



The First Sunday after the Epiphany

Baptism of Our Lord

Sunday, January 10, 2021

Live Streaming at 10:15 AM at

<https://www.facebook.com/stgregoryslongbeach/>

PRELUDE

David Feit-Pretzer

OPENING ACCLAMATION

Presider Blessed be God: ✠ Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
People **And blessed be his kingdom, now and forever. Amen.**
Presider There is one Body and one Spirit;
People **There is one hope in God's call to us;**
Presider One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;
People **One God and Father of all.**

GLORIA

Glory to God in the highest,
and peace to his people on earth.

Lord God, heavenly King,
almighty God and Father,
we worship you, we give you thanks,
we praise you for your glory.

Lord Jesus Christ, only Son of the Father,
Lord God, Lamb of God,
you take away the sin of the world:
have mercy on us;
you are seated at the right hand of the Father:
receive our prayer.

For you alone are the Holy One,
you alone are the Lord,
you alone are the Most High,
Jesus Christ,
with the Holy Spirit,
in the glory of God the Father. Amen.

COLLECT OF THE DAY

Presider The Lord be with you.
People **And also with you.**
Presider Let us pray.

Father in heaven, who at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit: Grant that all who are baptized into his Name may keep the covenant they have made, and boldly confess him as Lord and Savior; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. **Amen.**

FIRST READING

Genesis 1.1-5

Lector A Reading from Genesis.

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.

Lector The Word of the Lord.
People **Thanks be to God.**

PSALM 29

- 1 Ascribe to the LORD, you gods, *
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
- 2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory due his Name; *
worship the LORD in the beauty of holiness.
- 3 The voice of the LORD is upon the waters;
the God of glory thunders; *
the LORD is upon the mighty waters.
- 4 The voice of the LORD is a powerful voice; *
the voice of the LORD is a voice of splendor.
- 5 The voice of the LORD breaks the cedar trees; *
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon;
- 6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf, *
and Mount Hermon like a young wild ox.
- 7 The voice of the LORD splits the flames of fire;
the voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness; *
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
- 8 The voice of the LORD makes the oak trees writhe *
and strips the forests bare.

- 9 And in the temple of the LORD *
all are crying, "Glory!"
- 10 The LORD sits enthroned above the flood; *
the LORD sits enthroned as King for evermore.
- 11 The LORD shall give strength to his people; *
the LORD shall give his people the blessing of peace.

SECOND READING

Acts 19.1-7

Lector A Reading from the Acts of the Apostles.

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— altogether there were about twelve of them.

Lector The Word of the Lord.

People **Thanks be to God.**

HOLY GOSPEL

Mark 1.4-11

Presider The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ According to Mark.

People **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

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."

Presider The Gospel of the Lord.

People **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

SERMON

The Rev. Michael K. Fincher

RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL VOWS

Presider Do you reaffirm your renunciation of evil and renew your commitment to Jesus Christ?

People **I do.**

Presider Do you believe in God the Father?

People **I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

Presider Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People **I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.**

**He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.**

**He suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried.**

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven,

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Presider Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

People

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.**

Presider Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Presider Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Presider Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

People **I will, with God's help**

Presider Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

People **I will, with God's help.**

Presider Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

People **I will, with God's help.**

The Presider concludes the Renewal of Vows as follows

May Almighty God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has given us a new birth by water and the Holy Spirit, and bestowed upon us the forgiveness of sins, keep us in eternal life by his grace, in Christ Jesus our Lord. **Amen.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

As we gather around the waters of baptism today, gather us to your heart. Increase our commitment to the vows we have made to follow you. Give our spiritual leaders wisdom, patience, and guidance.

We pray for God's people and their leaders.

As we survey the news of the nations, sharpen our attention to what is happening in the world around us. Compel us to pray for those in authority and for the people they govern, that there may be peace between nations and neighbors.

We pray for God's world and all her people.

