

**Central Queens Pastoral Charge
United Church of Canada**

January 12, 2025

10:30 a.m.

The Baptism of the Lord

Central Queens Mission Statement

Central Queens United Church is a loving and living community called to support the life stages of all people; celebrating joy and sharing in pain. Through faith and fellowship we are united by God's love to live and serve as Disciples of Christ.

Gathering for Worship

Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Birthdays & Special Occasions

Lighting of the Christ Candle

There was a person who did **such amazing** things - said such **wonderful things** - that great crowds of people followed him everywhere. One day they ask him, "Who are you?" He said, "I am the light."

Quiet Preparation for Worship (Bible is brought forward during the quiet time)

Bible Presentation

***Introit** "Born in Human Likeness"

MV #47 (X3)

Call to Worship

Come, dear friends, and remember who you are and who you belong to.

In Christ, God has called us all "Beloved."

Yes, right here and now, God's love is pouring out fresh and new.

May this movement of the Spirit shape our hearts and minds.

May it kindle the light of Epiphany in us and throughout creation.

And may it guide our words and actions to share good news with the world!

***Hymn** "Praise to the Lord, the Almighty"

VU #220

Prayer of Approach

Holy One, awaken us to your boundless Spirit of Love.

Stretch our hearts wide, shaping us as vessels of your healing grace.

Help us see your face in one another, each life touched by your blessing.

Refine our intentions, cleanse our deeds,

Let our words be drenched in kindness, our hearts alight with hope.

Saturate our thoughts, our prayers, our dreams, our very being in you.

With Jesus, we share in the ancient prayer...

Lord's Prayer

**Our Father, which 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 those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever.
Amen.**

Responsive Reading Psalm 29

VU #755–756

***Hymn** “My Love Colours Outside the Lines” MV #138 vv. 1,2

All God’s Children

***Hymn** “My Love Colours Outside the Lines” MV #138 v. 3

Presentation of Our Gifts

Offertory Invitation

Jesus’ baptism shows us God’s generous, self-giving love—the source of our deepest joy. When we give generously, we make space for that love and joy to grow in us and bless others. Let’s open our hearts wide as we joyfully share our gifts. Your morning offering will now be presented.

Offertory

***Presentation of Offering** “In the Bleak Mid-Winter” VU #55 v. 4

***Offertory Prayer**

O Gracious God, we thank you for the invitation to grow through giving, made possible by your outpouring spirit. May these gifts we bring be used to form ever-new blessings in this congregation and around the world. And may our lives be the instruments of love and joy you desire. Amen.

Listening for the Word

Sacred Scripture

Prayer for Understanding

Holy Spirit, you blessed Jesus in his baptism, proclaiming him beloved of God.

As we give our attention to God's holy Word, descend on us, we pray.

Speak to us of God's love for us and renew our faith and commitment to follow Jesus, God's living Word. Amen.

Isaiah 43:1–7

But now, here's what the Lord says—
the One who created you, Jacob,
the One who shaped you, Israel:
“Don't be afraid, because I've redeemed you.
I've called you by name—you're mine.

When you go through deep waters, I'll be right there with you.
When you cross raging rivers, they won't sweep you away.
When you walk through fire, you won't be burned;
the flames won't consume you.

For I am the Lord your God,
the Holy One of Israel, your Saviour.

I gave Egypt, Ethiopia, and Seba
as a trade to set you free.

Because you're so precious to me,
honoured, and deeply loved,
I'd trade nations for you—
I'd give anything for your life.

So don't be afraid, because I'm with you.
I'll bring your children home from the east,
and gather them from the west.

I'll tell the north, 'Let them go,'
and the south, 'Don't hold them back.'
Bring my sons from far away,
and my daughters from the ends of the earth—

everyone who bears my name,
everyone I created for my glory,
everyone I formed and made."

Luke 3:15–17, 21–22

The people were filled with anticipation, wondering if John might actually be the Messiah.

But John told them, "I baptize you with water, but someone far greater is coming. I'm not even worthy to untie his sandals. He'll baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

He's ready to separate the wheat from the chaff—gathering the good grain into his barn and burning away the rest with a fire that never goes out."

When everyone had been baptized, Jesus was baptized too. As he was praying, the heavens opened,

and the Holy Spirit came down in a visible form, like a dove. Then a voice from heaven said, “You are my Son, whom I love. With you, I am well pleased.”

Anthem

Sermon

Prayers of Thanksgiving and Intercession

God of time and eternity:
as the new year stretches before us,
we thank you for the time you give us
and for all those things that are still possible
and precious in this gift.

We thank you for each new day and its possibilities;
for each night, its rest and reflection.

We thank you for words of forgiveness and the chance to make a
new start, for word of invitation to explore new opportunities.

Give us the courage to try something new
and the conviction to finish things leftover from last year.

Make time spent this year your time, O God.

Bless our time with you.

God of moments and memories
we remember before you people facing difficult times in the
months ahead.

We pray for those struggling with illness,
and for those facing treatment or surgery with uncertain results....

silence

We pray for those who are grieving the loss of dear ones
and for all who remember what used to be but can no longer be...
silence

Make time spent this year your time, O God.
Bless our time with you.

God of hopefulness and helpfulness,
we remember those who are seeking new opportunities this year:

those training for new employments and those looking for work;

those developing new businesses and seeking the right
employees;

and those who provide services to improve life in our
communities amid the uncertainties around us...

silence

Give us wisdom and perseverance in what we undertake as a
congregation in the face of all the changes in our community.

Make time spent this year your time, O God.
Bless our time with you.

As we work together with the vision of your kingdom before us
this year, fill us with love and generosity that can change the
world because of your blessing.

We pray we can make a difference in even the most challenging
situations because we are your beloved. Amen.

Responding to the Word

***Hymn** “When Jesus Comes to be Baptized”

VU #100

***Blessing**

We are blessed, washed in grace,
marked by the Spirit --- made whole.

Blessed not for ourselves, but to share,
to bless others as we have been blessed.

May Christ’s light shine in us, and through us
as we go and share this blessing with others.
Amen.

***Choral Benediction** “I am the Light of the World”

VU #87 v. 1

Postlude

*Please stand as you are able.