

God's Plan For You

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Preacher: Pastor Cathy Hall Stengel

[0 : 0 0] Good morning, everyone, and welcome to worship on this beautiful morning. I am so excited to have you here. I'm Kathy Stengel, one of the pastors who serves here, and I am so glad we get to join together in worship.

I'd like to tell you just a little bit, if you notice behind me, you see it looks like water. At the end of the service this morning, we are going to remember our baptisms.

So I invite you to get a little cup or a little dish of water and just have it with you. It can be a bottle, and you don't have to dump it out or do anything.

We're just going to remember our baptisms together. So that being said, the Lord be with you and also with you. Let us continue our worship with singing.

This is the day that the Lord has made, and surely we will rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.

[1 : 1 2] Let us rejoice and be glad in it. Let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day that the Lord has made.

Let us rejoice and be glad in it. This is the day, this is the day that the Lord has made.

Would you join me in a word of prayer? Precious Lord, move among us this morning. Let us welcome your tending.

Let us welcome your nurturing. Let us welcome your pruning. As seeds you have sown in our lives, take root, sprout, and grow.

We come to you this morning, Lord. We seek to have those seeds bear fruit in our lives. So, Lord, please move among us. Let our voices rise in praise as you do your work today.

[2 : 2 0] Receive our worship and joy. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. The beautiful, the beautiful river
Gather with the seeds of the river That flows by the throne of God On the margin of the
river Washing up its silver strain We will talk and worship ever Of a happy golden day
There is still gather of the river The beautiful, the beautiful river Gather with the seeds of
the river That flows by the throne of God There we reach the shining river

Lay we every burden down Grace our spirits will deliver And provide the love and crown
Yes, we'll gather at the river The beautiful, the beautiful river Gather with the seeds of the
river That flows by the throne of God Good morning again, friends.

Welcome to worship at Pendleton Center And Niagara Falls First United Methodist
Churches. We'd ask you to take a moment to fill out the friendship card online. It'll ask you
for some basic contact information, as well as if you have a joy to uplift or a concern you'd
like us to join you with in prayer.

Also, we are inviting you to join our fellowship group, PCUMC Online. It's a Facebook
group where you can join some conversations about our ministries and also connect with
other members of our church.

[5 : 00] We're excited about starting a small group ministry here at our church where you will be able to connect with some friends and go deeper in your faith walk. We'll see more about that in the next few weeks, but if you are interested in the possibility of joining one of these groups, please contact the office and we will be in touch with you soon.

Lastly, as you're thinking about and preparing your offering today, we have a mission moment that's related to our Vacation Bible School. And in order to help you know more about that ministry, there's a video here from our teens which will tell you some more.

Are you sad that you haven't been able to see your church friends? You don't. Well, guess what? What? Well, you don't have to worry because this year we have virtual VBS!

Yes! W-re- Yeah! Wow! Woohoo! From August 3rd to the 7th, we still have crafts, games, science, Bible stories, and a drive-thru hot dog lunch!

And new this year, community prayer and scavenger hunt. Don't forget, today is the actually, absolutely, definitely, positively, unambiguously, and dubitably, for real, the last day to register for this year's virtual VBS.

[6 : 14] Register at PendletonChurch.org slash VBS! Mom, sign me up, sign me up! Sign me up! przygotFor too■!

■■■■■■■■■■ Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Most wondrous God, we thank you for these blessings that you have given us, these gifts of tithes and offerings.

[9 : 02] Lord, we ask that you would transform it, Lord Jesus, that you would multiply it to bring blessings upon our congregation, upon our church, upon our community, and upon our world.

That we may be a light to this dark world. And Lord, I pray that you would bless it and put your hand upon it. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Jeannie Baldera Hi, everyone! I'm out here playing. I'm playing with the hose.

It drips a lot. If I shoot it up in the air, AHH, it's raining on me! I'm getting all wet.

I won't get you wet because then that'll get my camera wet. But my arms are wet, my face is a little wet, and it feels wonderful. God gave us water to make us know that God is here.

[10 : 05] We talk about God's Holy Spirit, which a lot of kids and a lot of grown-ups don't really understand. But one way of thinking about the Holy Spirit is we can do what we always do, which is we remember that God's love is in our hearts so we can love everybody.

