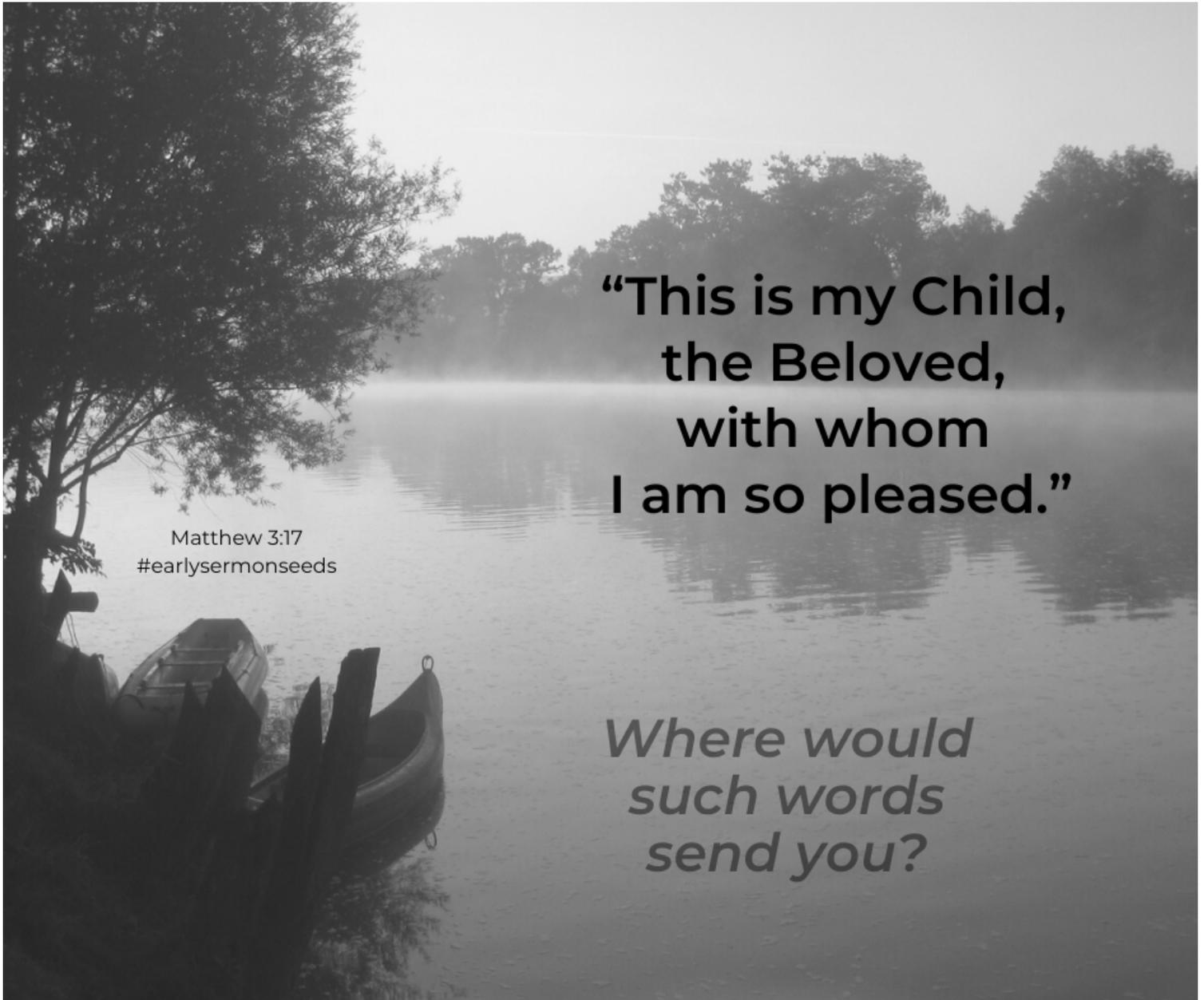


# BAPTISM OF OUR LORD



**“This is my Child,  
the Beloved,  
with whom  
I am so pleased.”**

Matthew 3:17  
#earlysermonseeds

*Where would  
such words  
send you?*

*January 8, 2023*  
*10:00am*

# GATHERING

**Prelude**

*Melody*

*Samuel Coleridge–Taylor*

**Welcome**

**Thanksgiving for Baptism**

**Hymn**

*This Is the Spirit's Entry Now*

**#448**

**Greeting**

**Prayer of the Day**

O God our Father, at the baptism of Jesus you proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit. Make all who are baptized into Christ faithful to their calling to be your daughters and sons, and empower us all with your Spirit, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

**Amen.**

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## WORD

**First Reading: Isaiah 42:1–9**

<sup>1</sup>Here is my servant, whom I uphold,  
my chosen, in whom my soul delights;  
I have put my spirit upon him;  
he will bring forth justice to the nations.

