

In the beginning was the Word...

An Advent & Christmas Course from the Diocese of Aberdeen & Orkney



Baptism

Sunday 7th January 2024



Baptism of Christ by David Zelenka (<https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Baptism-of-Christ.jpg>)

Scripture: Mark 1:4-11

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

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

To reflect

Do you remember your Baptism? Or have you been told stories about it, or seen pictures or perhaps just the certificate. You may have been baptised as an adult, so remember it well or perhaps you were baptised as an infant, with your parents and godparents making the promises on your behalf.

God calls to our lives in love and baptism is one way we respond. We are marked as God's own with the sign of the cross and promises are made about following the way of Jesus – through prayer, service, participation in Eucharist and more. Today you're invited to reflect on what your Baptism means to you, when did you last renew your Baptism vows. If you haven't yet been Baptised, perhaps you'd like to speak to your Priest about this, or if you'd like to re-affirm these vows (also known as confirmation).

To pray

Almighty God, you have given us the will to do all these things: Give us the courage and strength to achieve them to the honour and glory of your name, and the good of your Church and people; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. Amen. (from the Church of Ireland)

St. John the Baptist: 2 Baptism by Malcolm Guite (from *Sounding the Seasons*, 2012)

Love's hidden thread has drawn us to the font,
A wide womb floating on the breath of God,
Feathered with seraph wings, lit with the swift
Lightening of praise, with thunder over-spread,
And under-girded with an unheard song,
Calling through water, fire, darkness, pain,
Calling us to the life for which we long,
Yearning to bring us to our birth again.
Again the breath of God is on the waters
In whose reflecting face our candles shine,
Again he draws from death the sons and daughters
For whom he bid the elements combine.
As living stones around a font today,
Rejoice with those who roll the stone away.

To Listen

Baptism Song by Jon and Emily Darby

<https://open.spotify.com/track/6THDyQlmanMEb960anzzbd?si=2e330297f8ec432e>

God is Love by Marvin Gaye, one version is the Detroit Mix

<https://open.spotify.com/track/1J3WjiLbPAdW0mSBTxoHqF?si=0907775e79d246be>

God is Love, Let Heaven Adore Him, one version is by High Street Hymns

<https://open.spotify.com/track/54ac77ituVfdMh82p4OTYv?si=ef0db00ee9284870>

...and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.