

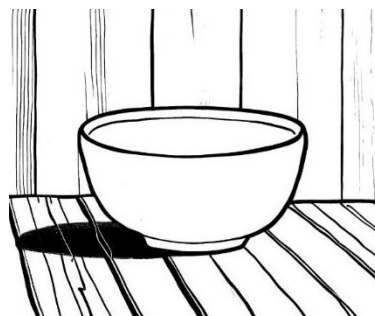
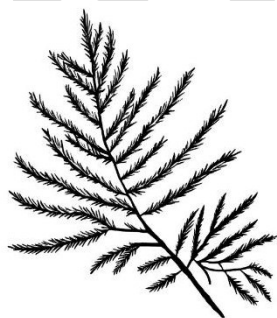
The Baptism of our Lord – A River Runs through It *A Celebrate! Worship for Every Festival*⁺ Service of Holy Communion

Preparation and Planning notes:

The Thanksgiving for Baptismal Waters flows through this service like a river, connecting God's gift of water for all creation and for our personal lives with stories in the Bible in which water is central: Jesus' baptism, our baptism, and the call of life of all who are baptized.

Several preparations will need to be made in advance:

- 1. A blue cloth, "flowing" from the base of the baptismal font like a river*
- 2. Four pitchers, filled with water, should be placed near the font prior to the service, for pouring into the baptismal font, preceding each of the four major sections of the Thanksgiving for Baptismal Waters*
- 3. Green boughs and bowls for each person who will be doing aspersion during the Thanksgiving for Baptismal Waters*



- 4. Newsprint or Butcher paper prepared in advance with a large depiction of the "A River Runs Through It" image (see next page and attachment), preferably placed on a table in an accessible area so that each person (of all ages) can easily add their thumbprints.*
- 5. Various colors of water-soluble paints in small bowls for making thumbprints*
- 6. Wet wipes to clean hands after thumbprints are affixed to the "A River Runs Through It" image*
- 7. Trash receptacle for the wet wipes*

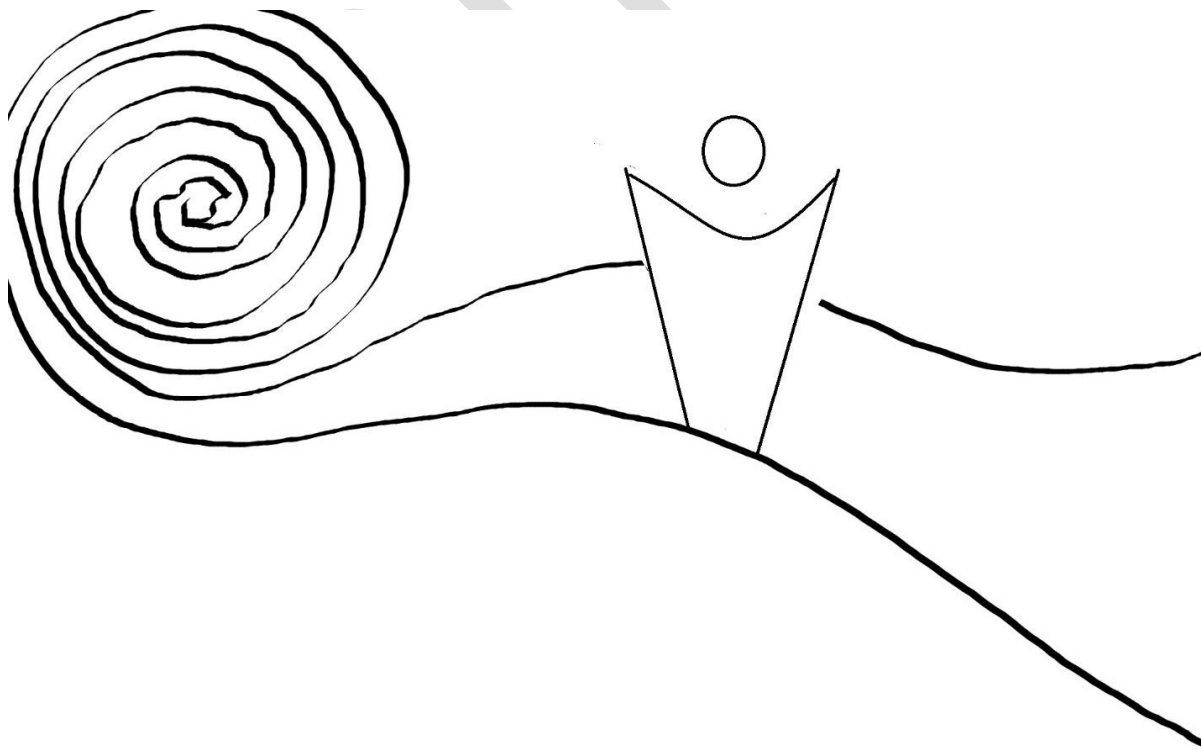
ASPERSION: To encourage full congregational participation, people of all ages should be invited in advance to lead the aspersion. It is recommended that the aspersion is practiced so that worshipers are sprinkled with water, not “soaked.”

