

# **St Swithun's Church Family Baptism of Christ**



**10<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

**10am Zoom**

**Or use this booklet to join  
together with us in Spirit**

*Please use this booklet to **worship with us** on zoom at 10am – or read through this service knowing that we are joining our prayers together in Spirit.*

*Create a sacred space – today find something gold to wear or place in front of you and if possible gather a candle and a cross if you can find them.*

*The children might like to use the Sunday school resources provided by Izzy.*

*In addition we will be audio recording today's sermon which will be uploaded to the website [www.saintswithuns.org.uk](http://www.saintswithuns.org.uk)*

*There are various prayer resources and other things to look at on the website – if you have any feedback or anything to share please let me know.*

***Giving - if you usually give your collection on a Sunday morning in cash, and you are able to, please put this aside each week to bring to church when you are next able to. Even better would be to set up your giving online ('Saint Swithun's PCC' ; 60-05-11 ; 16126718 ; NatWest Bank) if you haven't already done this.***

*You might like to enhance your worship by singing or listening to a hymn or a song at various points – I have a few suggestions below – you tube is a great resource...*

<b>Come Holy Spirit our souls inspire</b>	<a href="https://youtu.be/ljdMWFrd4Vo">https://youtu.be/ljdMWFrd4Vo</a>
<b>Here I am Lord</b>	<a href="https://youtu.be/-SHlrS6pMG4">https://youtu.be/-SHlrS6pMG4</a>
<b>Mine eyes have seen the glory</b>	<a href="https://youtu.be/maty13s_db4">https://youtu.be/maty13s_db4</a>
<b>Christ be our light</b>	<a href="https://youtu.be/ZJq3bhdgQoc">https://youtu.be/ZJq3bhdgQoc</a>
<b>Be still my soul</b>	<a href="https://youtu.be/hqgC1tqifV8">https://youtu.be/hqgC1tqifV8</a>

# Introduction

Today is a festival day – a day when we wear gold in church – so maybe find something golden to look at or wear to help you remember that we are celebrating a church party day today.

The Festival is The Baptism of Christ – our first Sunday in Epiphany. After Jesus' birth and childhood we jump forwards 30 years to his baptism in the river Jordan by John the Baptist which begins the story of his ministry.

## The Gathering

### The Greeting

In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Grace, mercy and peace  
from God our Father  
and the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

**And also with you**

### Prayers of preparation

When Jesus comes up from the water,  
he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending  
like a dove on him.

And a voice came from heaven saying:

'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

As we come to worship today,  
we remember that in our Christian lives, through baptism,  
we are children of God, we are beloved,  
and with us God is well pleased.

Today we ask the Holy Spirit to come to us  
wherever we are, in our lives, in our homes, in our community,  
in our church.

**Amen**

## **Prayers of Penitence**

*In a moment of quiet, let us say sorry to God...*

**Jesus, you are the light of the world,  
in your presence we recognise our wrongdoing and failure.  
Loving God, we are sorry and ask you to forgive us;  
open our hearts to you and fill them with your glorious light  
that others may see you shining through our lives.  
Amen**

## **The Absolution**

Loving God, you welcome all who turn to you  
in repentance and faith,  
may God forgive us and restore us  
to the light of God's presence.  
**Amen**

## **Glory to God**

Glory to God in the highest,  
**and peace to all people on earth.**

Rejoice knowing that God loves us, liberates us and makes us whole. As you remember the glory of God focus on your golden clothing or objects which you have for your worship at home today. In this moment of glorifying God, know that you are in God's glorious, wonderful and perfect presence.

You are a child of God,  
you are God's Beloved;  
and with you, God is well pleased.'

**I am a child of God,  
I am God's Beloved;  
and with me, God is well pleased.'**

# The Liturgy of the Word

## The Collect

Heavenly Father,  
at the Jordan you revealed Jesus as your Son:  
may we recognize him as our Lord  
and know ourselves to be your beloved children;  
through Jesus Christ our Saviour.  
**Amen.**

## Gospel Reading *Mark 1: 4-11*

Hear the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

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.'

