



*Living by Faith, Known by Love, A Voice of Hope*



First Church in Windsor, UCC  
January 10, 10 a.m.

### **Baptism of Jesus Sunday**

#### **Prelude**

*Down to the River to Pray*  
By G.H Allen\*  
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#### **Welcome**

#### **Introit**

*Jesus the Light of the World*  
Words by Charles Wesley  
Music by George Elderkin

**We will follow the light, beautiful light,  
come where the dewdrops of mercy are bright,  
shine all around us by day and by night,  
Jesus, the light of the world.**

**Call to Worship** (*from the poem "Beginning with Beloved: A Blessing" by Jan Richardson*)

**One:** Begin here: *Beloved.*

Is there any other word  
needs saying,  
any other blessing  
could compare  
with this name,  
this knowing?

**Two:** **Beloved.**

**Comes like a mercy  
to the ear that has never  
heard it.  
Comes like a river  
to the body that has never  
seen such grace.**

**One:** *Beloved.*

Comes holy  
to the heart  
aching to be new.  
Comes healing  
to the soul  
wanting to begin  
again.

Two: *Beloved.*

Keep saying it  
and though it may  
sound strange at first,  
watch how it becomes  
part of you,  
how it becomes you,  
as if you never  
could have known yourself  
anything else,  
as if you could ever  
have been other  
than this:

One: *Beloved.*

## Opening Hymn

*Sweet, Sweet Spirit*

By Doris Akers  
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There's a sweet, sweet Spirit in this place,  
and I know that it's the Spirit of the Lord;  
there are sweet expressions on each face,  
and I know they feel the presence of the Lord.

**Chorus:** Sweet Holy Spirit, sweet heavenly Dove,  
stay right here with us, filling us with your love.  
And for these blessings we lift out hearts in praise.  
Without a doubt we'll know that we have been revived  
when we shall leave this place.

There are blessings you cannot receive  
till you know the Spirit's fullness and believe;  
you're the one to profit when you say,  
"I am going to stay with Jesus all the way."

Chorus

## Prayer of Invocation

Powerful God, take us now to the River Jordan, that we might share Jesus' moment of emptying self to receive your Spirit in all its power. Move us to remember that we have been baptized, that your love was poured out on us, not because we earned it, but because of your amazing grace. Amid the wonder of it all, we gather to celebrate the Spirit's gifts. In your name we pray. Amen.

## Prayer of our Savior

**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 sins, as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory, forever. Amen**

## Children's Moment

## Water Video

## Scripture

Mark 1: 4-11

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. <sup>5</sup>And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. <sup>6</sup>Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. <sup>7</sup>He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. <sup>8</sup>I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." <sup>9</sup>In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. <sup>10</sup>And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. <sup>11</sup>And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

## Sermon

Pastor Nicole

"Who Was John Really?"

## Hymn

*Spirit, Spirit of Gentleness*

Words and music by James K. Manley

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**Chorus: Spirit, spirit of gentleness,  
blow through the wilderness, calling and free.  
Spirit, spirit of restlessness,  
stir me from placidness, wind, wind on the sea.**

**You moved on the waters, you called to the deep,  
then you coaxed up the mountains from the valleys of sleep.  
And over the eons you called to each thing,  
"Awake from your slumbers and rise on your wings."**

**Chorus**

**You swept through the desert, you stung with the sand,  
and you goaded your people with a law and a land;  
When they were confounded by their idols and lies,  
then you spoke through your prophets to open their eyes.**

**Chorus**

**You sang in a stable, you cried from a hill,  
then you whispered in silence when the whole world was still;  
And down in the city you called once again,  
when you blew through your people on the rush of the wind.**

**Chorus**

**Sharing Our Star Gifts**

**Prayers of the People**

**Pastoral Prayer**

**Prayer Response**

*When God is a Child*  
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Music by Joan Collier Fogg  
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**Announcements**

**Benediction**

**Postlude**

*We Shall Gather at the River*  
By Robert Lowry  
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Sung by the First Church Choir  
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The Call to Worship is from the poem **Beginning with Beloved: A Blessing** © Jan Richardson.  
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Other prayers for today's service were adapted and used with permission from *Led by Love* by Lavon Bayler. Cleveland: United Church Press, 1996.

\*The earliest known version of the song, titled "The Good Old Way," was published in [\*Slave Songs of the United States\*](#) in 1867 and is credited to Mr. G. H. Allan of Nashville, Tennessee.