

**ST CUTHBERT'S
SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH
COLINTON**

**First Sunday after Epiphany: The Baptism of the Lord
Wednesday 6 and Sunday 10 January 2021**



COVID-19
Services Online on our YouTube Channel

HYMN 280 – Hail to the Lord's anointed

**Hail to the Lord's anointed,
great David's greater son!
Hail, in the time appointed,
his reign on earth begun!
He comes to break oppression,
to set the captive free;
to take away transgression,
and rule in equity.**

**He shall come down like showers
upon the fruitful earth,
and love, joy, hope, like flowers,
spring in his path to birth:
before him on the mountains
shall peace the herald go;
and righteousness in fountains
from hill to valley flow.**

**Kings shall fall down before him,
and gold and incense bring;
all nations shall adore him,
his praise all people sing;
to him shall prayer unceasing
and daily vows ascend;
his kingdom still increasing,
a kingdom without end.**

**O'er every foe victorious,
he on his throne shall rest,
from age to age more glorious,
all-blessing and all-blest;
the tide of time shall never
his covenant remove;
his name shall stand for ever;
that name to us is love.**

*Paraphrase of Psalm 72 by James Montgomery (1771-1854)
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Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the
Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen.

THE PEACE

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

And also with you.

COLLECT FOR PURITY

**Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open,
all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden:
cleanse the thoughts of our hearts
by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit,
that we may perfectly love you,
and worthily magnify your holy name;
through Christ our Lord.**

Amen.

CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

God is love and we are God's children.
There is no room for fear in love.
We love because God loved us first.

Let us confess our sins in penitence and faith.

God our Father, we confess to you and to our fellow members in the body of Christ that we have sinned in thought, word and deed, and in what we have failed to do. We are truly sorry. Forgive us our sins, and deliver us from the power of evil. For the sake of your Son who died for us, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

God, who is both power and love, forgive us and free us from our sins, heal and strengthen us by the Spirit, and raise us to new life in Christ our Lord.

Amen.

GLORIA (*Said*)

**Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.
Lord God, heavenly King, almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.
Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world; have mercy on us;**

**you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.**

**For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Eternal Father, who at the baptism of Jesus revealed him to be your Son, anointing him with the Holy Spirit, keep your children, born of water and the Spirit, faithful to their calling; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.
Amen.

FIRST READING: Genesis 1.1-5

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, 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. Then God said, 'Let there be light'; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. 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.

SECOND READING: Acts 19.1-7

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the inland regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. 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.' Then he said, 'Into what then were you baptized?' They answered, 'Into John's baptism.' 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.' On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied— altogether there were about twelve of them.

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

GRADUAL HYMN 570 – O love, how deep, how broad, how high!

**O love, how deep, how broad, how high!
It fills the heart with ecstasy,
that God, the Son of God,
should take our mortal form for mortals' sake.**

**He sent no angel to our race
of higher or of lower place,
but wore the robe of human frame
himself, and to this lost world came.**

**For us he was baptized and bore
his holy fast, and hungered sore;
for us temptations sharp he knew;
for us the tempter overthrew.**

**To him whose boundless love has won
salvation for us through his Son,
to God the Father glory be,
both now and through eternity.**

*Benjamin Webb (1819-1885) alt from Thomas a Kempis (c.1379-1471)
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GOSPEL: Mark 1.4-11

Hear the good news of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Mark.

Glory to Christ our Saviour.

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.'

Give thanks to the Lord for his glorious Gospel.

Praise to Christ our Lord.

SERMON

I find our readings today highly appropriate for us as we start a new year of hope, hope for our troubled world. So I'm going to start by reflecting on the meaning of Jesus' baptism both for him and for us. I'll then investigate the notion that, just as we learn of the **first** creation in our Genesis reading, so we may interpret the baptism of Jesus Christ by John as heralding the start of a **new** creation, finally suggesting how this affects us.

The baptism that John offered was one of repentance for the forgiveness of sins, to reorient a person's life in order to leave behind past sins and make a fresh start, ready to welcome the Messiah. But why then did Jesus, God's own Son, the Messiah, undergo such a baptism? Douglas Wingeier offers an explanation. He affirms that the 'Incarnation means that Jesus associated himself with our sinfulness and need for repentance.' But I feel that Jane Williams expresses it even better. She declares that Jesus' baptism 'shows his identification with us and commitment to us, his affirmation and his love and acceptance of us.' He had, after all, come to earth as a fellow human being.

This is all highly significant, but in order to consider what Jesus' baptism means for us, I consider it vital to recall **all** that happened at that time. In Mark's Gospel we read of the heavens opening and the Holy Spirit descending on Jesus in the form of a dove, accompanied by the heavenly voice asserting 'you are my Son, the Beloved: with you I am well pleased.' Over the ages there's been a danger of associating Christian baptism merely with the sprinkling on of water. For example, we've heard in our reading from Acts, that the Ephesians considered themselves fully baptized in John's baptism, that of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. That is indeed part of it, but full holy baptism involves Father, Son and Holy Spirit, preparing us and all people to be followers of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Jane Williams puts this beautifully in stating that 'the movement of love from Jesus to us flows down from God the Father and the Holy Spirit.' Our task, of course, is to pass this love and compassion on to others, something so badly needed in this deeply troubled world, fighting a mysterious and threatening virus.