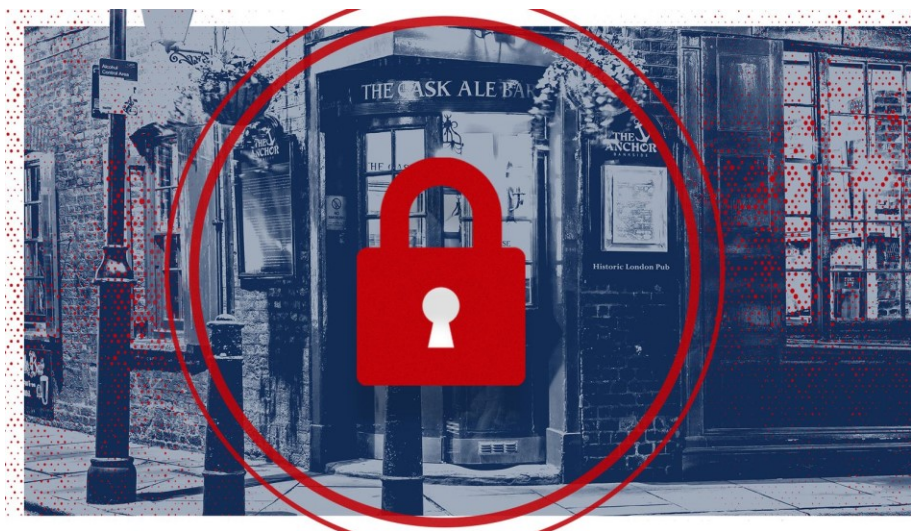
This is the Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you O Christ.**

## **Sermon** *Mother Juliet*

So we are back to worshipping in our homes – and today trying to remember the gold liturgical colour of the Baptism of Christ – a time to party but if you are anything like me – it's all a bit like hard work – we are willing ourselves to keep going and to remember the good things – but if we are honest there is an awful lot to feel fed up with, or fearful of or downright angry at.

Take a moment to reflect on how you are feeling now we have entered the third lockdown...



Whether it is through gritted teeth, the gold that we wear or focus on today as we remember the Baptism of Christ is still important for us, perhaps even more than ever in these dark and difficult days.

In our Gospel reading we are right at the beginning of the Gospel of Mark and we hear about the baptism of Jesus and how his identity as the Beloved of God is revealed, remembering of course that we are also in the Epiphany season which is a time of discovery and revelation.

Through Jesus' baptism, we see who Jesus is, but we also begin to learn who we are as followers of Jesus.

In our baptism and ongoingly I hope and perhaps today we need to know that this is true more than any other time that same voice from heaven comes to us and says, "You are my Beloved."

Reflect – what does it feel like to know that you are beloved? Do you find it easy to accept this or do you need to actively remember that you are treasured and loved by God?



At our baptism we are named God's beloved daughters and sons – as Christians we are God's children.

God gives us the gift of the Spirit, which is the promise of God's enabling and empowering presence in our lives.

Now we are back to lockdown worship we are perhaps more aware of the Holy Spirit as we remember that we can come to God wherever we are, and that we know despite our physical

distance, we are together in God's presence.

Today it is good to remember that the Spirit is with us – as the Spirit descends at Jesus' baptism.

What does it feel like to remember that you are in God's presence right now? How do you feel that you can experience the Holy Spirit?



So in these difficult covid times when we are full of fear, pain, grief, or uncertainty let us remember that there is always God's voice saying to us, whether we can hear it or not:

You are my Beloved—my child.

My Spirit is with you. I am with you always.

The Baptism is right at the beginning of the Gospel of Mark as it is the prelude to Jesus' ministry. Blessed with his identity as beloved, Jesus goes off to fulfil his mission or his work. Today may it be the same with us – today let us focus on our gold party gear knowing that we are also blessed - knowing that our identity is as beloved children of God – knowing that we are surrounded by God's presence.



