

## Sermon followed by Service

January 8, 2023

Acts 10:34-43

Day 7 of the new year. I don't know about you, but I could use a new year, a new start, a new day. How about you?

In our lesson, Peter, Jewish Peter, was living a new day. Peter had grown up in a Jewish world that saw the rest of the world, the Gentile world, as unclean. As a Jewish disciple of Jesus, he saw Jesus as of the Jews and for the Jews, and with his background he didn't seem to think much beyond that, yet. But now was a new day. The Spirit of God stepped in and opened Peter's eyes - his mind and heart - to see that Jesus is for all people - not just for Jews, but also for Gentiles. That truth would have been in the back of Peter's mind, but it seems to have gotten lost, or maybe suppressed.

That happens, doesn't it? We know Jesus is for all, but sometimes it can be hard to think that Jesus is for those people. Sometimes it can be hard to think of ourselves as sharing Jesus, or doing anything, with those people. And so we put a lid on thinking Jesus might be for those people, because, well ... why? When we put a lid on thinking that Jesus might be for them, is it because of them? Or because of us and our comfort zone, or worse?

Today was a new day for Peter. The Spirit of God had made it clear to Peter that Jesus is for all people. And so what did Peter do on this new day? He lived new! He put God's Word and God's Truth into practice. He stepped out of his comfort zone. He lived new. He's in the house of a Gentile, sharing Jesus with Gentiles.

Here's something that struck me. On this new day for Peter, Peter highlights a new day in the life of Jesus. As Peter shares Jesus, we don't hear of Christmas, the Wise Men, Jesus' flight to Egypt; we don't hear of Jesus growing up and growing in favor with God and man. Peter starts off with Jesus baptized. Jesus is about 30 years old. It's time for Jesus to step up and step in, to go public as Messiah, to bring God's kingdom work to the world around him. It's time for a new day in Jesus' life and work. So what did Jesus do? Jesus listened to his Father, our Father. And the Father had Jesus go to John the Baptizer to be baptized. Baptized with water and the Word, Jesus heard his Father's voice promise from heaven: "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased." Baptized with water and the Word, Jesus was anointed, super-charged by the Holy Spirit with the power of God.

That can sound perplexing. Jesus is and was the Son of God with the power of God. He is and was the Son of God by whom all things were created. As the Son of God, Jesus has and Jesus had the full power of God at his disposal. But it was a new day for Jesus, a new time for his work. The Father and his Holy Spirit wanted Jesus powered for what was coming. So the Father had his Son go to John the Baptizer to be baptized, and the Holy Spirit supercharged Jesus with the power of God for his new day and new work. Did you notice? Jesus wasn't too proud, too self-centered: "I can do this myself." No, Jesus did what his Father wanted him to do. He humbled himself before John the Baptizer. He was baptized. And he was powered by the Holy Spirit for his new day.

And what did Jesus do? He took God's Word and Power and put it into action. He didn't just mind his own business; he didn't keep his faith to himself. He put himself out there as the Man of God. He went around doing good. He healed the sick. By doing good, by

healing the sick, Jesus went to work undoing the work of Satan, undoing the control of Satan.

It should have been a glorious, beautiful time. But the more good Jesus did, the more Jesus healed, the more he shared the Word and Promise of God, the more people turned against him. The thought of that can keep us tucked in our comfort zones, not so? But Jesus knew what he came to do. He came to do our greatest good; he came to heal our greatest sickness. Jesus came to take our sin on himself; he came to take our guilt before God to the cross, and there to pay the price, suffer the curse, endure the judgment, we had coming. For what? For the time we were under Satan's control, for the times we re-surrendered to the control of Satan? For the times we stay stuck tucked in our comfort zone instead of doing the good the Father has for us to do? Yes, for all that and more, Jesus let himself be taken to the cross and killed. Why? So he could hear the Father and echo the judgment of the Father: "You are forgiven, let loose from your sin and guilt. You are justified, right by God; so come and share his happiness!"

How could Jesus do that, go through that, let that happen to himself? Jesus knew the Father's promise - on the third day he would be raised again. Jesus knew the Father's promise: we would be raised, all who believe in Jesus would be raised to life with him. Jesus knew the Father's promise, and in baptism, the Holy Spirit super-charged Jesus to hold on to that promise. And Jesus was not disappointed.

We have a new day ahead of us. We have a new year ahead of us. As a congregation, we have 125 years behind us, and we get to start a new day, a new 125 years ahead of us. Some days the new can look intimidating. Some days, we can prefer to stay stuck in our old

comfort zones. Some days, it can seem as if Satan has us under his control, that he's freely doing his thing with us.