<sup>2</sup>He will not cry or lift up his voice,  
or make it heard in the street;

<sup>3</sup>a bruised reed he will not break,  
and a dimly burning wick he will not quench;  
he will faithfully bring forth justice.

<sup>4</sup>He will not grow faint or be crushed  
until he has established justice in the earth;  
and the coastlands wait for his teaching.

<sup>5</sup>Thus says God, the Lord,  
who created the heavens and stretched them out,  
who spread out the earth and what comes from it,  
who gives breath to the people upon it  
and spirit to those who walk in it:

<sup>6</sup>I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness,  
I have taken you by the hand and kept you;  
I have given you as a covenant to the people,  
a light to the nations,

<sup>7</sup>to open the eyes that are blind,  
to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon,  
from the prison those who sit in darkness.

<sup>8</sup>I am the Lord, that is my name;  
my glory I give to no other,  
nor my praise to idols.

<sup>9</sup>See, the former things have come to pass,  
and new things I now declare;  
before they spring forth,  
I tell you of them.

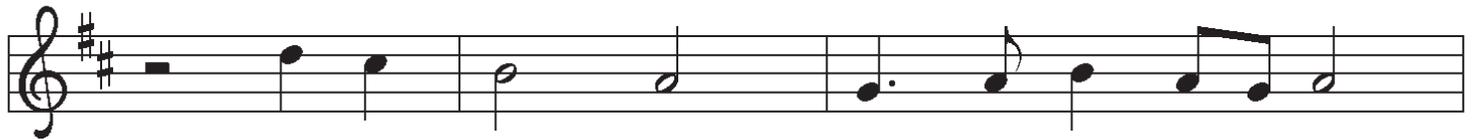
Word of God, Word of Life.  
**Thanks be to God!**

**Second Reading: Acts 10:34–43**

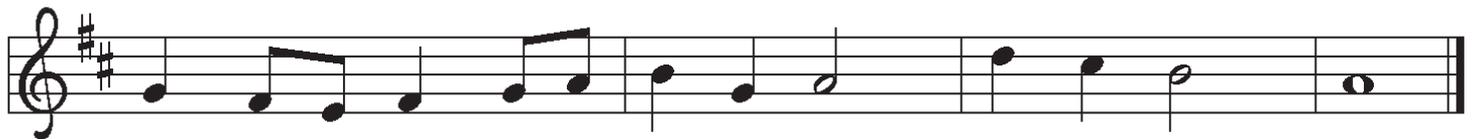
<sup>34</sup>Peter began to speak to Cornelius and his household: “I truly understand that God shows no partiality,  
<sup>35</sup>but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him. <sup>36</sup>You know the message he sent to the people of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ—he is Lord of all. <sup>37</sup>That message spread throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John announced: <sup>38</sup>how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power; how he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. <sup>39</sup>We are witnesses to all that he did both in Judea and in Jerusalem. They put him to death by hanging him on a tree; <sup>40</sup>but God raised him on the third day and allowed him to appear, <sup>41</sup>not to all the people but to us who were chosen by God as witnesses, and who ate and drank with him after he rose from the dead. <sup>42</sup>He commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one ordained by God as judge of the living and the dead. <sup>43</sup>All the prophets testify about him that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”

Word of God, Word of Life.  
**Thanks be to God!**

**Gospel Acclamation**



Al - le - lu - ia. Lord, to whom shall we go?



You have the words of e - ter - nal life. Al - le - lu - ia.

The Gospel for today is from Matthew the 3<sup>rd</sup> chapter.  
**Glory to you, O Lord.**

<sup>13</sup>Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. <sup>14</sup>John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” <sup>15</sup>But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.” Then he consented. <sup>16</sup>And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were

opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. <sup>17</sup>And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."

The gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, O Christ.**

**Sermon**

Pastor Phil Ruge-Jones

**Anthem**

Shall We Gather at the River?

arr. Carter

Shall we gather at the river,  
Where bright angel feet have trod;  
With its crystal tide forever  
Flowing by the throne of God.

