

GRACE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
128 East Baltimore Street
Greencastle, PA 17225
(717) 597-2983



Pastor: Rev. Mark Ruzicka
Choir Director: Patty Stepler
Organist: Susan Alsip-Lawson
Ministers: All Those Present

Seeking Higher Ground
First Sunday after Epiphany
Baptism of Christ, January 10, 2021

Genesis 1:1-5; Psalm 29; Acts 19:1-7; Mark 1:4-11

WE WELCOME GOD'S PRESENCE

WELCOME

VIDEO

Our Prayer
-by Freebridge Media

Welcome to Grace Church where we are God's people.

**United through Jesus Christ on a journey to grow, to share our faith
and serve others in the Greencastle area and the world.**

PRELUDE MUSIC

**Shall We Gather at the River
-Lowry/Sewell**

CALL TO WORSHIP (Based on Psalm 29)

Give to our GOD, O heavenly beings,
Give to our GOD glory and strength.

**Give to our God a glorious name;
worship our God in holy splendor.**

The voice of our GOD is over the waters;
the God of glory thunders,
the LORD, over mighty waters.

**The voice of our God is powerful;
the voice of our God is full of majesty.**

The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars;
Our GOD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.

**God makes Lebanon skip like a calf,
and Sirion like a young wild ox.**

The voice of our GOD flashes forth flames of fire.
**The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;
Our God shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.**

The voice of our God causes the oaks to whirl,
and strips the forest bare;
and in God's temple all say, "Glory!"

**The LORD sits enthroned over the flood;
Our God sits enthroned as ruler forever.**

May our God give strength to the people!
May the LORD bless the people with peace!

***PRAISE SONG**

**There's a Sweet, Sweet Spirit
408**



408 There's a Sweet, Sweet Spirit

1 There's a sweet, sweet Spir - it in this place, and I
2 There are bless - ings you can - not re - ceive till you

know that it's the Spir - it of the Lord; there are
know him in his full - ness and be - lieve; you're the

sweet ex - pres - sions on each face, and I
one to prof - it when you say, "I am

know they feel the pres - ence of the Lord.
going to walk with Je - sus all the way."

This gospel hymn grew out of this African American author and composer's intense experience of prayer with her interracial choir in Los Angeles one Sunday morning before worship. She recalled that sense of "a sweet, sweet Spirit" when she sat down at her piano the next day.

Refrain

Sweet Ho-ly Spir-it, sweet heav-en-ly Dove, stay right here

with us, fill-ing us with your love; and for these bless-ings we

lift our hearts in praise; with-out a doubt we'll know that we have

been re-vived when we shall leave this place.

INVOCATION

Creating, Calling, and Faithful God,
we come to this time and place to be with You,
to worship You, and to learn from You.

May our time together
be like Your creation of light in the darkness
that You called good.

May it be that You would call us good
while we respond to Your call and as we listen to You.

Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**O God, we hear Your voice
and we see the way of Jesus set before us.
But it's hard, dear God, to try again and again
to live up to our baptismal vows
and maintain our resolve to be Your people in the world.**

**In repentance we ask You to forgive us.
Set us once again on a holy path that leads to You.
Amen.**

SILENCE

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

Friends, God hears our prayers and sets before us the way of Jesus.
God calls us and gives us enough grace and mercy to follow the way.
Thanks be to God.

WE RECEIVE GOD'S GIFTS

SCRIPTURES

Genesis 1:1-5

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth,
the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep,
while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters.

Then God said, "Let there be light"; and there was light.

And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the
darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night.

And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.



Acts 19:1-7

While Apollos was in Corinth, Paul passed through the interior regions and
came to Ephesus, where he found some disciples.

He said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you became
believers?"

They replied, "No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit."

Then he said, "Into what then were you baptized?"

They answered, "Into John's baptism."

Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, in Jesus."

On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

When Paul had laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied—together there were about twelve of them.

