

Sunday Worship on January 11, 2026

(CCLI: License Number #3156883) (Welcoming Elder: Donald Hutchinson)

We Gather

- Welcome and Announcements
- Responsive Call to worship
- Praise song BOP 115 Hail to the Lord's anointed (Vs. 1, 2, & 5)
- Prayer for Worship and the Lord's Prayer
- Words of Assurance
- Praise song BOP 373 Jesus loves me this I know (Vs. 1-3)
- Prayer for children

We listen

- Sung prayer for illumination (BOP 445 Open our eyes, Lord)
- First reading: Isaiah 42:1-9
- Second reading: Psalm 29 (Refrain 2)
- Third reading: Matthew 3:13-17
- Sermon: **The Son who steps into our place**
- Praise song BOP 183 Christ, when for us you were baptized (Vs. 1-4)
- Prayer for people

We Respond

- Offering, Doxology (tune BOP 79 Praise God with songs that never cease) & Dedication
- Song for the Journey BOP 350 To God be the glory (Vs. 1-3)

We Serve

- Benediction
- A Sung Blessing

Responsive Call to Worship

We are called to serve in the name of Jesus, God's beloved Son,

God calls us by name because we are beloved.

God calls us to be a light to the nations.

We wait for God's teaching and to learn justice.

We are witnesses to God's goodness and grace who claims and loves us.

God's name be praised!

Praise song – BOP 115 Hail to the Lord's anointed (Vs. 1, 2, & 5)

Prayer of Adoration

Creator God, you formed the heavens and stretched them over us;
you spread out the earth and made it fruitful.

From your glory, you came to us in Jesus, your Son, to touch the earth with healing and hope.

We praise you for all the gifts you have given us

in Christ and in creation. In the strength of the Spirit, we come to renew our commitment to you, to serve in the name of Christ Jesus, who is one with you and the Holy Spirit, one God now and always.

Prayer of confession (Unison)

Merciful God, in baptism you promise us forgiveness and new life.

We confess that we often prefer our old ways. We resist the new opportunities you set before us. We cling to harmful habits and nurse grudges, failing to forgive one another. Have mercy upon us, O God, and guide us to live with more grace and generosity through Christ our Lord.

Heavenly Father, hear us, as we offer the Prayer that Jesus taught us: (The Lord's Prayer:)

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.

Words of Assurance

(Worship leaders might consider saying the assurance of pardon while pouring water into the Baptismal font, as a visual reminder of the forgiveness that is offered in baptism.)

Friends, hear the good news of the gospel. Before the world was made, we were chosen in Christ to be part of God's family. God calls us to new life in Christ, so trust in God's forgiveness and grace. Turn and follow Jesus in repentance and joy.

May the Peace of Christ be with you. *(Let us bless each other with the peace of the Lord.)*

Praise song BOP 373 Jesus loves me this I know (Vs. 1- 3)

Prayer for the children

Sung prayer for illumination (BOP 445 Open our eyes, Lord)

- First reading: Isaiah 42:1-9
- Second reading: Psalm 29 (Refrain 2)
- Third reading: Matthew 3:13-17

"This is the word of the Lord / Thanks be to God."

Sermon: The Son who steps into our place

Precious people of God, grace and peace to you in the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

Today, we meet Jesus at the Jordan River.

Not in glory, not on a throne.

But standing in line with sinners.

Matthew tells us that people were coming to John the Baptist for baptism – confessing their sins, turning their lives back toward God. And then, quietly, unexpectedly, Jesus arrived.

V13-14, “Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented him, saying, ‘I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?’”

John was shocked. He knew who Jesus was.

John’s confusion makes a perfect sense.

Jesus did not belong in this line up. He did not need to be baptized.

He had no sin to confess.

No repentance to make. No need for cleansing.

And yet, Jesus steps forward.

Jesus did not argue. He did not explain everything. He simply said, **V15, “Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfil all righteousness.”**

In other words, this is how God’s saving love works.

