



First Reformed United Church of Christ

Where People Discover...

The Love of God...

The Power to Love Others...

The Ability to Love Ourselves

January 9, 2022
The Worship of God
Baptism of Christ

Prelude

Christopher Kiser

***Chimes**

Words of Welcome

Rev. Elizabeth Horton

Anthem

"Down to the River to Pray"

arr. Curry

*As I went down to the river to pray, studyin' about that good ol' way
and who shall wear the starry crown, Good Lord, show me the way.*

O sisters, let's go down, let's go down, come on down. O sisters, let's go down, down to the river to pray.

*As I went down to the river to pray, studyin' about that good ol' way
and who shall wear the robe and crown, Good Lord, show me the way,*

O brothers, let's go down, let's go down, come on down. Come on brothers, let's go down, down to the river to pray.

*As I went down to the river to pray, studyin' about that good ol' way
and who shall wear the starry crown, Good Lord, show me the way.*

O fathers, let's go down, let's go down, come on down. O fathers, let's go down, down to the river to pray.

*As I went down to the river to pray, studyin' about that good ol' way
and who shall wear the robe and crown, Good Lord, show me the way.*

O mothers, let's go down, come on down, don't-cha wanna go down.

Come on mothers, let's go down, down to the river to pray.

*As I went down to the river to pray, studyin' about that good ol' way
and who shall wear the starry crown, Good Lord, show me the way*

O sinners, let's go down, let's go down, come on down. O sinners, let's go down, down to the river to pray.

*As I went down to the river to pray, studyin' about that good ol' way
and who shall wear the starry crown, Good Lord, show me the way*

Call to Worship

Bonita Hooper

One: Sisters and brothers, today we recall: Jesus came to the waters of baptism.

All: In baptism, our Creator claims us and frees us from the power of hatred and death.

One: In baptism we are joined to Christ, and we are joined together in unity, recalling

All: "There is no longer Jew or Greek there is no longer slave or free there is no longer male or female for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."

One: In baptism, the Spirit of God anoints us for ministry and makes us signs of divine love. It is the mark of acceptance into the church and the beginning of our growth into full Christian faith and discipleship.

All: Therefore, on this day, the whole church, the Body of Christ, remembers and celebrates.

One: Let us worship God!

***Congregational Hymn**

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***Invocation**

Bonita Hooper

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 43: 1-7

Bonita Hooper

But now, says the LORD—the one who created you, Jacob, the one who formed you, Israel: Don't fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine.

When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; when through the rivers, they won't sweep over you. When you walk through the fire, you won't be scorched and flame won't burn you.

I am the LORD your God, the holy one of Israel, your savior. I have given Egypt as your ransom, Cush and Seba in your place.

Because you are precious in my eyes, you are honored, and I love you. I give people in your place, and nations in exchange for your life.

Don't fear, I am with you. From the east I'll bring your children; from the west I'll gather you.

I'll say to the north, "Give them back!" and to the south, "Don't detain them." Bring my sons from far away, and my daughters from the end of the earth, everyone who is called by my name and whom I created for my glory, whom I have formed and made.

The word of God for the People of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Response in Song

"Water, River, Spirit, Grace"

Ellen Peterson

Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing

The river... of life ... flowing from the throne of God — Revelation 22:1 NIV

1. Come, Thou Fount of ev - 'ry bless - ing, Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;
 2. Here I raise mine Eb - e - ne - zer; Hith - er by Thy help I'm come;
 3. O to grace how great a debt - or Dai - ly I'm con - strained to be!

Streams of mer - cy, nev - er ceas - ing, Call for songs of loud - est praise:
 And I hope, by Thy good plea - sure, Safe - ly to ar - rive at home:
 Let Thy grace, Lord, like a fet - ter, Bind my wan - d'ring heart to Thee:

Teach me some me - lo - dious son - net, Sung by flam - ing tongues a - bove;
 Je - sus sought me when a stran - ger, Wan - d'ring from the fold of God;
 Prone to wan - der, Lord, I feel it, Prone to leave the God I love;

Praise the mount! I'm fixed up - on it, Mount of Thy re - deem - ing love.
 He, to res - cue me from dan - ger, In - ter - posed His pre - cious blood.
 Here's my heart, Lord, take and seal it, Seal it for Thy courts a - bove.

WORDS: Robert Robinson, 1735-1790

MUSIC: Wyeth's *Repository of Sacred Music, Part Second*, 1813

This tune in a lower key, No. 507.

NETTLETON
8.7.8.7.D.

Call to Confession

Rev. Horton

Unison Prayer of Confession

Gracious God, we confess that too often we live as though we are fearful, not faithful. When we encounter the waters of chaos and confusion, we don't easily pass through them, but we obsess about the height of the water instead of the sight of the other side. You promised to walk through the rivers with us. Help us believe. And help our unbelief.

