



October 21, 2018

Baptism Sunday

Welcome, Gathering, and Announcements:

*(Portions of the service printed in **bold** are spoken by the whole congregation. The asterisk (*) indicates congregation stands, but please feel free to sit at any time. Children are always welcome at our services. Books/toys are available at the front and back of the sanctuary.)*

Candle Lighting & Centring:

"In the ritual of baptism, we act out the bizarre truth of the Christian identity: We are people who stand totally exposed before evil and death and declare them powerless against love."

– Rachel Held Evans, *Searching for Sunday: Loving, Leaving, and Finding the Church*

Chorus: *Don't Be Afraid*, #90 MV

Call to Worship:

God promised to gather us up, to bring us together, although we may be scattered across the land.

We sing together the greatness of God.

God promised us comfort, a release from terror, and a respite from the pain that follows us on earth.

We sit together, marveling at the abundance of God.

God promised that the people would be satisfied with this bounty.

We work together, that all people might share God's bounty. Written by Maria I. Tirabassi, page 26 of *Before the Amen*

***Hymn: *Deep in Our Hearts*, #154 MV**

Prayer of Confession

& The Prayer Jesus Taught

Merciful God, you have called us to share in Jesus' mission to bring to life your vision of community and human family. We confess that we sometimes put our own desires before the needs of your children and have forgotten our covenant of Baptism. Forgive us, we pray, so that we might begin anew. Help us to know your wise and compassionate guidance, so that we will choose to live in faithfulness and joy, in generosity and delight, as Jesus has taught us... **Our Father...**

Words of Assurance

Jesus said, "*I have come that you may have life and have it abundantly.*" In that love we are forgiven; and in forgiveness is the strength to forgive ourselves and one another.

We receive this gift of Grace and live into this day in peace and hope.

***Sharing Peace & Blessings**

Let our hospitality towards each other reflect God's love.
Peace be with you.

And also with you.

Let us greet each other sharing signs of the peace of Christ.

Liturgy for Baptism

Statement of Purpose:

Before conscious thought or action on our part,

we are born into the brokenness of this world.

Before conscious thought or action on our part,

we are surrounded by God's redeeming love.
Baptism by water in the name of the Holy Trinity
is the means by which we are received, at any age,
into the covenanted community of the church.
It is the ritual that signifies our rebirth in faith
and cleansing by the power of God.
Baptism signifies the nurturing, sustaining,
and transforming power of God's love
and our grateful response to that grace.

wording from "A Song of Faith", United Church Statement of Faith, 2006

Presentation of Candidate:

Board Representative: On behalf of the congregation of Stettler United Church, I present Amber and Matt Dorsett, who bring their daughter Greta Grace -- goddaughter of Teresa Leibel -- for initiation into the body of Christ through baptism.

Profession of Faith and Promises:

Dear friends, God is love. We love because God first loved us and in baptism we respond to that love.

Matt and Amber, you and I have spoken about baptism, and why it's important to you that your children be baptised. I ask you now to respond to these questions, so the entire community can share in your desire.

Do you believe in God, Source of Love; in Jesus Christ, love incarnate; and in the Holy Spirit, love's power?

I do by the grace of God.

Will you follow in the way of Jesus, reaching out to others with love and compassion?

I will, God being my helper.

Will you support the work and witness of the Christian church?

I will, God being my helper.

Will you share your faith with Greta, growing with her as you pray with and for her, encouraging her by your words and actions, and walking with her in the way of Christ?

I will, God being my helper.

The Godparent's Commitment:

Teresa, having heard the things which Amber & Matt have said, will you support them, and their child in their covenant with God?

I will, God being my helper.

Will you give of your time and of yourself to Greta, guiding and encouraging her by word and action, supporting her in prayer and with love, to follow the way of Jesus?

I will, God being my helper.

***Congregational Commitment:**

And you, the people of God gathered here at Stettler United Church, will you provide an environment that will nurture and enrich the wellbeing of Greta, and of all the children among you?

With joy we commit ourselves to care for and nurture God's children. With God's help, we will live out our baptism as a loving community in the spirit of Christ: nurturing one another in faith, upholding one another in prayer, and encouraging one another in service.

***Affirmation of Faith: "A New Creed" #918 VU**

Blessing of Water: *(Words spoken as someone pours water into the font)*

Oh, let the waters come *down*, and baptize us, once again. Oh, let the waters come *up*, and make the deserts of our hearts bloom. Oh, let the waters come *out*, and soak our faces in tears. Oh, let the waters come *in*, and fill our thirsty souls. Oh, let the waters come and carry us to you, God-of-All, as we give thanks for the waters which bless our lives and water our hopes.

Amen. <https://www.united-church.ca/sites/default/files/season-creation-english-spanish.pdf>

The Act of Baptism & Anointing:

Greta Grace, we baptize you into the love, service, and joy of God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer. **Amen.**

Marked with the sign of the cross, may the Spirit be upon you, child of God, disciple of Christ, and member of the Christian church. **Amen.**

Baptismal Prayer:

We pray:

God bless this newly baptized child – Greta Grace. May she always know that the Source of all Love lives and comes to unique expression in her. Amen

God bless her parents – Matt and Amber -- and her god-mother – Teresa. May they always show their gratitude for the new life given them by loving and caring for Greta.

Amen.

God bless us all as faithful people. May we live in love and continue to draw encouragement from the faith which connects our loving with the mystery we call God. Amen.

Presentation of Candle, Gifts & Certificate:

Board Representative: Jesus calls us to be light for the whole world. Greta Grace, let your light shine before others so that they will praise God!

May this prayer shawl remind you that you are wrapped in God's love always; knit together in the family of faith.

*Hymn: "This Little Light" (#66AGCS)

(As the congregation sings, the family walks down and back up the aisle for the congregation to welcome the newly baptised persons.)

**This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine(x 3)
Let it shine, all the time, let it shine.**

**Hide it behind my back, "No!" (x 3)
Let it shine, all the time, let it shine**

**Share this light with neighbours, "Yes!" (x 3)
Let it shine, all the time, let it shine**

**This little light of mine, I'm gonna let it shine (x 3)
Let it shine, all the time, let it shine.**

A Reading from Psalm 104 *(Selected verses)*

With Wisdom, God created all the earth and its creatures.

*Hymn: *Water Flowing From the Mountains* #87 MV

Minister's Message

Choir Anthem

Invitation for Offering:

Here we pause to remember we live and give in response to God's bountiful love...

***Sung Dedication: "Spirit, Open My Heart" #79 MV**

(chorus, verse 2 & chorus)

***Prayer of Dedication:**

God of great wonders, we join with you in this season of giving.

You give us life and breath; fill the world with beauty; our hands with bounty; and our hearts with the desire to give. Bless and extend these gifts, and ourselves in service, in this and every season. Amen.

<http://carolpenner.typepad.com/leadinginworship/prayers-offering/>

Prayers of the Gathered Community

***Baptismal Benediction: *May God Who Creates You*, #454 VU**