But Tom Wright sees further significance in Jesus' baptism, asserting that it heralded a **new** creation. Our reading from Genesis tells of the **first** creation. When God created heaven and earth and commanded that there should be light, which he separated from darkness, he saw that it was good. But sadly, so much went wrong in the ensuing centuries. Evil of all sorts crept in steadily and human beings failed to care for

God's wonderful creation or respect each other. Doesn't this all sound very familiar in our current times of crisis?

God's need to address the urgent problem led to the Incarnation. However, it was from the time of his baptism that Jesus' true ministry started, that the new creation was set into motion, as Tom Wright declares. Jesus showed us the way, the light and the truth. Unfortunately humankind hasn't respected this new creation, the pursuit of all goodness, the development of God's kingdom here on earth.

So, we've heard that God saw that his original creation was good. But what does he see now, at the start of this new year? Tom Wright challenges us: 'Where are the signs of new creation? Where are the dark, formless voids that still await the rushing mighty wind?' to quote from Genesis. Unfortunately the latter question is all too easy to answer. Violence, exploitation, greed, selfishness, the list seems endless. We're all too aware of the ill effects of neglecting the natural world, whether it be in falling biodiversity, accelerating climate change or pollution or whether it be in leaving us open to this destructive pandemic. But signs of the new creation **are** there, glimmers of God's kingdom, in the many acts of kindness, compassion and selflessness we hear of, whether conducted by large charities, small local groups or just individuals. The hope, the light at the end of the tunnel, provided by those who've worked tirelessly to develop a vaccine against the virus, is another sign of the new creation heralded by the incarnate Son of God.

I pray that, at the start of this new year of 2021 we may all be filled with the hope, joy and love expressed first in God's original creation and brought to us once more in the new creation initiated at the baptism of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ. And may we feel able to spread that hope, joy and love in every small way of which we are capable. **Amen.**

Rev. Dr. Margaret Dineley

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 his 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.**

INTERCESSIONS

God, creator spirit, in our prayers today, we come to you with thanks and hope. We give thanks for the gift of your son Jesus Christ and rejoice in the hope we have through our baptism with Christ.

God, creator spirit, you brought into being a perfect planet of beauty, diversity and interconnectedness. It was good.

Forgive our selfish spoiling of the earth's resources. We pray for renewed understanding and effort to challenge and overcome the effects of climate change for the worldwide good of all.

God, creator spirit.... **hear our prayer.**

We pray for your worldwide church, united with Christ through baptism. We remember our brothers and sisters who are suffering and persecuted for their faith.

We hold before God our local leaders, giving thanks and praying for Bishop John, Nicki, Margaret, Caroline.... and for Marie and Philip in their work.

God, creator spirit.... **hear our prayer.**

We pray for God's world. We call to mind countries where there is violence at this time and pray for peace. We pray for good relations between the U.K. and E.U. as we move forward in 2021. We hold before God leaders worldwide. May they have a vision of peace and justice for all.... and the wisdom and strength to work for this. As we give thanks for the coming of vaccines we pray for the administration in the U.K. and worldwide.

God, creator spirit.... **hear our prayer.**

We pray for those in need.... the increasing number of people suffering from the virus.

We remember those ill in hospital..... giving thanks and praying for all N.H.S. staff at this time. We hold before God those in care homes and those who cannot visit them, those mourning a loved one, those alone and isolated. In a moment of quiet, we name those known personally who need our prayers.

God, creator spirit.... **hear our prayer.**

Finally a prayer for ourselves.

God, creator spirit, we thank you for our baptism in Christ. Give us in this New Year your love, wisdom and strength to work for the coming of your kingdom.

Accept this and all our prayers for the sake of your son Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

OFFERTORY HYMN 669 – Songs of thankfulness and praise

**Songs of thankfulness and praise,
Jesus, Lord, to thee we raise,
manifested by the star
to the sages from afar;
branch of royal David's stem,
in thy birth at Bethlehem;
anthems be to thee addressed:
God in man made manifest.**

**Manifest at Jordan's stream,
prophet, priest and King supreme,
and at Cana wedding-guest,
in thy Godhead manifest,
manifest in power divine,
changing water into wine;
anthems be to thee addressed:
God in man made manifest.**

**Grant us grace to see thee, Lord,
mirrored in thy holy word;
may we imitate thee now,
and be pure, as pure art thou;
that we like to thee may be
at thy great Ephiphany,
and may praise thee, ever blest,
God in man made manifest**

Christopher Wordsworth (1807-1885)

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Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation;
through your goodness we have this bread to offer,
which earth has given and human hands have made;
it will become for us the bread of life.

Blessed be God for ever.

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation;
through your goodness we have this wine to offer,
fruit of the vine and work of human hands;
it will become the cup of our salvation.

