



Welcome to LOC's Weekly E-News

ENews for Sunday, January 10, 2021



Epiphany and Baptism of our Lord Sunday

There is a certain irony in Mark's account of Jesus' baptism being chosen as the text for the first Sunday after Epiphany. In the church's tradition, Epiphany is the season when we recall the manifestation (*epiphaneia*) of Jesus to the world. Yet Mark's account of Jesus' baptism, like his gospel, has an air of secrecy. In Matthew, God's declaration about Jesus, "*This is my son*" (Matt 3:17), reads like a public announcement to John and the crowds gathered at the Jordan. In contrast, Mark portrays God's declaration of Jesus as though it were a private transaction between God and Jesus: "*You are my son.*" Likewise, it is apparently Jesus alone who sees the heavens split open and the Spirit descend upon him. In the three other gospels, these events seem to be portrayed in more objective terms (Matthew 3:16; Luke 3:21-22; John 1:32-34).

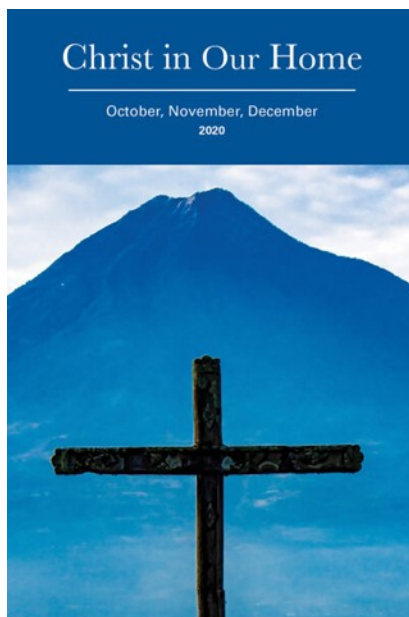
This feature of Mark's account is probably related to Mark's famous secrecy motif. Not until the second half of the gospel is Jesus' messianic identity unveiled, after Peter confesses Jesus to be the messiah (8:29). Indeed, only then will God publicly announce to the disciples on the mountain that "*This is my son*" (9:7). Still, the disciples will not understand what it means for Jesus to be the messiah (9:32; cf. 8:31-33). Ironically, in the end, it will be only the Roman centurion, witnessing the death of Jesus, who confesses Jesus to be son of God (15:39). As Mark sees it, Jesus' identity as messiah and Son of God will be revealed and can be known only through his death on the cross.

-Dr. Stephen Hultgren



Our Sympathy to:

- ✠Dianne Oien, family & friends upon the death of her mother, Alice Mae Falken.
 - ✠Katie Thorson, Jennifer Alton, family & friends upon the death of sister & mother, Margaret Worthington.
 - ✠Marilyn Gleckler, family & friends upon the death of her mother, Helen Freund.
 - ✠Richard Strand, family & friends upon the death of his dear wife, Sigrid.
- Please keep these families in your prayers.



Christ in Our Home Devotionals Delayed!

Many have been asking about picking up the new Winter Quarter 2021 Christ in Our Home devotional. We have contacted the publisher, our order has been shipped but there are apparent delays within the postal system leading to our not having them here before January 1st. For those committed to daily devotions, you are encouraged to simply spend time reading a chapter a day out of the primary gospel for this church calendar year-The Gospel of Mark. Since there are only 16 chapters, it is hoped by the time you reach the end, our devotionals will have arrived! Thank you for your patience.



Due to a commitment to include as many eligible voting members as possible in our Annual Congregational meeting, and due to the limitations of the Covid-19 Virus, in consultation with attorneys within the Grand Canyon Synod, we will be holding our meeting via written mail-in ballot rather than inperson. All current voting members of Love of Christ will be invited to return a prepared written ballot **by February 28, 2021** which will come by mail from the Church office. Information will be going out via postcard this week and a livestream review of all business needing to be conducted will be held between services on Sunday, February 14, 10:15AM-10:45AM. Primary business needing to be conducted: Approval of 2021 Spending plan, election of new Board members (3 positions are currently requiring election to three-year terms beginning 3/1/21), and reception of 2020 Financial report and Membership report.



Holy Communion is offered at the close of the 9:00AM and 11:00AM Services

If any household requests communion at home, one of the pastors will be happy to bring communion to them.



Please invite your friends to like us on



Or Subscribe to LoveofChristLC on

Livestream our 9:00AM and 11:00AM services on Facebook and YouTube

Thank you



Thank you for joining us in worship this Sunday. If you need pastoral care, please contact the Church Office or one of the pastors for assistance.

Thank you to all who continue to support the ministry of Love of Christ with your financial gifts.