Well, the Holy Spirit gives us that. The Holy Spirit is part of God. The Holy Spirit can be like sliding into a pool where you're safe with your swimmies on and your mom and dad, and that wonderful, cool feeling of being in the water.

Or maybe you don't like the pool. Maybe you'd rather run back and forth through the sprinkler or slide into the bathtub, and it feels all wonderful. Maybe in the bathtub there's even bubbles.

That's one of the ways that God can make us feel good. God can help us to feel fresh and new.

Are you new? I'm new here, but, well, sort of new. Are you? What I mean by new is that sometimes we're like a plant that doesn't get enough water.

[11 : 19] Have you ever seen one? It starts out straight and tall when it's got water, and then it just kind of folds over and goes down a little bit, and it's kind of sad and bedraggled looking.

And so then when we water it, what we hope for is that back up it comes, up come the leaves, and maybe even out come some new flowers or new parts of the plant.

When you and I feel worn out, do you ever get worn out? Do you ever get cranky? Do you ever get bored and just kind of go around and, I don't know what to do?

What do I do? Sometimes we're sad, and that makes us want to just hang out in bed or sit up in a tree or just kind of be by ourselves sometimes.

Sometimes we're angry, and we just are mad. And those feelings are okay, and God wants us to have all of our feelings in good ways.

[12 : 30] That means don't hit and push and call names, but it's okay to be upset. It's okay to cry. It's okay to be bored. Although you better be careful.

Somebody might find something for you to do if you're bored. But when we're not feeling our best, we're kind of like that plant that goes like this. And God sends the Holy Spirit to water us.

And then back up we come. So I think about it when I'm playing with the hose. When I see my neighbor slide into their pool with their dad.

I think about it when I drink a bottle of cold water. I think about it when I take a shower. Oh, how wonderful that feels. And maybe you don't like showers, but you like baths.

And maybe you don't like baths, but you like playing in the pool. Or maybe you don't like playing in the pool, but you like the sprinkler. It doesn't matter. It's still water. It's water that makes us grow and be strong.

[13 : 35] It's water that God sends to us to say, Don't be all wilted like that. Because I want to make you new.

I want to make you grow and be strong. And have lots of strength and beauty. Be fast and be smart.

And it's hard to do that when you're like this. Sometimes that just means we need a nap. And that makes us feel better. But water is one of the ways we can know that God's taking care of the earth.

That we're spraying the water on the plants that doesn't come in rain. And then we're taking care of God's earth. The water that we drink to make us healthy.

Did you know that our bodies are mostly water? So if we don't drink water, we'll be like that plant that kind of goes like this. God wants us to feel new.

[14 : 42] To remember every day brand new. That song that we did a couple of weeks ago. Do you remember? Jesus loves me.

This I know. For the Bible tells me so. Little ones to him belong.

They are weak, but he is strong. Yes, Jesus loves me. Yes, Jesus loves me.

Yes, Jesus loves me. The Bible tells me so. Did you hear that about we're weak and he's strong?

Well, his strong helps us to be strong. Just like water. So I hope you'll remember that when you drink a water. When you get in the water.

[15 : 41] When you're looking at the water. And you think, God gave us that. God gave me that. God gave you that. To help us to feel new. And awake.

And maybe not so tired. Or grumpy. Or bored. So I hope that's something you remember this week. Play with the hose if your parents let you.

I'm going to go play with the hose some more. But not with my camera here. Because I don't want to get it all wet. But before we do that. Let's pray. Wonderful God.

Oops, wait. What am I supposed to do? I forgot. This is me. This is God. Nothing in between. Dear God. Please help us to see water.

And think of you. Help us to feel the cool water. And know that you have sent it. For us to feel refreshed. And new.

[16 : 40] And strong. Help us to know. That you are with us always. And be reminded in every drink of water. In every bath.

In every shower. And in going swimming. And playing with the hose. You are here always. And you love us. And we give you thanks. Amen.

Thanks everybody. And I'll talk to you next week. Bye.

Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye. Bye.

Bye. Bye. ■■■notepro pele I've got peace, love, and joy like a river in my soul.

[18 : 44] I've got peace, love, and joy like a fountain.

We come together in worship as the body of Christ unified in spirit and we pray together lifting up our joys and our concerns to God so together let us pray.

