

## REMEMBRANCE OF BAPTISM

Blessed be the holy Trinity, † one God, the fountain of living water,  
the rock who gave us birth, our light and our salvation. **Amen.**

Joined to Christ in the waters of baptism,  
we are clothed with God's mercy and forgiveness.

Let us give thanks for the gift of baptism.

**We give you thanks, O God, for in the beginning your Spirit moved over the waters  
and by your Word you created the world, calling all life into being.**

**Through the waters of the flood you delivered Noah and his family.**

**Through the sea you led your people Israel from slavery into freedom.**

**At the river your Son, Jesus, was baptized by John and anointed with the Holy Spirit.**

By water and your Word you claim us as daughters and sons,

**We receive your promises and we are called to serve you.**

**We praise you for the gift of water that sustains life,**

**and above all we praise you for the gift of new life in Jesus Christ.**

Show us with your Spirit, and renew our lives with your forgiveness, grace, and love.

To you be given honor and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord

in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray....**O God, you are the tree of life, offering shelter to all the world. Graft us into  
yourself and nurture our growth, that we may bear your truth and love to those in need,  
through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

## FIRST READING: Ezekiel 17:22-24

*Tree imagery is used in a messianic prophecy to tell how the LORD will choose someone  
from Judah's royal family (the cedar tree) to reign over all creation. This tree will be planted on  
Mount Zion, the location of the holy temple.*

<sup>22</sup>Thus says the Lord GOD:

I myself will take a sprig from the lofty top of a cedar;

I will set it out. I will break off a tender one from the topmost of its young twigs;

I myself will plant it on a high and lofty mountain.

<sup>23</sup>On the mountain height of Israel I will plant it,

in order that it may produce boughs and bear fruit, and become a noble cedar.

Under it every kind of bird will live; in the shade of its branches will nest

winged creatures of every kind. <sup>24</sup>All the trees of the field shall know that I am the LORD.

I bring low the high tree, I make high the low tree;

I dry up the green tree and make the dry tree flourish.

I the LORD have spoken; I will accomplish it.

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

## **PSALM: Psalm 92:1-4; 12-15**

<sup>1</sup>It is a good thing to give thanks | to the LORD, / to sing praise to your name, | O Most High;

<sup>2</sup>**to herald your love | in the morning / and your faithful- | ness at night;**

<sup>3</sup>on the psaltery, and | on the lyre, / and to the melody | of the harp.

<sup>4</sup>**For you have made me glad by your | acts, O LORD;  
and I shout for joy because of the works | of your hands.**

<sup>12</sup>The righteous shall flourish | like a palm tree,  
and shall spread abroad like a ce- | dar of Lebanon.

<sup>13</sup>**Those who are planted in the house | of the LORD  
shall flourish in the courts | of our God;**

<sup>14</sup>they shall still bear fruit | in old age; / they shall be | green and succulent;

<sup>15</sup>**that they may show how up- | right the LORD is,  
my rock, in whom there is | no injustice.**

## **SECOND READING: 2 Corinthians 5:6-10 [11-13] 14-17**

*Paul encourages believers to live by faith and not by sight. We do not consider Jesus from a human perspective but through the eyes of faith, believing he died for all and was raised. All who are in Christ are now in God's new creation.*

<sup>6</sup>So we are always confident; even though we know that while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord—<sup>7</sup>for we walk by faith, not by sight. <sup>8</sup>Yes, we do have confidence, and we would rather be away from the body and at home with the Lord. <sup>9</sup>So whether we are at home or away, we make it our aim to please him. <sup>10</sup>For all of us must appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each may receive recompense for what has been done in the body, whether good or evil.

[<sup>11</sup>Therefore, knowing the fear of the Lord, we try to persuade others; but we ourselves are well known to God, and I hope that we are also well known to your consciences. <sup>12</sup>We are not commending ourselves to you again, but giving you an opportunity to boast about us, so that you may be able to answer those who boast in outward appearance and not in the heart. <sup>13</sup>For if we are beside ourselves, it is for God; if we are in our right mind, it is for you. ] <sup>14</sup>For the love of Christ urges us on, because we are convinced that one has died for all; therefore all have died. <sup>15</sup>And he died for all, so that those who live might live no longer for themselves, but for him who died and was raised for them.

<sup>16</sup>From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once knew Christ from a human point of view, we know him no longer in that way. <sup>17</sup>So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!

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

## **GOSPEL READING: Mark 4:26-34**

*Jesus frequently uses parables to teach ordinary people as they are able to hear and understand. Images of sowing and growing show the vitality of God's kingdom.*

<sup>26</sup>[Jesus] said, "The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground,<sup>27</sup> and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how.<sup>28</sup> The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head.<sup>29</sup> But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come."

<sup>30</sup>He also said, "With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? <sup>31</sup>It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; <sup>32</sup>yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade."

<sup>33</sup>With many such parables he spoke the word to them, as they were able to hear it; <sup>34</sup>he did not speak to them except in parables, but he explained everything in private to his disciples. The gospel of the Lord. **Thanks be to God.**

## **APOSTLES' CREED**

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

**I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.**

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.**

**He descended into hell. On the third day he rose again.**

**He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.**

**He will come again 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**

## **OFFERING PRAYER**

*We pray together for however we have made offerings to God in our lives.*

Let us pray. **We praise you, God, Creator of the universe. We thank you for all of the blessings in our lives and in the lives of those around us. Take these gifts and use them for your holy work. Grant us opportunities to serve those in need. Send your Spirit to watch over us and guide us in all that we do through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

## **PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION**

*Pastor:* Let us come before the triune God in prayer.

*A brief silence.*

*Leader:* Holy God, you plant the seeds of faith in every nation. Enliven your church, so that the good news of your grace may root and grow throughout the world.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* Creator, even the trees, shrubs, and flowers delight in your goodness. From the depths of the soil to the highest mountain, bring forth new plants.

Restore growth to places suffering drought. Lord, in your mercy,

**hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* Judge of nations, we pray for our leaders and those in power. Grant them the ability to regard those under their charge with humility, dedicating their lives in service to others. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

*Pastor:* Divine comforter, you show compassion to those in need and provide relief to those who call on you. Bless all who suffer, especially people trapped in cycles of poverty and homelessness. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* Sovereign God, this house of worship belongs to you. We give thanks and pray for our church musician(s) (*especially*). We dedicate to you the joyful noise that comes from this place; the cries of children, the melody of voice and instruments, and the songs from our hearts. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

*Leader:* Eternal God, we give thanks for our ancestors in the faith who are now at home with you. We look forward to that day when we are reunited in your new creation. Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

*Pastor:* We lift our prayers to you, O God, trusting in your abiding grace. **Amen.**

## **LORD'S PRAYER**

Gathered into one by Christ, let us 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**

## **PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

Let us pray.

**Wellspring of joy, through this meal you have put gladness in our hearts.  
Satisfy the hunger still around us, and send us as joyful witnesses,  
that your love may bring joy to the hearts of all people,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## **BLESSING**

Beloved children of God, as we are sent from this place, know that God loves you.

Christ's presence is with you wherever you go.

Finally, know that the Spirit is with you whenever you call on the Lord. **Amen.**

## **DISMISSAL**

Go and serve others with the love of Christ! **Thanks be to God!**

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