Multiple ways in which you can offer your financial support:

- Online/EFT-contact Dick Beckman, dickbeckman@loclc.org or 480.981.3550.
- Mail/Drop-Off at the Church Office
- Text 844.975.1973-You will be prompted on how to register and give
- Use the Donate Button on the Love of Christ Lutheran Church Facebook page

Naomi's Circle Our next zoom meeting is this Monday, January 11 at 1:00 Arizona time.

If you are interested in participating, please email April at kaajrygh@gmail.com.

If you can't join us, you can again find the lesson <https://www.gathermagazine.org/9984-2/>

LOVE OF CHRIST PRESCHOOL NOW ENROLLING



- Nurturing Christian environment
- Phonics based readiness program
- Low student to teacher ratio
- Flexible scheduling
- Affordable rates
- Art, crafts, stories, music, chapel and exciting special events
- Named a "Top Preschool in Mesa"

Available positions for the 2020/2021 school year are filling. Call (480)681-0937 today for registration information.

FAITH IN ACTION



Support our Food Banks at Victory Lutheran, 5946 E. University Dr, Mesa, AZ or First Evangelical/La Primera, 142 N. Date St, Mesa, AZ.



As the economic fallout of the pandemic impacts more and more, we are seeing an increase in requests for assistance from Love of Christ. If you are interested in making a special gift to help us continue to provide gas cards, bus passes, and some other assistance, you can give to Love of Christ with notation to be used for **Transition Assistance**.

What is a Blessing Bag? It is a bag of goodies that has toiletries and socks for the homeless. It is intended to be in your car and then can be handed out to a person on a street corner. Blessing Bags are provided for you to pick up at the end of service by our exit doors. Please feel free to take one as you leave on Sunday. You can also stop by the office and pick one up too. We will have them out for the months of January and February.

House overflowing after Christmas?



Why not donate your extra items to House of Refuge?

This non-profit serves the needs of families experiencing homelessness in our community, by providing a home, home furnishings, clothing, food boxes, individualized case management services and employment and education support to help families overcome homelessness, become self-sufficient and move to sustainable housing.

Location for drop-off of donations.

6858 E. Ursula Ave.

Mesa, Arizona 85212

(480) 988-9395

donationcenter@houseofrefuge.org

House of Refuge is open to accepting and processing donations every Wednesday & Thursday from 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

- Donations are to be placed on tables out in front of the Donation Center.
- All donations must be bagged or boxed. Household items/toys/non-cloth items can not be larger than 2' x 2'
- Donation of soft items only (clothing/shoes/linens) can be dropped off 7 days/week via the bins at the base of the Donation Center driveway. All items must be bagged and placed in the bins.
- For a larger donation (due to moving, etc.), please email pickup@houseofrefuge.org

Latest Habitat Family



Habitat for Humanity®
Central Arizona

Volunteer with us!

We will be building each Saturday from
November 21st, 2020 – April 24th, 2021

Building homes, community and hope.

Sign up at: <http://vhub.at/Faithgroups>

Habitat is limiting the number of general volunteers on site to 10, and the number of volunteer leaders to 5 due to social distancing guidelines.

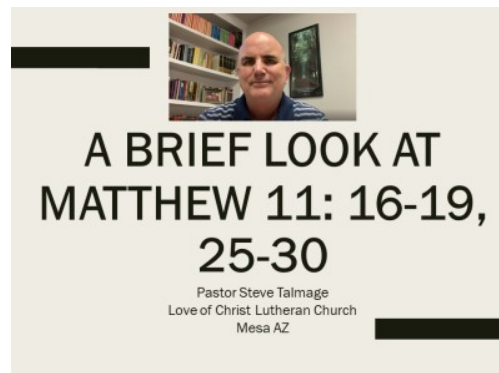
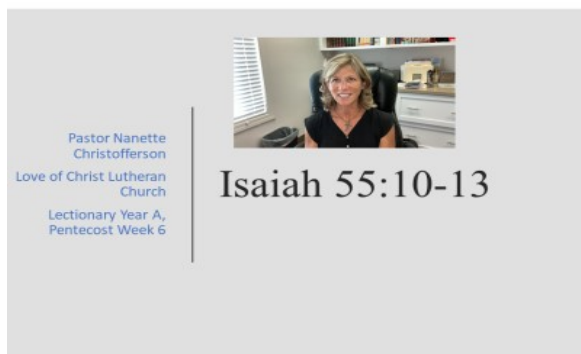
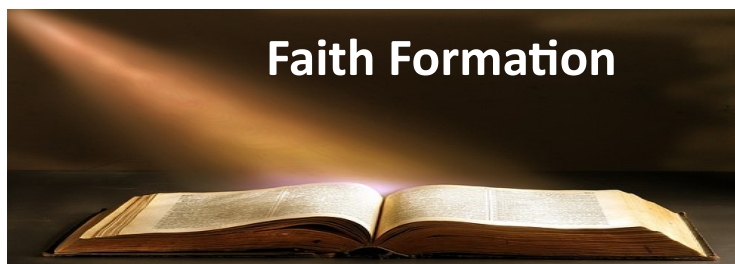
1. Click the link provided
2. Find projects for 'LBFC'
3. Choose a date and click 'Sign Up'
4. Create an account and complete your waiver to register for the event

