



# The Messenger

## International Lutheran Church

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## A NOTE FROM PASTOR CARL

### EXPECTATION

**Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, "You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased." (Luke 3:21-22 ESV)** Today at International Lutheran Church we celebrate the baptism of our Lord. This is the season of Epiphany - the ever-increasing light and revelation of Jesus the Son of God. The baptism of Jesus is an Epiphanic moment and the beginning of His public ministry. This is the moment and the reason that John came baptizing. All our expectations are redefined in this Epiphany. As the clouds give way, the Spirit descends, the voice booms, and the focus is on Jesus - the Son of God standing in the water.

This year we will be reading through the gospel of Luke and enjoying his perspective on Jesus, both his historical humanity as well as His eternal divinity. This gospel is more than just a chronological repetition of the events of Jesus' life. Luke's gospel is a beautiful and theological reflection on these historic events as they took place in time and space with universal and profound purpose. Perhaps this unique aspect is first reflected in Paul's letters and ministry when he writes in Galatians 4:4 "But when the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son, born of woman, born under the law." Jesus' historical appearance was and remains the fulfillment of time, as God stepped into time and space.

From Luke's perspective, the significance of Jesus' baptism is just this, the fulfillment of all of God's promises and actions. We actually begin with the expectations of the people and their wonderings if John could be "the One to come." We often have expectations. This is part of our human nature. Perhaps this is even a part of that God-created identity that sees into events or people a significance that requires understanding and wisdom to see. That our expectations are often misplaced or remain unfulfilled is also a significant signal to us that we live a broken reality. "All the people were baptized." They all heard the call of John and recognized that there was something happening even in the desert. While it was the tax collectors and sinners that responded, even the self-righteous people could not ignore the message. Herod even had to find a way to stop it by putting John in jail.

### SUNDAY SCHEDULE

9:00 AM *Sunday Morning Bible Study*  
10:00 AM *Divine Worship Service*  
(in-person and live stream)

### OTHER EVENTS

Go to [ilcseoul.org](http://ilcseoul.org) > Upcoming for other events

This is one of the unique aspects of Luke's gospel - while historically we know that it was John who baptized Jesus, Jesus is the sole focus here. Jesus stands in solidarity with the people and associates with all who will come into the water. His presence in the water makes of this water a life-giving flood, a spring that wells up to eternal life, and a new identity in the name that is now attached to us. Paul talks about it as being "in Christ" both His death but also His life. Jesus gathers us to Himself even to the point that we hear and experience what He hears and experiences as He stands in the water. We receive the Spirit even as the Spirit descended on Him. We hear the voice, even as the voice was heard by Him, "You are my beloved Son! In you I am well pleased." These words are the words we now hear "in Christ." You and I are beloved. We are no longer outsiders, but sons and daughters of God. We have been brought near and incorporated - in-fleshed through the bodily presence of the Son into God Himself.

Luke notes that this is the beginning of Jesus' earthly ministry, and that Jesus was about 30 years of age (Luke 3:23). What follows then brings us to Luke's second major theological interpretation of Jesus standing in the water, the voice booming from the clouds, and the Spirit's descent - Jesus is the Son of God. But this sonship is not detached from the same humanity that you and I share, but one and the same. As much as you and I are God's creation - Jesus shared in our humanity that our identity would be restored to God and that His expectations would then be fully met in Jesus. Our restoration becomes part of God's eternal Epiphany - the Light that has shone into our darkness and brought us to His perfect Light. In this Epiphany, we now shine and reflect that light. In earthly and ordinary ways God has transformed our expectations with His own Son, so that all people can know His love for them as He shines through us.

Pastor Carl

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

Unless otherwise noted, you may direct inquiries for any announcement to [seoulilc.volunteer@gmail.com](mailto:seoulilc.volunteer@gmail.com). Links to online or live stream events will be included in either the electronic version of *The Messenger* or will be sent out on Sunday morning.

### 'THE TIME OF CHRISTMAS'

The Sundays of Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany are observed as 'The Time of Christmas' in the church calendar. The colors on the altar and lectern, as well as the pastor's stole, will be blue (Advent), white (Christmas), and green (Epiphany). Blue, recognized as the color of the sky, can convey that Christ came down from heaven and was born into this world in our flesh, ascended to heaven, and will one day return. White is the color of many church festivals and represents purity as our sins are made "as white as snow." Green is the color of growth and suits Epiphany, the season of recalling that Christ has been revealed to all nations.

### END OF YEAR GIVING RECORDS

If you would like a record of your giving for the year for tax purposes, please contact the church at [seoulilc.church@gmail.com](mailto:seoulilc.church@gmail.com).

## GIVING OPPORTUNITIES

### ONLINE GIVING

THANK YOU TO THOSE WHO HAVE BEEN FAITHFULLY MAKING USE OF ONLINE GIVING.

**Your generosity makes the ministry of ILC possible, by God's grace!**

**KEB HANA 166-890039-91604**

## READINGS

### January 11: The Baptism of Our Lord

OT	Isaiah 42:1-9
NT	Romans 6:1-11
Gospel	Matthew 3:13-17

## SUNDAY VOLUNTEERS

If you are interested in serving as a Sunday Volunteer, or need to make a scheduling adjustment, please write to [seoulilc.volunteer@gmail.com](mailto:seoulilc.volunteer@gmail.com). Thank you!

### JANUARY 11

10:00 AM

ACOLYTE	Juwon & Carmen
GREETER	Hannah
USHERS	Michael B & Christian
COMMUNION ASSISTANT	James
LIVE STREAM	Lily
KITCHEN HELPERS	Joey & Yun
OFFERING COUNTERS	Lily & Joohun