

Session Theme: Sacraments

Activity: Hand Spelling

Scripture Story: Matthew 3:1-6; 13-17

Video Clip: The Lion King

1 In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, 2“Repent, for the kingdom of God has come near.” 3This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, “The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: ‘Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.’” 4Now John wore clothing of camel’s hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. 5Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, 6and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

13Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him. 14John would have prevented him, saying, “I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?” 15But Jesus answered him, “Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfill all righteousness.” Then John consented. 16And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Holy Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. 17And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”

NOTES

- The Greek word for baptism is *baptismo* and it means to immerse, submerge or to wash/clean - what John the Baptist is doing is a new thing. Baptism was not something Israelites did as a religious activity. What they did do was go down to the river and “baptismo” their laundry.
- Before they are baptized though, John is calling the people to repent. The Greek word for repent is *metanoia*. *Metanoia* means, simply, “To Turn Around.”
- Sin = hamartia in Greek. It means to miss the mark. It’s an archery term.
- ___this church___ does infant baptism, which is quite different from what we read in the story.
- When a baby is baptized at ___this church___, there is a covenant that the congregation makes with the family. This is that covenant:

We, your fellow members in this family of faith, do join with you (the parents) in the covenant you make this day, full of promise and hope for your children. We recognize them as children of the church, and beloved gifts from God. We make our covenant to support you and work with you in watching over them and caring for their spiritual interests. So we will also work and pray for their ongoing spiritual awakening and growth as disciples of Jesus Christ, that they may continually experience the inward grace of the baptism they have this day received.