Time to Fly *by Margaret Kyle.*

Merging Waters United Church

Sunday Morning Worship January 12, 2025

The Baptism of Jesus

WELCOME / BIENVENUE

People of all ages, identities, and walks of life are welcome.	Toutes et tous sont bienvenus, peu importe l'âge, l'identité ou les conditions de vie.
Wherever you are, whoever you are, we welcome you in love and community to worship.	Peu importe où que vous soyez, qui que vous soyez, nous vous accueillons dans l'amour et la communauté pour louer Dieu ensembles.
Wherever we are, we're close in one another's hearts.	Notre amour n'est jamais limité par la distance.

Please join in the responses in **bold text.** Veuillez vous joindre aux réponses en **texte gras.**

Keep our worship scent-free! To help fellow worshippers with chemical sensitivities, please do not wear perfume or scented products (lotion, hair spray) if attending in person.

Veillez à ce que notre culte soit exempt d'odeurs ! Pour aider les fidèles souffrant de sensibilités chimiques, nous vous demandons de ne pas porter de parfum ou de produits parfumés (lotion, laque) si vous assistez au culte en personne.

To protect personal privacy, please do not take photos or videos without authorization.

Pour protéger la vie privée, ne prenez pas de photos ou de vidéos sans autorisation.

WELCOME

LIFE AND WORK OF THE PEOPLE

GATHERING

ACKNOWLEDGING THE TRADITIONAL TERRITORY

We remember with gratitude that we live and worship on lands that are by law the unceded territory of the Mohawk Peoples. May we live with respect on this land, and in peace and friendship with its Peoples.

OUR PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE (LIGHT A CANDLE)

CENTERING MUSIC

What a Wonderful World
Words and Music by George David Weiss
and Bob Thiele, arranged by Brendt Edstrom

SPIRITUAL FOCUS

Breath prayer

OPENING PRAYER

O Faithful One, your promises have been answered and continue to be answered by the Beloved, Jesus of Nazareth. Open our hearts to receive this, your greatest gift of love, again today. As we hear your voice claim Jesus as your holy child, remind us that we too are claimed as children of God. Fill our hearts with joy as we continue to celebrate the promises fulfilled in Jesus. Amen.

OPENING HYMN: VU #381

Spirit of Life

CHALKING THE DOOR

LISTENING FOR GOD'S WORD

THE WORD (SCRIPTURE)

Luke 3:15–17, 21–22 *paraphrase*

Jesus' Ministry Begins
Based on Luke 3:15–17, 21–22
The road was busier than usual, as hundreds of people walked in the same direction. They were all headed for the River Jordan. Many people were already gathered along the river's edge. People were coming for one reason: they wanted to see John.

John was related to Jesus. Their mothers had known each other many years before. But John and Jesus had never met, for John had spent most of his life in the wilds of the

desert, seeking to learn about God. He dressed as a man of the wilderness in clothes made of camel's hair and leather. But it was what John said that drew the people to him and what he did for them.

John had learned about the messengers God had sent to people long ago. He knew he had to be a messenger, too. So John would shout his message, "Good news. Prepare the way. There is one who is coming who will show us God's love." Day after day, John would call out to the people and encourage them to change the way they lived so they would be better people. And then, when the people were ready to change, John would lead them, one by one, into the river until the water was waist-high; and there, John would say a prayer, dip them under the water, and baptize each one. When the people came out of the river, they were wet but smiling and feeling clean and new inside.

"Maybe John is the one for whom we have been waiting to be our teacher and leader," people began to wonder.

But John would shake his head and say, "No, no, it's not me. Why I'm not even special enough to stoop down and undo his sandals. No, I am here to help you get ready to meet him. I baptize you with water, but this special person will baptize people in a very different way. He will baptize you with God's Holy Spirit."

One day as John was preaching, Jesus stepped out from the crowd and walked up to John. He placed a hand on his shoulder and said, "John, please baptize me, too." John recognized who this was, but before he could reply, Jesus removed his seamless tunic and waded into the River Jordan. The water came up to his knees, and then up to his waist.

John followed Jesus into the river. He put his hand on Jesus' head, said a prayer, and then dipped Jesus into the water. As he came up out of the water, Jesus prayed to God. And then, looking up, it seemed like the sky split apart and there was light all around. The Holy Spirit hovered over Jesus like a dove, and deep down and all around, Jesus heard a loving voice say, "You are loved by God. I am so pleased with you."
This was the moment when Jesus' ministry began – a ministry of teaching, healing, and showing people the way of God's love.

FOR THE YOUNG AT HEART

FOOD FOR THOUGHT

HYMN: MV # 104 Eng,Lug, Eng Know That God is Good

OFFERING

OFFERING SONG: I See the Love of God

David Ouchterlony, arr. Michael Woytiuk

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Creator God,
we bring our gifts and ourselves, our promises and our heart.
Bless us, in all that we offer, that our offerings might be used
in your call to us:
to be stewards but not owners of that which have been given,
to be places in which you abide but not where you are
constrained.
Bless us, that in our giving, we might open ourselves to your call to seek justice and mercy for all that you have created,
for all that you love. Amen

PRAYERS OF JOY AND CONCERN

Response: **Hear our prayer!**

THE LORD'S / JESUS' PRAYER SUNG VU # 960

**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 them that 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,
for ever and ever. Amen**

CLOSING HYMN MV # 156 Dance With the Spirit

SENDING

BLESSING AND SENDING

Beloved child of God,
go into this world that God loves.
Bless it with your imagination;
transform it with your courage;
renew it with your compassion.
And may the Spirit's presence
fill you with abundant hope
and everlasting joy. Amen.

SENDING

Child of God

Spiritual, arrangement Miichael Woytiuk

Thank you for joining in worship today ♡

MERGING WATERS UNITED CHURCH

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UPCOMING SERVICES at 10:30 a.m.

19-Jan	2nd Sunday after Epiphany	Guest Rob Lutes shares the history of Amazing Grace