As we build relationships with those with whom we live and work, open our eyes to your presence in their lives and the ways we can serve you by serving them.

We pray for our neighbors and friends.

As we see those who suffer in any way, increase our capacity to love and to pray. We pray especially for those we mention now, silently, aloud, and in the comment section.

(Pause)

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for those who are suffering with illness and the struggles of life.

As we say goodbye to those who have departed this life, comfort us in our grief, assuring us of your love. We pray for the recently departed, and for those we mention now, silently, aloud, and in the comment section.

(Pause)

Lord, hear our prayer.

We pray for those who have died.

Presider Into your outstretched arms, O Lord, we commend ourselves and all for whom we pray, trusting in Jesus Christ, the Word made flesh who came among us as the light and life of the world. **Amen.**

SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

A spiritual communion is a personal devotional that anyone can pray at any time to express their desire to receive Holy Communion at that moment, but in which circumstances impede them from actually receiving Holy Communion.

In union, Blessed Jesus, with the faithful gathered at every altar of your Church where your Blessed Body and Blood are offered this day, and remembering particularly our own church community, we long to offer you praise and thanksgiving, for creation and all the blessings of this life, for the redemption won for us by your life, death, and resurrection, for the means of grace and the hope of glory.

And particularly for the blessings given us, that we now name, either silently or aloud.

(pause)

My Jesus, I believe that you are truly present in the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar. I love you above all things, and long for you in my soul. Since I cannot now receive you sacramentally, come at least spiritually into my heart. As though you have already come, I embrace you and unite myself entirely to you; never permit me to be separated from you. Amen.

And now as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to pray:

**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 trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom,
and the power, and the glory,
for ever and ever. Amen.**

Come Lord Jesus, and dwell in my heart in the fullness of your strength; be my wisdom and guide me in right pathways; conform my life and actions to the image of your holiness; and in the power of your gracious might, overcome every hostile power that threatens or disturbs the growth of your kingdom; who with the Father and the Holy Spirit live and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen.

EPIPHANY BLESSING

May Almighty God, who led the Wise Men by the shining of a star to find the Christ, the Light from Light, lead you also, in your pilgrimage, to find the Lord. **Amen.**

May God, who sent the Holy Spirit to rest upon the Only-begotten at his baptism in the Jordan River, pour out that Spirit on you who have come to the waters of new birth. **Amen.**

May God, by the power that turned water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana, transform your lives and make glad your hearts. **Amen.**

And the blessing of God Almighty, ✠ the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. **Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND SPECIAL BLESSINGS

Birthday and Anniversary Prayer: Watch over your *child*, O Lord, as *his* days increase; bless and guide *him* wherever he may be. Strengthen *him* when *he* stands; comfort *him* when discouraged or sorrowful; raise *him* up if *he* falls; and in *his* heart may your peace which passes understanding abide all the days of *his* life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

DISMISSAL

Presider Let us go forth in the name of Christ.
People **Thanks be to God.**

POSTLUDE

David Feit-Pretzer

THIS WEEK AT ST. GREGORY'S

Tuesday, January 12

Centering Prayer at 6:30 PM via Zoom.

Daily Offices (Monday through Friday)

Daily Morning Prayer: Monday through Friday at **9:00 AM** with Mother Sharon Sheffield on the St. Thomas Facebook page (<https://facebook.com/Saint-Thomas-of-Canterbury-Episcopal-Church-of-Long-Beach-CA-124554214274325/>).

Daily Evening Prayer: Monday through Friday at **5:00 PM** with Father Michael Fincher on the St. Gregory's Facebook page (<https://facebook.com/stgregoryslongbeach/>).

For the Daily Offices, you will need either a Book of Common Prayer or you can download the Morning and Evening Prayer liturgies and the Psalms for the week from the St. Gregory's website (www.stgregoryschurch.com).