- For each time of aspersion in the liturgy, it is recommended that, if the font is large enough, water is poured from a pitcher into the font.
- Next, a small bowl is dipped into the font to be filled with enough water, adequate for aspersion.
- If the font is not large enough to accommodate dipping a bowl, it is recommended that water is first poured from the pitcher into the font, and then directly into the bowl.

Readers: The First Reading is from the Beginner’s Bible. The second reading is from the Easy to Read Version of the Bible. The Gospel Reading is from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition (NRSVUE). It would be appropriate to have the first reading shared by a child’s voice. It is preferable to have the readers chosen in advance so that the readings can be practiced prior to worship. However, readers may also be chosen at the start of the service, if this is part of local tradition and appropriate to a given context.

Music: The songs provided are suggestions. The hymn numbers are from Evangelical Lutheran Worship. Congregations are encouraged to choose sacred music that reflects the piety of their particular worshipping community. Should musical ensembles or soloists be available, congregations are encouraged to include either intergenerational ensembles or soloists and ensembles that represent a variety of ages and abilities. Service music should reflect the water theme that connects us to the whole of creation.

Water and Welcome: Because this service includes aspersion, it will be important to include service notes to that effect, and also in the welcome to inform the worshipers that throughout the service they will be sprinkled with water, in remembrance of and Thanksgiving for Baptismal waters.



Prelude/Gathering Music

Welcome

The liturgy begins at the Baptismal font. The "Call to Worship" is optional.

Call to Worship

P: All who are thirsty,

C: Come to the water.

P: All how are seeking,

C: Come to the water.

P: All who are longing for justice,

C: Come to the water.

P: All who are carrying heavy burdens,

C: Come to the water.

P: All who are in need of mercy,

C: Come to the water.

P: All are from every time and every place,

C: Come to the water.

ALL: Amen

Entrance Song

When Long Before Time (verses 1-3)

ELW #861

Thanksgiving for Baptismal Waters

P: Blessed be the holy Trinity, + one God,
Source and Fountain,
Living Water,
River of Life.

C: AMEN

P: Connected by water to all of creation,
Sustained by water, the foundation of life,
Joined to Christ by water and the Word,
We give thanks for the gift of Baptismal waters -
Waters that bathe us in Divine Love,
Waters that remind us of Divine Mercy
Waters that equip us for being bearers of this Love and Mercy in the whole world.

Water is poured into the font.

The congregation is sprinkled with water during the prayer.

A: Holy Trinity, +one God,
We give you thanks for this earth, our planet home
And the waters that fill and sustain it.

C: We thank you, God for water.

Worshippers are invited to the Baptismal font to be marked with water and the sign of the cross with the words below. Those unable to come to the font, participate at their seats.

Child of God, remember that through water and the Word, your sins are forgiven. The old has passed away, you have been made new in Christ, and you are called to let your light shine for the sake of the Gospel, for the sake of the world.

The service (with or without Holy Communion) continues below.

Thanksgiving for Baptismal Waters, continued

Water is poured into the font.

The congregation is sprinkled with water during the prayer.

A: Sustaining God, our River of Life we honor you
For calling us to live among your faithful people,
To hear your word and share in your Supper,
To proclaim your good news in Christ through word and deed,
To serve all people, following the example of Jesus,
To strive for justice and peace in all the earth.

C: We honor you, O God.

A: We honor you, O God
For showering us with your Holy Spirit,
The spirit of wisdom and understanding,
The spirit of counsel and might,
The spirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord,
The spirit of joy in your presence,
Both now and forever.

C: We honor you, O God.

A: We honor you, O God
By letting our lights shine before others
So they may see our good works,
And glorify you,
As we bear your creative and redeeming word to all the world.

C: We honor you, O God. AMEN.

Sending

Blessing

P: May the blessing of the holy Trinity, + one God,
Source and Fountain,
Living Water,
River of Life
Be upon you this day

And remain with you always.

C: AMEN

Sending Song

When Long Before Time (verses 4-6)

ELW #861

Dismissal

P: Go in peace.

C: Thanks be to God.

Postlude

+ “Celebrate! Worship for Every Festival” liturgies are part of the Nourishing Vocation with Children Project at St. Olaf College, Northfield, MN. This liturgy was created by Rev. Dr. Charlene Rachuy Cox. This full attribution must be included, along with the logos attributions and permissions below, on any reproduction or distribution of this material, along with the attributions below about the readings.

“Creator of Water,” Copyright © 1998 by Carolyn Winfrey Gillette. All rights reserved. Included in Gifts of Love: New Hymns for Today’s Worship (Geneva Press, 2000). Email: carolynshymns@gmail.com New Hymns: www.carolynshymns.com/ Used by permission.

Excerpts from Genesis 7-9, The Beginners Bible: Henley, Karyn. *Timeless Children’s Stories*. Zondervan, 1989.

Acts 10:34-43. Holy Bible, Easy to Read Version

Luke 3:15-17, 21-22, Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition.