Holy God we come before you in praise and thanksgiving to glorify your holy name and we pray that in this time that you will come and fill us with your presence that we will experience your peace, that we will experience your power, that we will experience your love.

Lord we lift up to you these things that we've been carrying, these things that are in our heart, the burdens that we've been carrying upon ourselves. Lord you said that your yoke is light, that your yoke is easy and so we offer them up to you knowing that you are good and that you will take these concerns and take these burdens and take them from us Lord with your healing hand.

We pray that your healing hand will be upon us at this time Lord. That if we are experiencing anything physically that needs healing Lord that your healing hand will come and send healing from the top of our head to the bottom of our feet that we will be restored in health and wellness.

[20 : 23] We pray for health and wellness Lord of people who have been struggling physically that pain will stop, that disease will go away, that people will be restored to the creature you created them to be.

Lord we pray that you'll continue to fill all of us up with your healing power in this time. Healing not only our bodies but also our minds. We pray that you will have your hand upon our minds in this time Lord that if there be any anxiety, any depression, any concern, anything that is troubling us Lord that you will come and fill our hearts, fill our minds with the mind of Christ.

We pray that you will fill us Lord with your light and your love. That our thoughts will be your thoughts, our ways will be your ways and we pray Lord that you have protection above and around us to protect us physically but also mentally, emotionally, relationally Lord protection around us that as the enemy throws flaming arrows at us that we will be protected in your holy name.

Lord we pray that you will continue to lift us up in this time. That you will give us your peace and your provision. We pray for relationships that are struggling.

That you will bring restoration. That you will bring healing. That people who have gone through brokenness within relationship with one another that they will be healed.

[21 : 54] Lord you are our great physician. Healing all ways of our body, our mind, our spirit, our soul, our relationships. And we pray that you will continue to send that healing touch in every area of our lives.

Lord we lift up to you people who are struggling financially. That you will give opportunity. That you will show the way. Lord in this time we pray that you will give us all your discernment and your wisdom.

As we move forward help us to walk firmly and boldly in your way, in your word. Knowing that you are there holding us up and strengthening us for every step of the journey.

Lord we pray for our church. That as we continue in ministry that you will continue to guide us. Keep us healthy.

Keep us strong. Keep us unified Lord. Show us your way that we can bring glory to this world in your name. We pray for our nation. That your peace and your Holy Spirit will wash across this nation bringing healing in all ways.

[23 : 01] And we pray that your glory will show. That your glory will shine in our hearts. In our lives.

So that others may come to know you. Lord help us to be a blessing to others. Help us to be beacons of light to others in this dark world. Lord that people will be drawn closer to you because of us.

So fill us Lord with your spirit. Cover us. By your love. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Hi, this is Louis Bobzing. Today I'm going to be reading from Isaiah chapter 42 verses 1 through 9.

Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight. I will put my spirit on him and he will bring justice to the nations. He will not shout or cry out or raise his voice in the streets. A bruised reed he will not break and a smoldering wick he will not snuff out. In faithfulness he will bring forth justice. He will not falter or be discouraged till he establishes justice on earth. In his teachings the islands will put their hope. This is what God the Lord says, the creator of the heavens who stretches them out, who spreads out the earth with all that springs from it, who gives breath to its people and life to those who walk on it. I, the Lord, have called you in righteousness. I will take hold of your hand. I will keep you and will make you to be a covenant for the people and the light for the Gentiles, to open eyes that are blind, to free captives from prison and to release from the dungeon those who sit in darkness. I am the Lord, that is my name. I will not yield my glory to another or my praise to idols. See, the former things have taken place and new things

[25 : 36] I declare, before they spring into being, I announce them to you. This is the word of our Lord. Thanks be to God. Lord, you have come to the lakeshore, looking neither for wealthy nor wise ones. You only ask me, dear God, dear God, I will come to the lakeshore, looking neither for wealthy nor wise ones. You only ask me, O Lord, with your eyes you have searched me, and while smiling, have spoken my name. Now my bow's left on a shoreline behind me.

By your side, I will seek other seas. Hi, this is Louis Bobzine again. I'm now going to read from John chapter 3, verses 1 through 15. Jesus with Nicodemus.

Now there was a Pharisee, a man named Nicodemus, who was a member of the Jewish ruling council. He came to Jesus at night and said, Rabbi, we know that you are a teacher who has come from God, for no one could perform the signs you were doing if God were not with him.