In baptism, you have been baptized into a new day. It won't always look like a new day, or feel like a new day, or sound like a new day. But better than our senses, you have this Truth - you have been baptized into the victory of Christ; you have been baptized into the righteousness of Christ; you have been baptized into a new day of life right and together with God.

When Jesus was baptized into his new day, when the Spirit opened Peter's eyes to see the new day that God had for him, what did they do? They stepped in and stepped up to live the new day God had for them. Peter didn't stay stuck in his past comfort zone; both Peter and Jesus stepped out to show and share with the world the Good News that God has for us in Jesus.

That's the new day ahead for us. The Spirit of Christ has put this want, this drive into our hearts and before our congregation. This year we want to challenge each other, we want to challenge ourselves to be like Peter and to leave our comfort zones. This year we want to challenge each other, we want to challenge ourselves to be like Jesus in living the God-Lived Life. This year we want to challenge each other, we want to challenge ourselves to do good into the world around us.

What does that mean? The idea behind that word "do good" isn't just to do right things or nice things, but to meet the needs of the people around us, and so to undo the control of Satan around us, and so to show off the power and promise and love of God, not just to people in our circle, but to all the people around us. Yes, this year want to challenge each other, we want to challenge ourselves to share

Jesus with all peoples around us. You heard us talk about this last year - “Everyone a witness.”

When I say that we have a new day ahead of us, I’m not saying that doing good and sharing Jesus isn’t part of your past or our past, that doing good and sharing Jesus isn’t already part of your everyday life. For years, I have seen that new life in so many of you. But I also see how sometimes we struggle to do what we want. And sometimes we struggle to want what Jesus wants. Some days we struggle. Not so?

But this is a new day for us. In your baptism, you are baptized into a new day. Our failures, our shortcomings, our past don’t need to hold us back. Satan’s control out there doesn’t need to hold us back. Our fears inside and the challenges out there don’t need to overwhelm us and hold us back. We are baptized and set free from our past; we are baptized and set right with God to live a new day, this new day, with Jesus. We are baptized into the victory of Jesus so that we get to live like conquerors before Satan; yes, we get to live today like winners because baptized into Jesus, we are winners. And when we feel too small for the challenge, we get to remember that in baptism, the Holy Spirit of God has connected you with Christ and supercharged you with the power of God to hold on to his promise and to live this new day - how? - for the glory of God and the good of his people.

Today may not feel like a new day. But today we get to live baptized. We get to live connected to Christ and supercharged by his Spirit to live this day new - here, at home, and out there in the world. Amen.

January 7 & 8, 2023

NEW MORNING PRAISE

IN OUR WORLD TODAY ... the shine of Christmas and the newness of a new year are wearing off.

IN OUR WORSHIP TODAY ... as we see Jesus baptized and “supercharged” by the Spirit for his life and ministry, we rejoice that we have been baptized and “supercharged” by the Spirit for our life and ministry with Christ!

OPENING HYMN

*“How Lovely Shines the Morning Star”*

Hymn 370

How lovely shines the Morning Star! The nations see and hail afar  
the light in Judah shining. O David’s son of Jacob’s race,  
my Bridegroom and my King of grace, for you my heart is pining.  
Lowly, holy, great and glorious,  
O victorious Prince of graces, filling all the heav’nly places.

O highest joy by mortals won, true Son of God and Mary’s son,  
the highborn King of ages! In your blest body let me be,  
e’en as the branch is in the tree, your life my life supplying.  
Sighing, crying for the savor  
of your favor, resting never till I rest in you forever.

O mighty Father, in your Son you loved me ere you had begun  
this ancient world’s foundation. Your Son has made a friend of me,  
and when in spirit him I see, I joy in tribulation.  
What bliss is this! He is living,  
to me giving life forever; nothing me from him can sever.

Oh, joy to know that you, my friend, are Lord, beginning without end,  
the first and last, eternal! And you at length—O glorious grace—  
will take me to that holy place, the home of joys supernal.  
Amen, amen! Come and meet me,  
quickly greet me! With deep yearning, Lord, I look for your returning.

Lift up the voice and strike the string, let all glad sounds of music ring  
in God's high praises blended. Christ will be with me all the way,  
today, tomorrow, ev'ry day till trav'ling days are ended.  
Sing out, ring out triumph glorious,  
O victorious chosen nation; praise the God of your salvation.

#### OPENING SENTENCES

O Lord, o-pen my lips.

The musical notation is on a single staff in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody starts on a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. There is a fermata over the C5 note. This is followed by a triplet of eighth notes: G4, A4, and B4. The piece ends with a whole note C5.

**And my mouth shall de - clare your praise.**

The musical notation is on a single staff in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody starts with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. There is a fermata over the C5 note. This is followed by a quarter note D5, a quarter note E5, a quarter note F#5, and a whole note G5.

Hasten to save me, O God.