Blessed be God for ever.

EUCCHARISTIC PRAYER

The Lord be with you.

And also 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 God thanks and praise.

Worship and praise belong to you, Father, in every place and at all times. All power is yours. You created the heavens and established the earth; you sustain in being all that is.

In Christ your Son our life and yours are brought together in a wonderful exchange. He made his home among us that we might for ever dwell in you. Through your Holy Spirit you call us to new birth in a creation restored by love.

As children of your redeeming purpose we offer you our praise, with angels and archangels and the whole company of heaven, singing the hymn of your unending glory:-

Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might.

Heaven and earth are full of your glory.

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

Glory and thanksgiving be to you, most loving Father, for the gift of your Son born in human flesh. He is the Word existing beyond time, both source and final purpose,

bringing to wholeness all that is made. Obedient to your will he died upon the Cross. By your power you raised him from the dead. He broke the bonds of evil and set your people free to be his Body in the world.

On the night when he was given up to death, knowing that his hour had come, having loved his own, he loved them to the end. At supper with his disciples he took bread and offered you thanks. He broke the bread, and gave it to them, saying:

"Take, eat. This is my Body: it is broken for you."

After supper, he took the cup, he offered you thanks, and gave it to them saying:

"Drink this, all of you. This is my Blood of the new covenant; it is poured out for you, and for all, that sins may be forgiven. Do this in remembrance of me."

**We now obey your Son's command.
We recall his blessed passion and death,
his glorious resurrection and ascension;
and we look for the coming of his Kingdom.
Made one with him, we offer you these gifts
and with them ourselves,
a single, holy, living sacrifice.**

Hear us, most merciful Father, and send your Holy Spirit upon us and upon this bread and this wine, that, overshadowed by his life-giving power, they may be the Body and Blood of your Son, and we may be kindled with the fire of your love and renewed for the service of your Kingdom.

Help us, who are baptised into the fellowship of Christ's Body to live and work to your praise and glory; may we grow together in unity and love until at last, in your new creation, we enter into our heritage in the company of the Virgin Mary, the apostles and prophets, St Cuthbert, and of all our brothers and sisters living and departed.

Through Jesus Christ our Lord, with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all honour and glory be to you, Lord of all ages, world without end.

Amen.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD

The living bread is broken for the life of the world.

Lord, unite us in this sign.

LORD'S PRAYER

As our Saviour Christ has commanded and taught us, we are bold to say:

**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.**

INVITATION

This is God's gift to us; The sign of his great love.
Receive of this and take Christ into your heart.

COMMUNION

**Lamb of God; you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God; you take away the sins of the world:
have mercy on us.**

**Lamb of God; you take away the sins of the world:
grant us peace.**

A PRAYER FOR US TO PRAY AT HOME:

God of infinite mercy, we thank you for Jesus our Saviour, who feeds his people and gives them eternal life.

Though we cannot consume the gifts of bread and wine, we thank you that we do receive Christ's saving presence, the forgiveness of sins, and all other benefits of his passion. Grant that we may continue for ever in the Risen Life of our Saviour. Amen.

THANKSGIVING AND SENDING OUT

Give thanks to our gracious God
Whose mercy endures for ever.

POST COMMUNION

Gracious God, lover of all, by this sacrament you make us one family in Christ your Son, one in the sharing of his body and blood, one in the communion of his Spirit. Help us to grow in love for one another and come to the full maturity of the Body of Christ. We ask this in his name. Amen.

BLESSING

Christ the Son of God gladden your hearts with the good news of his kingdom; and the blessing of God almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

Amen.

DISMISSAL

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

In the name of Christ.

Amen.



St Cuthbert's Notes 6 and 10 January 2021

Update on Services:

**Due to the current restrictions,
there will be no services in church until further notice.
However, our weekly service will continue to be recorded,
and available to view on our YouTube Channel:**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC3iPQOkQiVERjeHZbj2OnBQ>

Foodbank:

In December I was able to send **£690** to the Foodbank. Angela's response to our larger than usual contribution was:

"A big thank you to all at St Cuthbert's for a very generous gift to Foodbank! We appreciate your support very much. Every week we have been reaching between 55-60 individuals and between 50-60 children. We are giving out Christmas meals on the 22nd Dec to about 30 families this year as well as their regular food parcels, helping some with fuel poverty and providing toys for about 30 children. Your donation will go a long way to helping us do that. Best wishes and thanks to you and all at St Cuthbert's"

Thanks also to everyone who gave donations to Patricia or me for the January collection. As long as the present restrictions exist we will go on making a cash collection at the beginning of each month.

Susan Clark

The Sign:

The deadline date for any information or articles for the February 2021 issue of 'The Sign' is **Sunday 17 January**. Please send to stcuthbertscolinton@gmail.com. Thank you.

Weekly Prayer:

Eternal Father, who at the baptism of Jesus revealed him to be your Son, anointing him with the Holy Spirit: grant that we, being born again, and made your children by adoption and grace, may daily be renewed by your Holy Spirit; through the same Jesus Christ, our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, world without end. Amen.