Assurance of Forgiveness

Installation of Deacons, Elders and Trustees

Rev. Horton

DEACONS

Dave Fulton	Alane Holste
Robert Danze	Smithie Parrish
John Maze	Stacy Sosebee-West

ELDERS

Rita Lohr	John Smith
John Gray	Lisa Nelson
Betty Barr	Clifton Murphy

TRUSTEES:

Buddy Lohr	Clifford Lopp	Jerry Smith
Mark Smith	Walter Hoffman	

Gospel Reading

Luke 3: 15-22

Rev. Horton

The people were filled with expectation, and everyone wondered whether John might be the Christ. John replied to them all, "I baptize you with water, but the one who is more powerful than me is coming. I'm not worthy to loosen the strap of his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire. The shovel he uses to sift the wheat from the husks is in his hands. He will clean out his threshing area and bring the wheat into his barn. But he will burn the husks with

a fire that can't be put out." With many other words John appealed to them, proclaiming good news to the people.

But Herod the ruler had been criticized harshly by John because of Herodias, Herod's brother's wife, and because of all the evil he had done. He added this to the list of his evil deeds: he locked John up in prison.

When everyone was being baptized, Jesus also was baptized. While he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit came down on him in bodily form like a dove. And there was a voice from heaven: "You are my Son, whom I dearly love; in you I find happiness."

Sermon

"A Beginning and a Blessing"

Remembering Our Baptism

Invitation to Give

Prayer of Dedication

Bonita Hooper

Response in Song

"The Spirit Sends Us Forth to Serve"

Ellen Peterson

***Benediction**

Rev. Horton

Postlude

Christopher Kiser

**~ Please remain seated until the ushers direct you to exit. ~
After the service, you are invited to join in the Prayer Circle in the front of the sanctuary.**

MINISTERS: The Congregation of **FIRST REFORMED UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**
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FIRST REFORMED UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST IS AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION

We welcome into the full life and ministry of the church all people, regardless of ability, age, education, ethnicity, family or marital status, gender identity or expression, income, nationality, political affiliation, race, sexual orientation, or any other distinction. At the baptismal font and at the communion table, from the nursery cribs to the church leadership, whether you were raised in a church or have never, before attended one, you are welcome here.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE

LITURGIST: Bonita Hooper

DIGITAL MEDIA TECHS: Jeremy Peterson

SOUND TECH: James Gray

ACOLYTE: Emma Hartle

BIBLE STEWARD: Jacob Hartle

USHERS: John Gray, Lisa Nelson, Eddie Yates

PLEASE PRAY FOR...

Jeremy Lovell, Alisa Johnson

AT HOME AND IN CARE FACILITIES:

Peggy Bates, Sherry Bonner, Lee & Ellen Bouchard, Ruth Essick, Pattie Everhart, Vogen Everhart, Lib & Jimbo Hinkle, Jeff Hutchens, Marguerite Leonard, Deanna Michael, John Potts & Janette Neal, Lib Sink, Carolyn Spivey, Adena Wall

OUR FRIENDS:

*John Ray Ward (Patti Lovell's brother-in-law), *The Family of Ken Holmes (neighbors of Jerry & Patti Lovell, Nicole Holste (Alane Holste's sister-in-law), Family of Will Swaim (friend of Alane Holste), Ed Leonard (Sylvia Waiser's brother), Miller Abernathy (Sylvia Waiser's son-in-law), The family of Evelyn York (friend of Alane Holste), Marc Frye (son of the late Doris Frye, Ashley Thomason (Ron & Heidi Hutcheson's daughter-in-law)

JANUARY CELEBRATIONS

BIRTHDAYS:

10th...Deanna Michael...Harriette Murphy

11th...Camille Morgan

13th...Jitter Yarbrough

15th...Laura Perry

WEEKLY CALENDAR OF CHURCH ACTIVITIES

Sunday, January 9: First Sunday after Epiphany

9:30AM **Adult Bible Study:** "Well Pleased" Facilitator: Rev. June Grubb
The Baptism of Jesus (Luke 3:15-17, 21-22)

10:30AM **Worship Service** (in person and via YouTube)
Installation of 2022 Consistory

10:45AM **Children's Worship** (Theater Room)

Following Worship

Prayer Circle

Choir Practice (Sanctuary)

Consistory Meeting

6:00PM **Youth Group** (Fellowship Hall)

Tuesday, January 11:

12:00PM **2CFAR** (via Zoom)

7:00PM **Book Study** "The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World" (via Zoom)
Facilitator: Smithie Parrish

Wednesday, January 12:

5:30PM **Confirmation**

6:30PM **Children's Fun and Games** (Fellowship Hall)

Youth Study Assistant: Stacy Sosebee-West (Youth Room)

Thursday, January 13:

4-6:00PM **Clothing Ministry Workday**

6:30PM **Board of Evangelism Meeting** (Fellowship Hall)

Saturday, January 15:

12:30PM **Take-out Lunch Ministry** (Kitchen)

Sunday, January 16: Church's 121st Anniversary

9:30AM **Adult Bible Study:** "Varieties of Gifts" Facilitators: Jay & Cathy Whitley
I Corinthians 12:1-11

10:30AM **Worship Service** (in person and via YouTube)
Installation of 2022 Consistory

10:45AM **Children's Worship**

Following Worship

Prayer Circle

Choir Practice (Sanctuary)

6:00PM **Youth Group** (Fellowship Hall)