The musical notation is on a single staff in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody starts with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. There is a fermata over the C5 note. This is followed by a quarter note D5, a quarter note E5, a quarter note F#5, and a whole note G5.

**O Lord, come quickly to help me.**

The musical notation is on a single staff in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody starts with a half note G4, followed by a quarter note A4, a quarter note B4, and a quarter note C5. There is a fermata over the C5 note. This is followed by a quarter note D5, a quarter note E5, a quarter note F#5, and a whole note G5.

#### CONFESSION & ABSOLUTION OF SINS

**M:** We have come into the presence of God, who created us to love and serve him as his dear children. But we have disobeyed him and deserve only his wrath and punishment. Therefore, let us confess our sins to him and plead for his mercy.

**C:** **Merciful Father in heaven, I am altogether sinful from birth. In countless ways I have sinned against you and do not deserve to be called your child. But trusting in Jesus, my Savior, I pray: Have mercy on me according to your unfailing love. Cleanse me from my sin, and take away my guilt.**

M: God, our heavenly Father, has forgiven all your sins. By the perfect life and innocent death of our Lord Jesus Christ, he has removed your guilt forever. You are his own dear child. May God give you strength to live according to his will.

C: Amen.



Give glory to God, our light and our life.



**Come, O come, let us wor - ship.**

### COME, O COME, LET US SING TO THE LORD (SUNG)

Come, O come, let us sing to the Lord,  
let us shout with joy to our saving Rock;  
come, enter in with our songs of praise, come, enter in with thanksgiving.

You are a great and a wondrous God,  
cupping in your hands all the depths of earth.  
You made the hills and the mountains high,  
you made the seas and the dry land.

Come, let us worship and, bowing low,  
kneel before the One who has made us all.  
You are the God whom we call our own,  
we are the flock that you shepherd.



## PRAYER OF THE DAY

Father in heaven, at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan, you proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. Keep us who are baptized into Christ faithful in our calling as your children, and make us heirs with him of everlasting life; through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

## FIRST READING

*Isaiah 42:1–7*

“Here is my servant, whom I uphold,  
my chosen one in whom I delight;  
I will put my Spirit on him,  
and he will bring justice to the nations.  
He will not shout or cry out,  
or raise his voice in the streets.  
A bruised reed he will not break,  
and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out.  
In faithfulness he will bring forth justice;  
he will not falter or be discouraged  
till he establishes justice on earth.  
In his teaching the islands will put their hope.”

This is what God the LORD says—  
the Creator of the heavens, who stretches them out,  
who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it,  
who gives breath to its people,  
and life to those who walk on it:  
“I, the LORD, have called you in righteousness;  
I will take hold of your hand.

I will keep you and will make you  
to be a covenant for the people  
and a light for the Gentiles,  
to open eyes that are blind,  
to free captives from prison  
and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness.

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

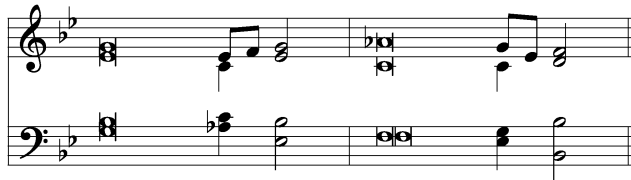
**PSALM OF THE DAY**  
*Refrain*

*Psalm 45B*



Great are the works of the LORD. Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le -  
lu - ia! Great are the works of the LORD.

*Tone*



My heart is stirred by a / noble theme  
as I recite my verses / for the king.  
You are the most excel- / lent of men  
and your lips have been anoint- / ed with grace.  
Gird your sword on your side, you / mighty one;  
clothe yourself with splendor and / majesty. *Refrain*

Your throne, O God, will last for ever and / ever;  
 a scepter of justice will be the scepter of your / kingdom.  
 You love righteousness and hate / wickedness;  
 therefore God, your God, has set you above your com- / panions.  
 I will perpetuate your memory through all gener- / ations;  
 therefore the nations will praise you for ever and / ever.  
**Glory be to the Father and / to the Son**  
**and to the Holy / Spirit,**  
**as it was in the be- / ginning,**  
**is now, and will be forever. / Amen. Refrain**

*Refrain*

Great are the works of the LORD. Al-le - lu - ia! Al - le -  
 lu - ia! Great are the works of the LORD.

*Tone*

**SECOND READING**

*Acts 10:34–38*

Then Peter began to speak: “I now realize how true it is that God does not show favoritism but accepts from every nation the one who fears him and does what is right. You know the message God sent to the people of Israel, announcing the good news of peace through Jesus Christ, who is Lord of all.

You know what has happened throughout the province of Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached — how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.