Yes, we'll gather at the river,  
The Beautiful, the beautiful river;  
Gather with the saints at the river  
That flows by the throne of God.

Yes, we'll gather at the river,  
The beautiful, the beautiful river,  
Gather with the saints at the river  
That flows by the throne of God.

Deep river, My home is over Jordan  
Deep river, I want to cross over into campground.

Ere we reach the shining river,  
Lay we every burden down;  
Grace our spirits will deliver,  
And provide a robe and crown.

Soon we'll reach the shining river,  
Soon our pilgrimage will cease;  
Soon our happy hearts will quiver  
With the melody of peace.

Yes, we'll gather at the river  
The beautiful, the beautiful river,  
Gather with the saints at the river,  
That flows by the throne of God;  
That flows by the throne of God.

**Affirmation of Baptism**

page 234

**Prayers of the Church**

Called together to follow Jesus, we pray for the church, the world, and all in need.

*A brief silence.*

... Merciful God,

**receive our prayer.**

We bring to you our needs and hopes, O God, trusting your wisdom and power revealed in Christ crucified.

**Amen.**

### Lord's Prayer

**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.**

### Offering

*Christ, When for Us You Were Baptized*

*Dietrich Buxtehude*

### Offertory Prayer

Liberating God,

you break the bonds of injustice and let the oppressed go free. Receive these offerings in thanksgiving for all your works of merciful power, and shape us as people of your justice and freedom. You we magnify and adore, through Jesus our Savior,

**Amen.**

## SENDING

### Blessing

### Sending Hymn

*Rise, Shine, You People!*

*#665*

### Dismissal

Go in peace. Follow the way of Jesus.

**Thanks be to God.**

### Postlude

*Songs of Thankfulness and Praise*

*Wayne Wold*

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**Minister:** Rev. Phil Ruge-Jones

**Organist:** Elaine Mann

**Assisting Minister:** Pete Lokken

**Choir Director:** Diana Cataldi

**Reader:** Molly Wilson



## Important Details for the January 8th Forum

After a shortened worship service, we will begin a conversation about the focus of Grace's ministry. The forum will last until about 11:30am. The first half an hour, Mitch Piper will facilitate a conversation about a direction you would be excited for Grace to have as our focus for the year ahead. We will have an open mic and someone taking minutes.

What do you think we could focus on that would be both appealing to you and might engage who are not already gathered with us currently? Identify things that have given you joy at Grace that we might go deeper into or new directions we might take. Share something that you would be willing to put your energy behind. We want to hear lots of voices, so focus your remarks leaving time for others.

Pastor Phil shared his vision of the direction he could see Grace moving as one possibility among those you will share. His message can be heard on YouTube beginning at 14:40: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GxJKpTdghp4&list=PLdCCuQubE03Q8IqkEL1QSPAkcVwx6cTZr&index=1>. A printed copy can be requested by calling Pastor Phil 715-577-1173.

After the half an hour of open mic, we will share a conversation we have begun with Habitat for Humanity for your feedback. Habitat has the potential of getting a grant from the housing authority to purchase part of our building. This would include Grace Place, the first floor rooms and hallway beyond Pastor Phil's office, and the second floor rooms/hall beyond the nursery. (We keep everything from the lounge to the Parlors; the childrens' chapel to the sanctuary; the whole third floor including spaces used by the choirs, bells, and the crafters.)

Habitat would provide us with a deposit that would allow us to install an elevator on that end of the building, take care of any asbestos issues, and construct the wall that would divide our property from theirs. **Their project would be to have nine to eighteen apartments that would serve veterans who otherwise might not have housing.** This is an important need in our community that we could help to provide. We would sell that portion of the building and therefore its care would be in other hands. Our own physical footprint would more closely match our current congregational size. Our facility costs would lower accordingly and we would expect to receive funds from the sale that could be used to implement the ministry focus we commit to realizing at Grace.

We would hope to receive guidance from those at this meeting as to whether this conversation should be continued. They have a March 1 deadline for submitting the proposal and require some time for the details to be articulated prior to that application.

## Joys of Christmas

Greetings from Grace Lutheran Communities!

We hope this letter finds you and your family healthy and in good spirits!

105 of our employees' children woke up to a gift yesterday under their tree or in their stocking all because of you!

Whether you made a monetary donation, shopped for gifts, or donated supplies, you made our Joys of Christmas Program a success!

Your generosity did much more than give a child a gift...