SPECIAL MUSIC

Performed by Patty Stepler

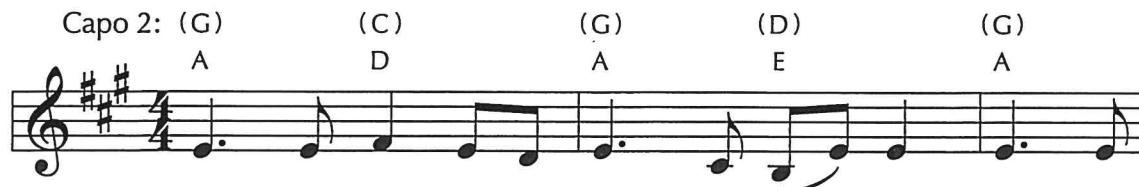
**Lord, the Light of Your Love Is Shining
(Shine, Jesus, Shine)**

192



192 Lord, the Light of Your Love Is Shining

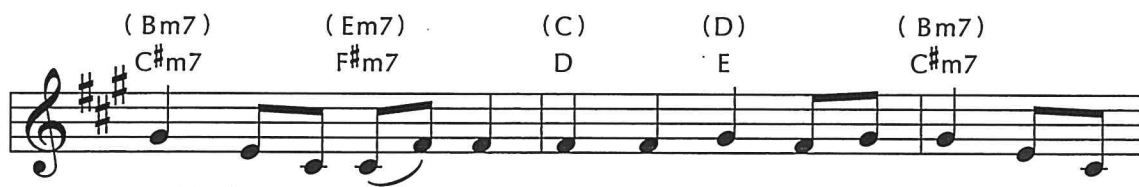
Shine, Jesus, Shine



1 Lord, the light of your love is shin - ing, in the
2 Lord, I come to your awe - some pres - ence, from the
3 As we gaze on your king - ly bright-ness, so our



midst of the dark - ness, shin - ing; Je - sus, Light of the
shad - ows in - to your ra - diance; by the blood I may
fac - es dis - play your like - ness; ev - er chang - ing from



World, shine up - on us; set us free by the truth you now
en - ter your bright-ness. Search me; try me; con - sume all my
glo - ry to glo - ry, mir - rored here may our lives tell your



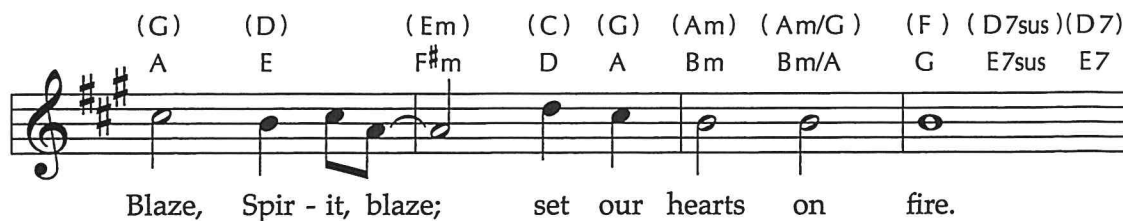
bring us. Shine on me; shine on me.
dark - ness. Shine on me; shine on me.
sto - ry. Shine on me; shine on me.



Shine, Je - sus, shine; fill this land with the Fa - ther's glo - ry.

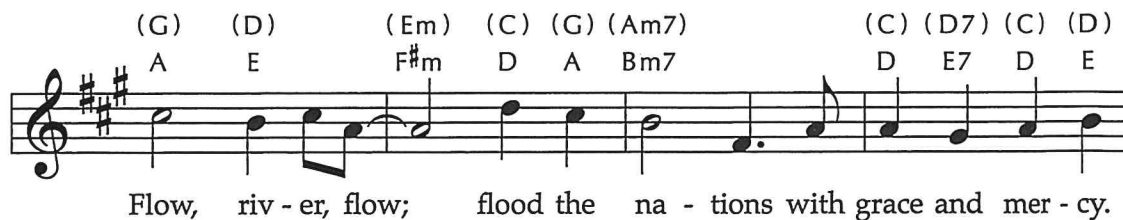
While the reference to Jesus as the Light of the world (John 8:12, 9:5) can be understood generally, this hymn is perhaps best understood as a response to the Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-8/Mark 9:2-8/Luke 9:28-36). This is the most popular of the author/composer's many songs.

