

Prayer of Preparation: *Take me to the water. Take me to the water. Take me to the water, to be baptized.* Spirit of God, hovering over the waters of creation, bless us as we hear God calling each of us beloved. **Amen.**

Jesus went to the waters. Not for a reset...it's us who need the reset. Jesus went to the waters of baptism to identify with us; and by faith, we identify with Jesus. Here's what Luke's gospel says, “*Now when all the people were baptized and when Jesus also had been baptized...*” Jesus went, along with the people, along with God's people, to the Jordan River as an act of solidarity...as an act of identifying himself with us; and us with him.

We identify with Jesus as we become God's children: we are fully, lovingly, graciously adopted as children of God. And we are called “beloved.” Here's the gospel, the good news of Jesus Christ, when we are baptized, God is proclaimed *in us* and *through us* by God's grace.

This our *Reset*; this is our new year, this is our new beginning. This is our opportunity for us to begin anew; to reset ourselves, to reset our souls.

Here's our reset: God calls us. God calls us to the waters of baptism to be changed into **who** God wants us to be. God calls us to the waters of baptism to be **redeemed** through Jesus. God calls us to the waters of baptism to be **restored** to God's own image. God calls us to the waters of baptism **mold** us into the people who will transform the world.

God calls us to the waters of baptism **regardless** of our past, **regardless** of our sins, **regardless** of who we used to be. God calls us, God welcomes us, God incorporates us into one family...God's family.

God calls us...to send us. Our baptism is a day in time meant to send us into the world to see with God's eyes, to hear with God's ears, to feel with God's heart. I want you to hear Luke's gospel with a fresh ear, “*Jesus was about thirty years old when he began his work...*”

Baptism is the beginning: first baptism....then the work. God's work. The reason we need a soul reset is because we are being sent out to do God's work...just like Jesus was sent out to do God's work. This why we take the time to walk in the waters of baptism. This why we take the time to lean into the change God calls us to. This why we take the time to lean into our redemption through Jesus the Christ. This why we take the time to lean into our restoration. This is when we lean into the fact that God wants to mold us and get us ready for our mission in the world.

I started today's worship service with a poem that begins: *come on in...the water's fine*. The waters of baptism are indeed fine. The waters of baptism will change the way you walk. The waters of baptism will change the way you talk. The waters of baptism will change the way you love. I'd like to add, the waters of baptism will help you hear God's voice, calling from heaven, you are my child, my beloved. With you, I am well pleased.

Response to the Word: *Glory hallelujah. Glory hallelujah. Glory hallelujah, to be baptized.* Gracious God, thank you that you have sent the waters of baptism to help us hear you calling to us. May we always and ever hear you calling us beloved. **Amen.**