Jesus' mission is to bring God's radical love to earth.

Take some time to think about what our mission is as Christians today?

We are right at the beginning of the Gospel of Mark – throughout this year we will read more about how Jesus fulfilled the mission given to him by God. I hope these stories inspire us in our mission to love as God loves us.

Perhaps today we simply need to know that God's voice is always there, however drowned out by the multiple other voices we are hearing at the moment. Yes, life is so difficult at the moment for so many but please remember – that we are God's beloved, and we are in the presence of God through the Spirit. We are precious and we are loved.

Knowing we are beloved can change us and change our mission – when we are able to feel loved we are more likely to love others more truly.

Feel loved, and love others.  
Amen

## **Affirmation of faith**

**We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.  
We believe in God the Son,  
who lives in our hearts through faith, and fills us with love.  
We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens us with power from on high.  
We believe in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.  
Amen.**



## Prayers

Let us Pray...

For the church, for all those worshipping at home – especially for our St Swithun's Family. May we carry the love of God into our homes, our communities and our world to bring light in the darkness.

Let us pray: **God, have mercy.**

For our world, all those who are battling coronavirus, especially those who are experiencing major loss of life. For a speedy vaccination program around the globe to restore life and to bring relief and hope.

Let us pray: **God, have mercy.**

For the NHS and all who are working to save lives and care for others at this time – especially those in our neighbourhood who need our care and support – may we show appreciation and kindness to encourage and help them in this challenging time.

Let us pray: **God, have mercy.**

For those who are struggling to breathe, for those who are ill and scared, for those who are fighting for their lives. For those in the darkness and agony of isolation, that they may find healing and wholeness. We remember especially those who are in need or have asked for our prayers – Karen, Paulette, Maureen and family, Martin, Rossy and family, Kevin, Gwen, Pamela, Neil, Debbie, Elaine and family, Clinton, Francis, Cynthia, Diane, Harold, Ivy, Sean, Taneisha, Talabi, Susan, Edith, Vanda, Lorna, Ena and Stephen. Bring them comfort in their distress.

Let us pray: **God, have mercy.**

That we, with those who have died in faith, may find mercy in the day of Christ; we especially remember Sidney and John.

Rest eternal grant unto them O Lord

**And let light perpetual shine upon them**

Merciful Father

**Accept these prayers, for the sake of your Son,  
our Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen.**

## The Lord's Prayer

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us:

**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, the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

## The Peace

The angels sang, 'Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to all in whom he delights.'

The Peace of the Lord be with you  
**And also with you.**

## The Notices

- *We will continue with our services on Zoom – links will be shared via email and text; communion at 9am on Sundays in lockdown, in church, with stringent measures in place (given Richard and Mother Juliet are not having to self-isolate).*
- *We will continue to upload the services and the audio sermons on the website.*
- *Happy Birthday Lucia and all those who have a birthday.*



# Dismissal and Blessing

## The Blessing

May God our loving parent, from whom every family in earth and heaven receives its name strengthen us with the Spirit in our inner being, so that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith and that we may know that we are beloved; and the blessing of God Almighty, Creator, Redeemer and Spirit be among you and remain with you always  
**Amen.**

## The Dismissal

We have seen God's glory, the glory revealed to all the nations.  
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.  
**In the name of Christ. Amen.**

## Contacts:

### **Priest in Charge: Rev Juliet Evans**

191 Hither Green Lane, Hither Green, London SE13 6QE  
juliettaevans@icloud.com; 07955229351

### **Churchwarden: Diane Keen**

[saintswithunschurch@gmail.com](mailto:saintswithunschurch@gmail.com) ; 07805619142

### **Safeguarding Officers:**

**Olivia Daley** 07956618629

**Patricia Francis** 020 8690 6026

[www.saintswithuns.org.uk](http://www.saintswithuns.org.uk)



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