Jesus replied, Jesus replied, Very truly I tell you, no one can see the kingdom of God unless they are born again. How can someone be born when they are old? Nicodemus asked. Surely they cannot enter a second time into their mother's womb to be born.

Jesus answered, Jesus answered, Very truly I tell you, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless they are born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to Spirit.

[28 : 02] You should not be surprised at my saying, you must be born again. The wind blows wherever it pleases. You hear it sound, but you cannot tell where it comes from or where it is going.

So it is with everyone born of the Spirit. How can this be? Nicodemus asked. You are Israel's teacher, said Jesus, and do you not understand these things?

Very truly I tell you, we speak of what we know, and we testify to what we have seen, but still you people do not accept our testimony. I have spoken to you of earthly things, and you do not believe. How then will you believe if I speak of heavenly things?

No one has ever gone into heaven except the one who came from heaven, the Son of Man. Just as Moses lifted up the snake in the wilderness, so the Son of Man must be lifted up, that everyone who believes may have eternal life in him.

This is the word of our Lord. Thanks be to God. God bless you.

[29 : 22] You need my hands full of caring, through my labors to give others rest.

God bless you. I know. I know.

I know. I know. I know. I know.

Now my boat's left on the shoreline behind me By your side I will seek other seas When I was a kid and the summer days would get long and we'd been out of school long enough that we didn't know what to do with ourselves but school wasn't anywhere near yet to be found We'd find our way to be outside We always were outside unless it was raining and we played in the outside Maryland heat day after day Only when it rained did we hang out in our rooms and read At least that's the way I remember it We had a tree swing and it was the kind that had two ropes that came down from so high in a tree that at the time it just seemed impossibly high but we didn't have to think about

How did it happen? How did it get up there? We just had the swing In the slow hours of summer we would spin that swing around and around and around and around until it began to knot up not just be twisted but start to knot and then like let go So I would be on the seat and my sister would be twisting and twisting and twisting and then she would let go and we would twist it hard we would tuck our legs under the seat swing and put your head down Why?

[31 : 47] Because it brought you small and that way you could spin all the faster It would maybe feel a little disconcerting at first when there was that let go and there'd be screaming and laughing and holding on desperately tight because it would be going so fast When our swing stopped there was always this challenge that before the swing stopped you would jump off Of course maybe you know what would happen if you jump off immediately before the swing stops turning you're probably going to trip over and fall on your face because we were so disoriented and when we didn't do that because sometimes we would get bored with that we would take the swing and go around the tree and around the tree and back and forth and around without getting caught in any of the trunk or limbs or anything

I know that our stomachs got twisted up in knots our equilibrium was off but we were kids we loved it years later when I went on the spinning teacups at a park I realized no more it was just too upsetting for my body so that feeling of disorientation I think that we find ourselves sometimes in that place in our lives without the swing without the physical spinning sometimes life can throw us into a place where we find ourselves kind of off balance and not being able to quite find our way we lose track of where center is because we're being pulled by something off center this might look like a crisis for one of our children or our grandchildren this might be caring for aging parents this might be a sudden and frightening diagnosis or it might look like not having any visitors or not being able to visit because of a virus most people would describe this as not a good feeling they're not feeling like we did when we were kids and we were so excited to wind up and spin around in talking with patients and family members at the hospital

I would sometimes gently ask them in a time of crisis what was it that was able to keep you together in other times of trouble what did you look for what did you hang on to in other times and places when you felt like you didn't know where center was anymore anymore sometimes they would remember something or someone and we would talk about that and see if that was something that they could reach for again in this time maybe it was their faith maybe it was a scripture passage maybe it was just a friend or a parent or a sibling sometimes they couldn't find anything or anyone who might be available to them at this time and so we would sit holding hands praying remembering a song or maybe listening to it trying to get the world to just stop spinning for just a minute and sometimes we'd sit if it was a patient until they fell asleep sometimes we would sit with family members until they could begin to find themselves again and feel like they were on solid ground we heard this morning from Isaiah and Isaiah is charging into a place and he's charged with the responsibility for caring for the people of Israel and the people of Israel had been on a swing that was swinging so fast and so furiously that it felt like everything they thought they knew had flown off in all the centrifugal force and now it had stopped but they couldn't stand up they couldn't make progress they couldn't step forward because they were just so disoriented it was a dizzying time for Israel they had experienced the overwhelming defeat of the Babylonians it was big and it was hard and it was the one time when they felt that God had abandoned