Please register by the Sunday before the volunteer event



For questions or more info please contact:
Larry Falken | Ljfalken2@gmail.com

THANK YOU to all of the cooks and volunteers who helped make our Family Promise week successful. We will have our new dates out soon for when they will be here next! We are hoping that come this fall and next year we will be able to host in a way that allows for more participation from our congregation. Thank you again to all who served.



Online Introductions to Lectionary Lessons for Sunday, January 17 WILL RETURN the week of January 10, 2021 to Facebook, YouTube, and www.loveofchristchurch.net.

No Sunday School or Confirmation Until Sunday, January 10, 2021

WEDNESDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY

Galatians is a great place to start when it comes to understanding the early church and the basics of the Gospel post resurrection. According to Dr. Matthew Skinner, Luther Seminary New Testament professor, "No letter showcases Paul's rhetorical tenacity and theological fervor quite like Galatians. Paul wrote this letter to a collection of churches he had founded, urging groups of gentile Christ-followers not to listen to other missionaries who were telling them they had to follow the law of Moses." Galatians is all about the gospel, and a letter to keep going back to throughout all of our lives. This letter explodes with life and demonstrates Paul's passion for Jesus Christ as the Messiah and Savior. We hope that those who join our class will find Paul's passion contagious! **Pastor Steve Talmage and Pastor Nanette Christofferson will be offering this 5 week class beginning Wednesday, January 13 on ZOOM from 6:30-7:15 pm. This class will end on Wed. Feb. 10th.** If you are interested, please sign up using our sign up Genius on our web-page or below link:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/904054CAFA92EA7FA7-galatians>

This sign up is a little different. Those who sign up will only register once and will not sign up for dates/times. The list will be a rolling list, and anyone interested can sign up through February 9th.

For Additional information about upcoming events or Faith Formation offerings, please go to www.loveofchristchurch.net or contact the Church Office 480.981.6199



Tech Team Volunteers are Needed and Welcomed

As we continue to rely more and more on delivering our worship and other offerings through the use of technology, we have reached a point where our Tech Team is open to receiving the help and offer the training for interested youth (15 and older) and adults. The following positions are opportunities to receive training. If interested, contact the Church office and we will pass your information on to the team.

LOC Tech Team Volunteers

Camera Operator (during service)

Job Description: Operate Video camera from Sound Booth during service

Experience needed: No experience necessary. We will train you

Skills needed: Ability to Zoom and pan a camera on a tripod

Time commitment: Must be onsite at LOC and arrive 15 mins before service.

Scheduling: You can let us know how often you would like to help to be part of a rotation.

Age requirements: 15yrs or older

Video Presentation Operator (during service)

Job Description: Operate Video presentation software from Sound Booth during service

Experience needed: No experience necessary. We will train you

Skills needed: Use mouse and keyboard to advance slides during the service

Time commitment: Must be onsite at LOC and arrive 15 mins before service.

Scheduling: You can let us know how often you would like to help to be part of a rotation.

Age requirements: 15yrs or older

Video Presentation Slide Creator (do from home)

Job Description: Use Microsoft PowerPoint to create announcement and song lyrics slides from documents sent from pastors and music directors.

Experience needed: Experience with Microsoft PowerPoint

Skills needed: Use Microsoft PowerPoint

Time commitment: Develop PowerPoint slides by 8pm Friday. Receiving lyrics and announcements by Wednesday. Approximately 3 hours a week.

Scheduling: You can let us know how often you would like to help to be part of a rotation.

Age requirements: 15yrs or older

Video Editor (do from home)

Job Description: Use Video editing software and Microsoft PowerPoint to create pre-recorded videos from video/audio files

Experience needed: Experience with Microsoft PowerPoint and comfortable with computer technology. We will train you to use the video editing software.

Skills needed: Use Microsoft PowerPoint

Time commitment: Depends on the project. You would only do as much as you are able to.