(G) (D) (Em) (C) (G) (Am) (Am/G) (F) (D7sus)(D7)
 A E F#m D A Bm Bm/A G E7sus E7



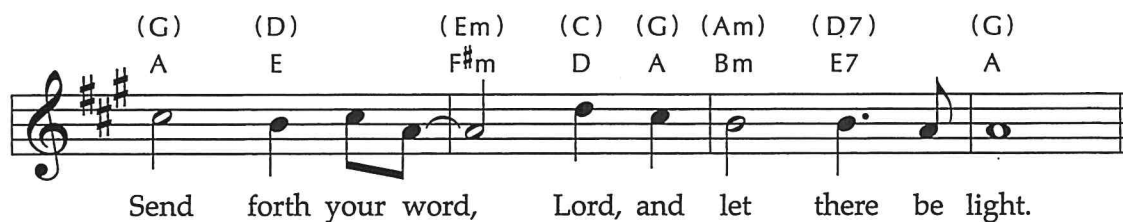
Blaze, Spir - it, blaze; set our hearts on fire.

(G) (D) (Em) (C) (G) (Am7) (C) (D7) (C) (D)
 A E F#m D A Bm7 D E7 D E



Flow, riv - er, flow; flood the na - tions with grace and mer - cy.

(G) (D) (Em) (C) (G) (Am) (D7) (G)
 A E F#m D A Bm E7 A



Send forth your word, Lord, and let there be light.

WE ASK GOD TO OPEN THE BIBLE TO US

WE READ GOD'S WORD TOGETHER

Mark 1:4-11

John the baptizer appeared in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins.

Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey.

He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals.

I have baptized you with water; but he will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan.

And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him.

And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased."

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

This is the Word of God for the People of God!
Thanks be to God!

SERMON

SHARING OF PRAYERS, CONCERNS, JOYS AND CELEBRATIONS

MOMENT OF SILENCE AND REFLECTION

PASTORAL PRAYER

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father, who art in heaven,
Hallowed be thy name.
Thy kingdom come,
Thy will be done,
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread
And forgive us our debts
As we forgive our debtors
And lead us not into temptation
But deliver us from evil,
For thine is the kingdom, and the power,
and the glory forever.
Amen.**

WE GIVE BACK TO GOD

INVITATION TO OFFERING

God, You call us to give as we have received in Christ. Please help us to share our blessings with those in need.

***WE SING A SONG OF THANKSGIVING TO GOD**

**Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise God, all creatures here below;
Praise God, above ye heavenly host;
Creator, Christ, and Holy Ghost. Amen.**

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Faithful God,
Bless us in our baptismal calling
to show hospitality to others.
We offer the gifts that we have been given to be used
not for conquest and dominance,
but for use in liberating the poor and hurting people
who pray for our liberation as well as their own.
Receive and multiply our gifts for life-giving ministry in Jesus name.
Amen.

WE GO OUT CARRYING GOD'S LOVE

***BENEDICTION**

Thank you, God, for blessing us with memories of Jesus' baptism and ours.
Thank you for removing our reluctance, doubt, and fears...and replacing
them with courage and commission.

May we go forth with Your calling, direction, and blessing. Amen.

***PRAISE SONG**

Baptized in Water
482



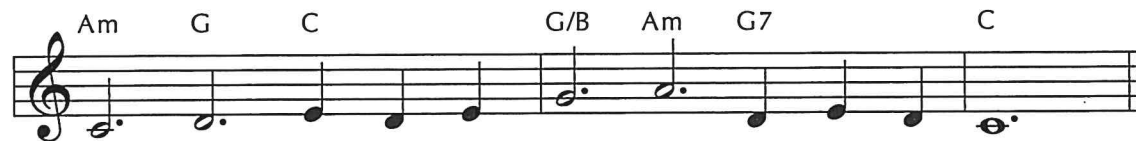
Baptized in Water



1 Bap-tized in wa - ter, sealed by the Spir - it, cleansed by the
 2 Bap-tized in wa - ter, sealed by the Spir - it, dead in the
 3 Bap-tized in wa - ter, sealed by the Spir - it, marked with the



blood of Christ our King; heirs of sal - va - tion, trust - ing the
 tomb with Christ our King; one with his ris - ing, freed and for -
 sign of Christ our King; born of the Spir - it, we are God's



prom - ise, faith - ful - ly now God's prais - es we sing.
 giv - en, thank - ful - ly now God's prais - es we sing.
 chil - dren; joy - ful - ly now God's prais - es we sing.

Each stanza of this compact and carefully constructed text about baptism begins with allusions to John 3:5 and Ephesians 1:13. The interplay of constant and changing lines accentuates each added image. It is set here to a Gaelic tune first transcribed in the 19th century.