God's promise and abandoned them and they had nothing to believe in anymore so Isaiah steps up and as you heard I'm going to share these words again but here is my servant the one I uphold my chosen who brings me delight I put my spirit upon him he will bring justice to the nations he won't cry out or shout aloud or make his voice heard in public he won't break a bruised reed he won't extinguish a faint wick but he will surely bring justice he won't be extinguished or broken until he has established justice in the land the coastlands await his teaching he was in a place where God knew that the people needed to hear from someone who knew how to bring them back to center not a mighty fist or a sword or a blazing light but a person who could remind them about the God they believed in the God that they felt they had lost who had abandoned them they thought sometimes we can get into that place we as Christians are sometimes prone to believing that we won't have to go through these times where we are dizzied and disoriented by what life brings but it doesn't work that way we get spun around and spun around and we are sometimes in desperate need of someone to come and remind us who is God and yet the next part is who am I with God

I have never once felt that God has abandoned me but that doesn't mean that in the dizzying experience of crisis and confusion and pain that I haven't turned away from God arms crossed this is too hard and I don't know where you are but it doesn't feel like you're here right now and I knew without a doubt that God was very much there but I felt a little bit abandoned and disoriented and what did it take it took people it took messengers of God to come alongside me and not say don't believe that don't feel that way but rather like the people of Israel to be with me until I remembered until I could begin to imagine in my remembering who was the God

[39 : 43] I said I believed in what were the promises that I counted on when I unfolded in my life as a person of faith which leads us to Nicodemus we hear about in John Nicodemus is an interesting man and yet not so different from some of us Nicodemus wanted to know about God wanted to know about Jesus wanted to understand what Jesus was doing what are you teaching he was intellectually interested he was socially interested and he wanted to understand this man Jesus and yet what did he do he made an appointment to see Jesus at the night time in the dark and he approached Jesus out of the darkness and he began this conversation and they had this conversation and Jesus told him that he must be born anew to understand faith and to understand the light and the life that the kingdom of God had to offer

Nicodemus didn't understand how could that be possible because in his mind his rational mind he's thinking how does a person re-enter their mother's womb and be born another time when Jesus told him at some point he said I don't understand and it wasn't long before he left in the darkness and still didn't really understand how many of us really understand and I want us to think about this passage this call to be born anew a little bit differently this morning because you might have been a person who believed in Jesus your whole life never was there a minute that you didn't believe in Jesus you may be a person who had what some people call a born again experience where there was some momentous occasion or time or moment or place in your life where it was like a lightning strike and you were overwhelmed with the need to come to

Jesus in faith and maybe you're one of those people who's hanging around the edge and haven't come in yet haven't said yes haven't become a person who is going to say I believe I want to affirm you wherever you are because I think that this passage says more than that I think that this morning what I want to talk about is the fact that this being born anew it might mean just more than we think it might mean that we not only at some point realize oh I've always been a Christian or we might become a Christian or we might be thinking about becoming a Christian but here's what I know that God calls us to renew and be reminded of our faith over and over again it is never an experience that just happens one day and then you're done because you don't stay the same do you

I sure am not the same person as I was as a teenager when I went up to a communion table and took the bread and the cup remembering the body and the blood of Christ and believed it I'm telling you friends I've had to come to that altar place over and over again as struggles disorient me as changes that I didn't expect or deaths that I didn't expect to experience or just things around me that turned into chaos it didn't mean that I came to an altar per se it meant that what I desperately needed was to be renewed in my faith I needed to be like the people of Israel who had to discover this is who we follow this is what we believe and God who gave us life did not abandon us and will not abandon us and meant every word of the promises even such as what immediately follows this morning's verse that God sent his beloved son that whoever believes in him should not die but have everlasting life

I never stopped believing it but I need to be reminded I need to be renewed renewed and so I would like us to think more about that that maybe like the cool waters like the streams like the lakes like the ocean like the water we drink and the water that we use to nourish the earth that maybe what we need is to be renewed which is why we are going to come to this place of renewing our baptismal covenant and vows some of which you don't even remember I have no idea because I was a baby when I was baptized I don't remember but when I reaffirm my baptism I'm reminded not that my parents or your parents kept whatever promises they made but I come to these places of reaffirming my baptism because by golly