Age requirements: 15yrs or older

Scheduling: You can let us know how often you would like to help. You will be asked before being assigned to a project.

January 10, Baptism of our Lord- Live at 9 and 11am on



and



Pastor Steve's Sermon Title: "Knowing Whose We Are"

Genesis 1:1-5

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, ²the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. 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. ⁵God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

Acts 19:1-7

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the inland regions and came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples. ²He said to them, 'Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became believers?' They replied, 'No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.' ³Then he said, 'Into what then were you baptized?' They answered, 'Into John's baptism.' 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.' ⁵On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ⁶When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied—
⁷altogether there were about twelve of them.

Mark 1:4-11

⁴John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. ⁵And 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. ⁶Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. ⁷He 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. ⁸I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit.'

⁹In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. ¹⁰And 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. ¹¹And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'

We are encouraging all of our faith community to participate using the Faith In The Home suggestions. This is an excellent way for all of us to grow individually as well as sharing it with others. We ask that you take advantage of this resource during this time of temporary suspension of Bible Studies and other fellowship activities that are normally here at the church.

JANUARY 10, 2021
BAPTISM OF
OUR LORD



Jesus is God's beloved, and so are we.

DAILY BIBLE READINGS

These passages are related to the Lectionary texts for this Sunday.

Sunday	Mark 1:4-11	The baptism of Jesus
Monday	Genesis 1:1-5	God creates light
Tuesday	Acts 19:1-7	Paul baptizes in Ephesus
Wednesday	Mark 15:33-39	Death of Jesus
Thursday	Ephesians 4:1-6	Unity in the body of Christ
Friday	Galatians 3:19-29	The purpose of the law
Saturday	Psalms 29	The voice of God in the storm
Sunday	John 1:43-51	Jesus calls Philip and Nathanael

SCRIPTURE VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased." Mark 1:11 (NRSV)

PRAYERS AND BLESSING

A Prayer for the Week:

Dear God, we thank you for Jesus, your Beloved Son and our Savior and for claiming us in baptism as your loved children now and always. Amen.

Mealtime Prayer:

God of tender care, as we are given strength from this meal, may we remember with joy that we are your beloved children through Christ our Lord. Amen.

A Blessing to Give:

May the Lord give you strength and bless you with peace. (Psalm 29:11)



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JANUARY 10, 2021
HYMN OF THE WEEK
You are Mine



WEEKLY MILESTONES

Take a moment to tell or think about a recent mountain high and/or valley low in your life.

CARING CONVERSATIONS

Discuss in your home, small group, or use for personal reflections:

- What is a dramatic event you have witnessed or heard about?
- Have you experienced a baptism as a life-changing event? Explain.
- How was Jesus' baptism a life-changing event for the world?

DEVOTIONS

Read: Mark 1:4-11.

Jesus' baptism is marked by dramatic events. Not only did Jesus go out to John in the wilderness, but so did "all the people of Jerusalem" (v. 5). John, who has a strong following acknowledges that Jesus, the one to come after John, is so much more important, that John is not worthy to untie Jesus' sandals. Jesus' own baptism will bring with it the Holy Spirit, not just the call to repentance, as was the baptism of John. The Holy Spirit will make Jesus' baptism and the Christian baptism different (see Acts 19:1-7). Then, the most dramatic moment happens, the moment that defines Jesus' baptism as a cosmic shattering event: the heavens were torn apart and the Spirit of God came down, appearing like a dove. The tearing apart of the heavens will be matched by the tearing apart of the curtain in the temple at the time of Jesus' death (Mark 15:38). Jesus' baptism is linked with the cosmic shattering event of his death that changes for all time our relationship to God. This is something that we participate in through our own baptisms, another earth-shattering experience filled with love that claims us as God's beloved children. Is being claimed by God in baptism earth shattering to you? Why or why not?

Pray: God of glory and might, help us to see and believe in your earth-shattering power and love for us and to see that love embrace us in the remembrance of our baptisms. Amen.

SERVICE

The baptism of Jesus took place using water. Water is essential to life. It is important that rivers, lakes, and oceans stay clean but they can get and have been contaminated by people's actions. What are some things we can do to help keep our waters clean and free of pollution?

RITUALS AND TRADITIONS

The "Baptism of our Lord Sunday" is a time to recall our own baptisms. This week in your home, light a candle, perhaps your own baptismal candle. Dip your fingers into a bowl of water and mark the sign of the cross on your forehead or the foreheads of one another. As you mark the sign of the cross, give this blessing:

Say: **You are God's beloved child.**



In addition to *Taking Faith Home*, celebrate milestones in your daily life as an effective faith formation tool. Go to: www.milestonesministry.org