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## Grace Lutheran Communities to Grace Lutheran Church Did You Know?

The renovations at Grace Prairie Point are completed. Having passed all the Wisconsin State requirements, there are now two types of care available. The Oaks Assisted Living Suites offers the extra care for residents in a home-like setting. The Aspen Memory Care Suites provide special care for residents with dementia. Premier safety and security is provided with up-to-date technology and facility design features. For more information, Amanda at 715-598-7800 or Jamie at 715-832-3003 will be able to help you. Pick up a brochure at the Foundation Board in the Narthex.

The Winter 2022 Newsletter is available at the Foundation Board also. Featured are the facilities wherein the Foundation staff provide management services. Read Any Duhr's Greeting and enjoy the photos of activities chronicled at these homes for elder care. They are: American Lutheran Home and Hillside Assisted Living in Mondovi and Autumn Village in Menomonie; Pioneer Health and Rehab in Prairie Farm; Heritage Home in Elmwood and Riverwood — Eagle's Nest in Wisconsin Dells. Pick up the newsletter at the Foundation Board in the Narthex.

- You gave our employees the gift of seeing the smiles on their children's faces when they opened the gifts
  - You gave our employees a sense of normalcy in an uncertain time
  - You showed up for our employees & their families
  - You told them through your actions, that their community cares about them beyond the work they do
- Thank you for your continued support of Grace Lutheran Communities, our mission, and its employees. You didn't just give a child a gift, you gave their family a Christmas.  
Best wishes to you.

### Elizabeth Circle

Elizabeth Circle will meet on Monday January 9th at 10am in the Lounge at Grace. We will use the January Gather magazine for the Bible Study. All women are invited to come for fellowship, food and study. If you plan to come or have questions about Circle, contact Barb Piper (bpiper2007@yahoo.com or call/text 715-529-6900.)

### Sunday School

Due to the first Sunday being January 1st, Sunday School in January will be on the 8th and 22nd. The normal schedule of first and third Sundays will return in February.

- January 8
- January 22
- February 5
- February 19

## Adult Education Opportunity

You are invited to attend “How Does Liturgy Mean?” a three-session education study beginning Sunday, January 15, at 11am and continuing the next two Sundays in January (22 & 29). We will meet in the Grace Chapel.

We will explore the relationship between what Lutherans hold to be true and our order of worship we call the liturgy. In other words, how does our liturgy express our theology?

Session One will focus on our Liturgy of Preparation — Confession and Forgiveness. Session Two will center on the Liturgy of the Word. Session Three will concentrate on the Liturgy of the Eucharistic Meal.

How Does Liturgy Mean will be led by Don Wisner, Grace member, former Luther Seminary Professor of Worship and retired pastor of University Lutheran Church at the Ecumenical Religious Center on the UW–Eau Claire campus.

Education, Youth & Family Ministries

## Free: LED Light Bulbs

United Way of Chippewa Valley has partnered with Greenlite and Focus on Energy to offer these light bulbs to us free of charge. They are being distributed to individual homes through non-profit or community organizations. The purpose is to help each of us reduce energy costs. Each bulb is a A19 60-watt equivalent.

Pick up one package of 4 bulbs in the Narthex.

## Ministry Reports

If you are writing a ministry report for the 2022 Annual Report, please have it completed and sent to Andrew in the office by January 12 so he can compile and print them in time for the meeting. Thank You.

## Church Office Hours

Monday — Thursday : 10AM — 2PM

Phone: 715-832-9713

Email: [info@grace-church.org](mailto:info@grace-church.org)

Rev. Dr. Phil Ruge-Jones: [pastorphil@grace-church.org](mailto:pastorphil@grace-church.org)

If you missed one of our services, you can find them on the “Grace Lutheran Church ELCA Eau Claire Wisconsin” YouTube page. If you would like to follow along with a bulletin they can be found on our website (<https://grace-church.org/>) under the “Our Ministry” section.

Services are also broadcast on the following platforms:

### Televised Service

Sunday 10:30am WQOW Channel 18, Cable 9, 618HD (every other week)

Thursday 1:30pm Cable Channel 993 (ChipVal CTV Pub Ed)

### Radio Service

Sunday 8:30am WAYY 790 AM

Do you have information for the bulletin and Grace at a Glance? Deadline is Thursday by 12:00 p.m. by emailing Andrew at [info@grace-church.org](mailto:info@grace-church.org) or by calling the office at 715-832-9713