[45 : 54] I believe that God made a promise and God redeemed us and when we remember our baptism we remember who we are in this storm of life and it doesn't even have to be COVID the world around us didn't stop hurting us and causing chaos and distress in our lives just because of a virus you've lost people you've been by yourself you've been unable to be with people you love this morning my son and his wife and their baby are at my house and we get to be together it's the first time he's ever been away from home first time he's ever been in someone else's house slept in a crib that wasn't his own and it is wonderful and yet

I can't kiss him I can't smell him because we're wearing masks it's disorienting it's not what we thought it would be you didn't know that people would have strokes or fall and get concussions or children would need to go to the hospital you didn't know that marriages might end that your house might need repaired that your car may stop working that has nothing to do with COVID and yet spins us around and around until sometimes we don't remember who we are and we don't remember the God who calls us in this summer as we believe and continue to preach Jeremiah 29 11 that God has a plan for us that is good and it's a plan of hope when we're getting off the swing and we feel like we might not even be able to stand up part of what helps us to reorient is remembering remembering the promises

I am your God and you are my people I come to you not to destroy but to give life I baptize you with new life and new hope and so we do remember or maybe somebody next to us remembers us remembers for us until we can remember for ourselves that's what the people of Israel were called to do walk next to each other until you can believe again keep remembering and reminding the promises until we remember how much we believed in them even church is disorienting but let's walk it together let's get off our swings let's get off the merry-go-round the teacups or the tragedies and struggles of our everyday lives and let's remember what helps us to stay grounded

I believe that the God who gave me life is the God who gave me a plan for my life I believe that the God who gave me a plan for my life brought me here for such a time as this and such a place as this and no matter the overwhelm I remember every day sometimes this is where God wants me to be and I believe this is where God wants you to be so we might not be able to stay away from each other I hope until all the circles stop spinning but just like it says in Isaiah in verse 6 I the Lord have called you for a good reason I will grasp your hand and guard you and give you as a covenant to the people as a light to the nations let's be reminded let's take each other's hands just as we feel

God taking our hands and be steadfast help each other help our community help those who are around us if you're standing firm then hold on to me or to others if you're dizzy and circling and feel sick to your stomach then look around and let someone take your hand and then together let us rise up reminded refreshed and renewed like cooling waters over a hot and parched land God will grow us God will give us fruit so let's receive all of that and be prepared for what God has in mind for you and for me would you pray with me wonderful

[51 : 49] God sometimes there are not enough words of gratitude gratitude for the hand you hold out in the dizziness for the friends that you send to sit beside us while we're still turning for the church and the community of Jesus Christ who says we're still with you even if it's not in the building for the people in our communities and our state and our nation that the people of Jesus Christ will be hands reaching out slowing the spin helping people remember not only Lord who am I but let me come out of the darkness and stand before you and say yes again and stand fast in what I know to be true in the name of Jesus

Christ we pray I will never be the same again I can never return I've closed the door I will walk the path I will run the race and I will never be the same again fall like fire so like rain go like my waters again and again sweep away the darkness burn away the shaft and let our flame burn to glorify your name there are my eyes there are deeper seas whatever you need to do

Lord do it be the glory of God fills my life and I will never be the same again all my life suck my rain throw like my waters again again sweep away the darkness burn away and I will close the door I will walk the path

I will embrace and I will never be the same again And I will never be the same again A thousand times I've failed, still your mercy remains Should I stumble again, still I'm caught in your grace Everlasting, your light will shine when all else stays Everending, your glory goes beyond all things You upon all else, my purpose remains

The hour of losing myself in bringing you praise Everlasting, your light will shine when all else stays Everending, your glory goes beyond all things My heart and my soul, I give you control Consume me from the inside of all Let justice and pain become my embrace To love you from the inside of all Everlasting, your light will shine when all else stays Everending, your glory goes beyond all things And the light of my heart is to bring you praise

[57 : 37] For your grace from the inside of all Your grace from the inside of all I am John, my heart and my soul I give you control Consume me from the inside of all Let justice and praise become my embrace control, consume me from the inside out, Lord. Let justice and praise become my embrace, to love you from the inside out. Everlasting, your light will shine when all else fades, everending, your glory goes beyond the pain. And the cry of my heart is to breathe, new praise for the year.