POSTLUDE MUSIC

Benedictus -Young



Seeking Higher Ground, Service Prayers for Baptism of Christ Sunday was written by the Rev. Rosemary McCombs Maxey, a citizen of the Muscogee (Creek) Nation and is retired clergy and a member of Fellowship Congregational United Church of Christ, Tulsa, Oklahoma. Adapted by Mark Ruzicka.



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Contributions received week of 1/3/2021

Regular Offering: \$880

Initial Offering: \$23

Communion Offering: \$15

Building Fund: \$5



Pastor Emeritus

The Reverend Ralph S. Geiman, 1967-1995



First Sunday after Epiphany

Baptism of Christ, January 10, 2021

Pastor: Rev. Mark Ruzicka Cell Phone: 717-504-2923
GUCC Office Phone: 717-597-2983

We welcome everyone into 2021!

Due to the increasing number of Covid cases in our area, our in-person worship services have been suspended through the month of January. Grace United Church of Christ will be live streaming our services. Please comment hello on our live stream so we know you are watching with us! You will be able to access the live service through our Facebook page, Grace United Church of Christ @ <https://www.facebook.com/GraceChurchGreencastle/>

We are making every effort to communicate with the congregation regarding any changes, postponements or cancellations. We will be using our congregational phone chain to send out group recordings with any updates. You are welcome to call the church office with any questions or contact any consistory board members if you need any help.

Grace's Free Closet is temporarily closed, and will remain closed through the month of January. Please 'like' their Facebook page 'Grace's Closet Greencastle' or contact Nancy Myers to keep updated on any changes.

Church Meetings/Events/Fundraisers: We ask all our members and volunteers to kindly wear your masks during any and all church events, activities, fundraisers and meetings.

Congregational Group Email – Don't miss any church updates! Contact church office if you are not currently on our email list so we can add you today!

2021 Box Offering Sets - If you haven't picked up your 2021 offering envelopes, please contact the church office to make arrangements. Please verify that your name and address is correct on the outside label on the box.

Facebook: The live streaming of our worship service can be viewed on our Facebook page, Grace United Church of Christ. Please join our Facebook page to keep updated on activities and connect with others in the community. Our weekly worship program with announcements can also be downloaded from our website if you are viewing from home. You can find our page at: <https://www.facebook.com/GraceChurchGreencastle/>

We Welcome your Offerings - They can be mailed to GUCC, PO Box 448, Greencastle, PA 17225, dropped off at the church office, or you can donate online through our website.

GUCC Website: Please look us up on the web to see the history of our church! You can also download our weekly service programs and announcements at: <https://www.graceuccgreencastle.com>

Chancel Choir -The choir rehearsals have been postponed till further notice. Any questions or updates, please contact Patty Stepler.

Heirloom Mirrors – Long-time member, Jeff Stouffer, has been making high quality custom hardwood mirrors for over 35 years. Jeff has a long background creating custom wood projects. Jeff is donating his talent, time and materials by selling his custom heirloom mirrors to benefit GUCC. Please visit our website for more details about Jeff's talents and ordering information about these beautiful custom mirrors. You will find this information on the Groups & Activities page, under Jeff Stouffer Heirloom Mirrors. Feel free to call Jeff or the church office with any further questions, or to place your order. We thank everyone who has ordered mirrors and plaques to help support GUCC!

The new **January/February 2021 Upper Room** daily devotional brochures are now available. Please contact the church office to make arrangements to pick up a copy.

We need volunteers for **Greeters/Ushers, Readers & Communion Servers** for February. Please call the church office at 717-597-2983 so we can add you to the schedule. Thank you.

2020 Contribution Reports: Year to date contribution/offering statements are now available to anyone who would like a copy for their tax records. Please call the church office to request a copy & we will gladly mail it out to you, or you can pick it up if you prefer.

Grace Snyder Circle meeting scheduled for January 11th has been cancelled.

Consistory Meeting & Reports: Committee reports for December are now due to the church office. The agenda will be sent out to board members via email once everything is received. Our Consistory Meeting is scheduled for January 17, at 8:30am, in the social hall. We will be following safe distancing and wearing masks.

Annual Congregational Meeting is scheduled for January 24. Please submit all your committee reports to the church office as soon as possible to allow us time to put together and distribute the agenda packets. Further details about the meeting will be announced as they become available.

Next Online Worship Service, January 17, 10am

