ho - ly Lord, God of  
 pow-er and might, heav-en and earth are full of your glo - ry. Ho -  
 san - na in the high-est. Blessed is he who comes in the  
 name of the Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est.

**EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER**

God who, in the beginning, made order out of chaos bringing forth creation; who blessed Abraham and Sarah with a child, who led Israel from slavery into freedom, who through the prophets foretold the coming of a suffering servant, and who made Mary mother of a Son to be called Emmanuel – God, most high, who has redeemed us through Jesus Christ, our Lord – we remember...

In the night in which he was betrayed, our Lord Jesus took bread and gave thanks, broke it and gave it to his disciples, saying: Take and eat; this is my body given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me.

Again, after supper, he took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it for all to drink, saying: This cup is the new covenant in my blood, shed for you and for all people for the forgiveness of sin. Do this in remembrance of me.

**LORD'S PRAYER**

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

**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.**

### **INVITATION TO COMMUNION**

The Word is revealed in a manger, in simple bread and wine. Come meet Christ in this meal.

Take the bread and eat, this is the body of Christ, given for you. *(please consume the bread)*

Take the cup and drink, this is the blood of Christ, shed for you. *(please drink from the cup)*

### **BLESSING AFTER COMMUNION**

The body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, strengthen you and keep you in his grace.  
**Amen.**

### **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

We give you thanks, gracious God, that you have once again fed us from your very self with the body and blood of Christ. Through this mystery, send us forth to proclaim your promise to a world in need, through the same Jesus Christ, our Savior.  
**Amen.**

### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

The Mission Endowment Fund Oversight Committee meets tomorrow, Monday the 11<sup>th</sup>, at 2pm over Zoom.

Shepherd King's Book Discussion group meets tomorrow evening, from 7 to 8 pm, to talk about *Abrazos* by Rebecca Padilla.

Next Sunday, January 17, is Shepherd King's annual Congregational Meeting. It will begin shortly after worship – probably about 10:45 or 10:50. The meeting will be held virtually. You may join in either via livestream – the livestream will simply continue after the service ends. You can ask questions, make comments, and vote using the comments on livestream. Or you can attend on Zoom – make sure I know you wish to join the Zoom meeting and I'll send you the link. I will operate Zoom here in the sanctuary during the meeting. You can ask questions and/or vote either by voice or in the comments on Zoom.

If you have neither livestream nor Zoom, please get in touch with a member who does have those things. You can call them on your telephone at 10:45 am, and then listen-in over your phone to their livestream or Zoom. You can make comments and cast your vote through the person you have called.

You should have received materials this week for the meeting, including a proposed budget for 2021, a list of candidates for council, and an updated congregation constitution. If you have questions about those things during the week, contact me or Kathy Gerloff (budget) or Jorie Hughes (constitution).

**BLESSING**

Almighty God, who sent the Holy Spirit to Mary, proclaimed joy through the angels, sent the shepherds with good news, and led the magi by a star, bless you this day † through the Word made flesh.

**Amen.**

**CLOSING HYMN** *“God, Whose Almighty Word”*

- 1 God, whose almighty word  
chaos and darkness heard  
and took their flight:  
hear us, we humbly pray,  
and where the gospel day  
sheds not its glorious ray,  
let there be light.
  
- 2 Christ, who once came to bring,  
on your redeeming wing,  
healing and sight;  
health to the troubled mind,  
sight where illusions blind;  
oh, now to humankind  
let there be light.
  
- 4 Holy and blessed three,  
glorious Trinity,  
Wisdom, Love, Might:  
boundless as ocean's tide,  
rolling in fullest pride,  
through the earth, far and wide,  
let there be light.

Text: John Marriott, 1780-1825, alt.

**DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Share the gift of Jesus.

**Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!**

**POSTLUDE**

**Organ**

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