Tied up, Lord, my soul, rise up for me. Tied up, Lord, my soul, rise up to you, Lord.

As I went down to the river to pray, studying about that good old way, and who shall wear the starry crown? Good Lord, show me the way. Oh, sisters, let's go down, let's go down, come on down. Oh, sisters, let's go down, down to the river to pray. As I went down to the river to pray, studying about that good old way, and who shall wear the starry crown. Good Lord, show me the way.

Oh, brothers, let's go down, let's go down, come on down. Oh, brothers, let's go down, down to the river to pray.

Friends, at the beginning of my message, I shared with you that we are going to reaffirm our baptism. I invited you to get some water, a dish of water, a cup of water, or a bottle of water. At the end of this affirmation of baptism, I would invite you to follow with us. If you want to, when Pastor Sherry touches the water, you can touch yours. At the very end, when we affirm that we are baptized, then I invite you to dip your hand in the water, pour a little bit on your hand, or whatever is comfortable to you where you are. Let's begin. Sisters and brothers in Christ, through the sacrament of baptism, God's Spirit has been poured out upon water, water poured over and immersing us, water that flows freely for all who will receive it, water from the streams of God's saving power and justice, water that brings hope to all who thirst for righteousness, water that refreshes life, nurtures growth, and offers new birth. Today, we come to the waters to renew our commitment in each other's presence to Christ who has raised us, the Spirit who has birthed us, and the Creator who is making all things new. A part of our commitment in remembering our baptism is to come before God being reminded of our humanity and the ways we are sometimes separated from God. Join me in this time of promising faithfulness and surrendering our sins to God, knowing that we are already forgiven in the life and grace brought by

[61 : 53] Jesus Christ. And so I ask you, will you turn away from the powers of sin and death? We renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of our sin.

Will you let the Spirit use you as prophets to the powers that be? We accept the freedom and power God gives us to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves. Will you proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ and live as disciples of Jesus Christ, His body? We confess Jesus Christ as our Savior, put our whole trust in His grace, and promise to serve Him as our Lord, in union with the Church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations, and races? Will you be living witnesses to the Gospel, individually and together, wherever you are, and in all that you do? We will remain faithful members of Christ's Holy Church, and serve as Christ's representatives in the world. Will you receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the

Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments? We affirm and teach the faith of the whole Church, as we put our trust in God, the Father the Father Almighty, in Jesus Christ, His only Son, and in the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

The Spirit of the Lord is with us. Even so, come Lord Jesus. Almighty God, the life you birthed in us by baptism into Jesus Christ will never die. Your justice never fails. Your mercy is everlasting.

Your healing river flows. Your Spirit blows where you will. We cannot stop you, God. But sometimes we try. We try to block the flow. We redirect the winds of the Spirit, or we walk so far away from the life-giving stream that we do not perceive it, and we forget its power.

[64 : 20] We march ourselves. We are dry and thirsty, O God. Come refresh us. Come upon us. Come upon us, Holy Spirit. Come upon us, Holy Spirit. Come upon these waters. Come upon these waters.

Let these waters be to us drops of your mercy. Let these waters remind us of your righteousness and justice. Let these waters renew in us the resurrection power of Jesus. Let these waters make us long for your coming reign.

Most holy God, Most holy God, Abba, Father. relates to you.

Spirit of fire, Spirit over the waters, Spirit of holiness, Lord ■male us-lander, Father Dieu ■x tu-lo,ets Effects and peace in His Son, Holy Spirit of God. profiti enaktion-clog during the earth forever into God. Eternal God! One in three and three in one finds the way that we may chant the scriptures and we pray n Trent Hod■ number 530 in one shiggienen. All glory is yours now and forever. Amen!

Remember that you are baptized and rejoice. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[66 : 26] Amen. Amen.

So friends, now receive this benediction. Almighty God, by the life you birthed in us. By baptism into Jesus Christ, we'll never die.

May you go forward into this day and into this week knowing that this power, the power of baptism, the power of God the creator, Jesus Christ our Savior, and the Holy Spirit goes with you.

May you live in strength and peace and grace. Amen. Amen.

Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.

[68 : 06] Amen. Amen.

Amen.