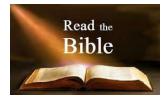


We welcome you joining us on the Liturgical journey from Epiphany to Transfiguration Sunday. This material reflects the Sunday sermons ensuring the whole church are on the same page and can take the learnings deeper with scripture readings, daily devotions and questions for group discussions. May you draw closer to God whilst learning His truths, find the journey transformative and experience God's love for you in a very deep and real way.



Song: Spirit lead me: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CHAAfC6gjnw

# WEEK 1 12 JANUARY - A Baptism of Life-Change



lsaiah 43:1-7 Psalm 29 Acts 8:14-17 **Luke 3:15-17, 21-22** 

### Luke 3:15-17 - The Message

<sup>15</sup> The interest of the people by now was building. They were all beginning to wonder, "Could this John be the Messiah?" <sup>16-17</sup> But John intervened: "I'm baptizing you here in the river. The main character in this drama, to whom I'm a mere stagehand, will ignite the kingdom life, a fire, the Holy Spirit within you, changing you from the inside out. He's going to clean house—make a clean sweep of your lives. He'll place everything true in its proper place before God; everything false he'll put out with the trash to be burned." <sup>21-22</sup> After all the people were baptized, Jesus was baptized. As he was praying, the sky opened up and the Holy Spirit, like a dove descending, came down on him. And along with the Spirit, a voice: "You are my Son, chosen and marked by my love, pride of my life."



Monday, January 13: Psalm 106:1-12; Judges 4:1-16; Ephesians 6:10-17; Tuesday, January 14: Psalm 106:1-12; Judges 5:12-21; 1 John 5:13-21; Wednesday, January 15: Psalm 106:1-12; Numbers 27:1-11; Luke 11:33-36; Thursday, January 16: Psalm 36:5-10; Jeremiah 3:1-5; Acts 8:18-24; Friday, January 17: Psalm 36:5-10; Jeremiah 3:19-25; 1 Corinthians 7:1-7; Saturday, January 18: Psalm 36:5-10; Jeremiah 4:1-4; Luke 11:14-23;



This week was written by: **REV THABISO MCINGA** 

As the people stood in anticipation, questioning in their hearts whether John the Baptist might be the Messiah, the narrative of Luke 3:15-17 reveals a moment of clarity and redirection. John, in his humility and faithfulness,

declares that he is not the Christ but merely a forerunner preparing the way for one mightier than he. Indeed, this resonates deeply with the season of Epiphany, a time when Christ's identity as the light of the world is revealed to all.

In his testimony, he somewhat reminds us that he understood that the story is not about him, but about pointing others to the Messiah. In verse 17 of this text, John describes Jesus as holding a winnowing fork, ready to separate the wheat from the chaff. This image of judgment can be unsettling, but it also conveys hope. Jesus gathers what is fruitful and purges what is harmful. During Epiphany, as we reflect on the revelation of Christ's glory, we are invited to examine our own lives. So, this season is an opportunity for spiritual clarity and renewal.

And therefore, like John – we too are not the light, but we are called to reflect the light and direct others to Christ. Yes, in a world filled with confusion and misplaced hopes, Epiphany encourages us to shine the light of Christ in ways that reveal his love. So, we ask, **"Who is the Messiah?"** Thus, ultimately, this scripture does inspire us to a deeper awareness of Christ in our lives.



 What challenges do you face in directing others to Him?
 How can you, individually and as a small group, share the hope and transformation of Christ with others in practical ways this season?
 What qualities or practices in your life might draw others to Christ during this season of Epiphany?



FAMILY TIME: Written by Jenny Blake CHILDREN'S PASTOR jennyb@bmc.org.za

Week 1 - A Baptism of Life-Change

Scripture: Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

Key Verse: "You are my beloved Son; with you, I am well pleased." (Luke 3:22)

## Introduction

Have you ever wondered what makes something special? Maybe it's a gift that someone took time to pick out, or an event that celebrates something important. Baptism is a lot like that—it's a moment when God tells us how much He loves us and invites us into a life of change and growth.

### **Bible Story Recap**

In today's story, people were wondering if John the Baptist might be the Messiah. But John pointed them to someone even greater—Jesus! When Jesus was baptized, something amazing happened. Heaven opened, the Holy Spirit came down like a dove, and God spoke, saying, "You are my beloved Son; with you, I am well pleased."

This wasn't just a moment for Jesus; it was a sign for all of us. Baptism is about saying "yes" to God's love and His plans for our lives.

#### Family Discussion

- 1. What does baptism mean to you? Talk about any baptisms in your family or church. How does it remind us of God's love?
- 2. Why do you think God was so pleased with Jesus? Explain how Jesus showed perfect obedience and love, and how we can follow His example.
- What changes can we make to live for God?
  Share one way you could grow in love, kindness, or faith this week.

#### Activity: A Symbol of Change

Take a piece of paper and write or draw something you'd like to ask God for help with—maybe being kinder, forgiving someone, or trusting Him more. Fold it and place it in a bowl of water. Watch as the water surrounds it, reminding us that God's love washes us clean and helps us grow.

#### Prayer

"Dear God, thank You for loving us and calling us to live a life that pleases You. Help us to grow in kindness, faith, and love, just like Jesus did. Thank You for the gift of baptism and for always being with us. Amen."