The Word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**GOSPEL ACCLAMATION**

**Alleluia! Holy, holy, holy is the LORD Almighty;  
the whole earth is full of his glory. Alleluia!**

**GOSPEL**

*Matthew 3:13–17*

Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?”

Jesus replied, “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented.

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise be to you, O Christ!**

**HYMN**

*“To Jordan’s River Came Our Lord”*

**Hymn 377**

To Jordan’s river came our Lord, the Christ, whom heav’nly hosts adored,  
the God from God, the Light from Light,  
the Lord of glory, pow’r, and might.

The Savior came to be baptized — the Son of God in flesh disguised —  
to stand beneath the Father’s will and all his promises fulfill.

As Jesus in the Jordan stood and John baptized the Lamb of God,  
the Holy Spirit, heav'nly dove, descended on him from above.

Then from God's throne with thund'rous sound  
came God's own voice with words profound:  
"This is my Son," was his decree, "the one I love, who pleases me."

The Father's word, the Spirit's flight anointed Christ in glorious sight  
as God's own choice, from Adam's fall to save the world and free us all.

Now rise, faint hearts: be resolute! This man is Christ, our substitute!  
He was baptized in Jordan's stream, proclaimed Redeemer, Lord supreme.

## SERMON

## HYMN

*"Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord"*

**Hymn 585**

Come, Holy Ghost, God and Lord! May all your graces be outpoured  
on each believer's mind and heart; your fervent love to them impart.  
Lord, by the brightness of your light you gather and in faith unite  
your Church from ev'ry land and tongue:  
this to your praise, O Lord our God, be sung. Alleluia, alleluia!

Come, holy Light, guide divine, and cause the Word of life to shine.  
Teach us to know our God aright and call him Father with delight.  
From ev'ry error keep us free; let none but Christ our master be  
that we in living faith abide,  
in him, our Lord, with all our might confide. Alleluia, alleluia!

Come, holy Fire, comfort true, grant us the will your work to do  
and in your service to abide; let trials turn us not aside.  
Lord, by your pow'r prepare each heart,  
and to our weakness strength impart that bravely here we may contend,  
through life and death to you, our Lord, ascend. Alleluia, alleluia!

## PRAYER AND LORD'S PRAYER

Loving Father, lead us to rejoice every day as we remember our baptism. When we sin against you and others, give us power to put down the sinful nature that was drowned in the water of baptism. When we doubt your love, cause us to remember the promises you made when we came to the font. When we feel weak, invigorate us with the hope of eternal life that awaits all who are baptized and believe in you.

Keep in your care all our brothers and sisters who are suffering in sickness, enduring hardship, carrying a cross, or mourning the death of someone they love. Let them also return to their baptism and remember the blessings you bestowed on them through the water and the Word. Keep all the baptized in your care and bring us at last to the river of the water of life in heaven.

**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.**

M: O Lord, our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, you have brought us safely to this new day. Defend us with your mighty power, and grant that this day we neither fall into sin nor run into any kind of danger; and in all we do, direct us to what is right in your sight, through Jesus Christ, your Son, our Lord. Amen.

## BLESSING (SUNG)

M: The Lord bless and Keep you.

C: **Amen.**

M: The Lord's face ever shine upon you.

C: **Amen.**

M: The Lord grant you peace for all your days.

C: **Amen.**

## CLOSING HYMN

## *“Baptized into Your Name Most Holy”*

Hymn 680

Baptized into your name most holy, O Father, Son, and Holy Ghost,  
I claim a place, though weak and lowly,  
among your saints, your chosen host.  
Buried with Christ and dead to sin, your Spirit now shall live within.

My loving Father, there you took me to be henceforth your child and heir.  
My faithful Savior, there you let me the fruit of all your sorrows share.  
O Holy Spirit, comfort me when threat'ning clouds around I see.

My faithful God, you fail me never; your promise surely will endure.  
O cast me not away forever if words and deeds become impure.  
Have mercy when I come defiled; forgive, lift up, restore your child.

All that I am and love most dearly — receive it all, O Lord, from me.  
Let me confess my faith sincerely; help me your faithful child to be!  
Let nothing that I am or own serve any will but yours alone.

## OFFERING

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## **A God-Lived Life Challenge**

A God-Lived Life is about more than church (or money). A God-Lived Life encompasses our whole lives. As Jesus lived and gave his whole life for us, we show our love and appreciation by seeking to be like him.

This year, God's Word will be challenging us, and we'll be challenging ourselves and each other to live the God-Lived Life. We'll talk about a life of being a disciple, a life lived for others, a life of hospitality, and a life lived shrewdly.

Each God-Lived Life theme will be introduced with a special worship service. Then we will be introduced to different challenges. We'll consider these challenges with prayer and the promise of God. Then, we'll choose our challenge and commit to follow through with the power of God. Why? For the glory of God and the good of his people!