



**Midweek Service of Word and Prayer
Grace Lutheran Church
Lincoln, Nebraska**

Opening Dialog

The light shines in the darkness,

and the darkness has not overcome it.

The Word became flesh and lived among us,

and we have beheld Christ's glory.

To us a child is born, to us a Son is given.

In the Word was life, and the life was the light of all people.

Introduction to Sunday

Our re-creation in baptism is an image of the Genesis creation, where the Spirit of God moved over the waters and brought order to chaos. Both Mark's gospel and the reading in Acts make clear that it is the Spirit's movement that distinguishes Jesus' baptism from John's. The Spirit has come upon us, calling us God's beloved children and setting us on Jesus' mission to re-create the world in the image of God's vision of justice and peace for all.

Prayer of the Day

Holy God, creator of light and giver of goodness, your voice moves over the waters. Immerse us in your grace, and transform us by your Spirit, that we may follow your Son, Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Readings

Genesis 1

³Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light. ⁴And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness.

God speaks order into chaos, why is this significant today?

Acts 19

"⁴Paul 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."

What is the goal of John's ministry? Why is this important?

Mark 1

⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

The site of Jesus' baptism is a narrow, muddy section of the river Jordan. Why is this significant?

Reflection

Words Matter

“Sticks and stone may break my bones, but words can never hurt me.” In days past this rhyme was taught to children to help them overcome the pain of mean and cruel words. Most people will agree, however, that the rhyme is false. By adulthood people often have experienced more pain through words than physical violence. Words have great power. In Genesis it is nothing more than God’s Word that brings order from chaos. In Psalm 29 it is the voice of God, God’s words, that are celebrated. The words of world leaders can cause stock markets to soar or plummet. It is water and God’s word which together claim our lives in baptism. It is God’s word along with bread and wine that bring us the presence of God in holy communion. Words can heal and love and bring joy. Words can also cut, harm, and destroy. Choose your words with care.

Lord’s Prayer (together)

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours, now and forever. Amen.

Apostle’s Creed (together)

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God’s only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

Responsive Prayer

Show us your mercy, O God,
and grant us your salvation.
Give us the joy of your saving help again,
and sustain us with your bountiful Spirit.
Give peace in all the world;
for only in you can we live in safety.
Keep the nations under your care,
and guide us in the way of justice and truth.

Let your way be known upon earth;
your saving health among all nations.
Let not the needy be forgotten,
nor the hope of the poor be taken away.
Create in us a clean heart, O God,
and sustain us with your Holy Spirit.
Lord, hear my prayer,
and let my cry come before you.

Closing Prayer

O God, in you we live and move and have our being. Guide and govern us every day by your Holy Spirit, that in all the cares and occupations of our life we may not forget you, but remember that always we are walking in your promises; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Serve the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

Blessing

Almighty God (+) bless us, defend us from all evil, and bring us to everlasting life.
Amen.