Jesus began his public ministry not by distancing himself from human brokenness, but by stepping directly into it. He did not watch repentance from a safe distance, but he entered the water himself.

This is the first thing we must see clearly. Jesus went where he did not need to go, so that we will never be alone where we must go.

Imagine a swimming instructor teaching a frightened child.

The instructor (pic) does not stay on the edge of the pool, shouting instructions. He steps into the water first. He stands beside the child and says “Hey, it’s okey. I am here. Follow me.”

Jesus does not teach salvation from the shore. He steps into the water with us, so that when we follow, we are never alone.

The Jordan River becomes holy not because the people are perfect, but because Jesus is present. He stands shoulder to shoulder with sinners. He shares the waters meant for repentance. This is not weakness. This is holy love.

This moment already points forward. The Jordan points to the cross.

The water points to suffering. The humility points to self-giving love.

From the very beginning, Jesus chooses the way of obedience, not power over us, but solidarity with us.

And then something extraordinary happens.

When Jesus came up out of the water, heaven opened. The Holy Spirit descended like a dove. And a voice spoke from heaven.

V17, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”

Notice the order.

Jesus has not preached yet.

Jesus has not healed anyone yet.

Jesus has not gone to the cross yet.

Before all of that, he is called Beloved.

This is the heart of the gospel. Jesus is not loved because of what he has done. Jesus acts because he is loved.

And this matters deeply for us.

Because Jesus stepped into our place, his story becomes our story.

In Jesus, we are not defined first by our failures, our fears, or our doubts, but by grace.

In baptism, in communion, in faith, God speaks a word over us too.

You belong to me.

Sisters and brothers in Christ, Jesus does not save us from a distance.

Jesus steps into the water.

Jesus steps into our pain. Jesus steps into our confusion and weakness.

And he walks with us every step of the way.

This is the message of the Lord for us today.

Let us pray.

Gracious God, we thank you for Jesus, who stepped into our place and stood with us in love. Help us trust his grace, to rest in our identity as your beloved, and to follow him with humble hearts. In Jesus' holy name, we pray. Amen.

Praise song BOP 183 Christ, when for us you were baptized (Vs. 1-4)

Prayer for the people:

Faithful and loving God, we come before you grateful for your Son Jesus Christ who entered our world fully, and lovingly.

We pray for those standing in difficult waters today – those who burdened by illness, grief, uncertainty, or fear. Remind them that Christ is already there, present, steady, and near.

We pray for your church, that we may follow Jesus not in pride, but in humility and compassion. Make us a people who stand with the broken, who speak hope, and who live your grace and love.

We pray for the world you love. There are places of violence, division, and injustice. Let your Holy Spirit descend again, bringing healing, reconciliation, and peace.

We do all this, believing in the name of Jesus Christ who stepped into our place and bore all our sins already, and still carries all of us. Amen.

Invitation to the offering:

Because Jesus Christ has given himself fully for us, we now respond with grateful hearts. Our offering is not a payment, but a prayer. It's a sign of trust, a sign of love, and a sign that we belong to God. Let us give God with our love and energy. Through our offering, we are becoming the hands and feet of God.

As we give our offerings, let us glorify God.

(BOP #79, Praise God with songs)(words are on the screen)

Offering prayer:

Gracious and loving God, all that we have comes from you. Receive these gifts as signs of our gratitude and trust. Use them to bless others, to strengthen your church, and to make Christ's love visible in our family, in our church, and in our community. In Jesus' precious name, we pray. Amen.

Song for the Journey – BOP 350 To God be the glory (Vs. 1-3)

Now, it is our time to be sent to the world where God called us to be.

Today, we have seen Jesus at the Jordan River. The Son who steps into our place, who stands with us in love, and who is named Beloved before all else. As we go into the world, may we live from that same grace, trusting that wherever we walk, Christ has already gone before us.

Benediction: May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the Love of God, our Father, And the intimate fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with us all, now and always. Amen.