Regarding Zoom Events: Some of our programs are being conducted using Zoom to allow for an interactive experience. You can access an event using your computer, smart phone, or even your landline. Access information is contained in the weekly emails sent to parishioners, or contact Fr. Michael at rector@stgregoryschurch.com or (909) 373-6478.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Outreach Update: We just wanted to give you an update on the Thanksgiving and Christmas gift card program. As previously reported, thanks to your generosity, we were able to give \$6,000 in gift cards to the Los Angeles County Department of Mental Health. Keeley Gilmore, our contact, let us know that she distributed the gift cards to 17 families. Your generosity helped provide Thanksgiving meals for these families and Christmas gifts for 34 children! Thank you again for your generosity!

Stewardship Update: In a trying and difficult 2020, we have been incredibly blessed by your Faith-Filled Generosity. To date, we have received 85 pledges for a total of \$256,790. This is our third highest pledge total in the last nine years. It is also the highest dollar amount per pledge (\$3,021) we have seen. We still have not received pledge cards from a few of you who have pledged in the past. So, if you have not yet turned in your pledge for 2021, we would appreciate you doing that soon so we can finalize our budget for the year. And if you have misplaced your pledge card, let us know and we can send one to you.

Annual Reports: With the New Year upon us, it's time to start thinking about our Parish Annual Meeting, scheduled for Sunday, January 31st (more to come on that). In preparation for the Annual Meeting, we will need to produce the Annual Report. All persons responsible for a ministry program in the Parish (you know who you are), should submit written reports of the year's activities to the Parish Office no later than Wednesday, January 20th. Yes, even in the year of COVID, we still need to report on our ministries. And if there was not much activity due to the pandemic, at least a brief report on what you normally do or what your plans are for 2021 would be in order. Reports need to be in Word or Word-compatible format and emailed to Kevin at info@stgregoryschurch.com. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.

Bible Study: Due to restrictions on public gatherings under the current Stay-at-Home order, Bible Study has been suspended until further notice.

St. Gregory's Sharing Library: Due to the new Stay-at-Home order, the Sharing Library is closed until further notice.

Diocesan Convention Delegates: The Diocese of Los Angeles holds its annual convention in early November. Each parish is represented by its clergy and lay delegates. We are entitled to

three delegates—one to be selected by the Vestry from among its members and two to be elected at the Annual Meeting. If you are interested in representing us at the Diocesan Convention, please notify the Parish Office. If you have any questions, see Fr. Michael.

Feed My Lambs and Food Bank: Our parish feeding programs need your help!

- **Feed My Lambs** has the following needs:
 - **Lunch Makers** – We need 3 to 4 volunteers (under 65 and with no underlying health issues) to be Lunch Makers on the Friday before the Feed My Lambs Saturday. Next month it will be Friday, February 5th. The time will be determined by YOU! If you are interested, please contact Tamera (contact info below) and let her know the time you are available. Whatever hour is best for the most volunteers will determine the time. We make and assemble 100 lunches in sacks, which takes about an hour and a half.
 - **Staffing at St. Luke's** –We need a couple of volunteers to help with the distribution of sack lunches and coffee at the St. Luke's Shower program on the first Saturday of the month. We start working at 7:00 AM and are generally done by 9:30 AM.
 - **Hardboiled Eggs** – We are re-introducing hardboiled eggs to our sack lunches, so need 100 hardboiled eggs each month. Hardboiled eggs can be dropped off at the Parish Office on the Wednesday before the first Saturday of the month, from 10:00 to noon. If this time does not work, contact Tamera and she will arrange a convenient time to meet you at the church.
 - **Clothing and Comfort Items** – We need towels, wash cloths, men's pants and shorts (sizes 32-38), men's shoes (sizes 10-14), backpacks, and blankets.

If you have questions about helping out with Feed My Lambs, contact Tamera Benedict at (calbenedicts@gmail.com, 562.301.6800).

- **Food Bank** has the following needs:
 - **Donations of Food** – We especially need cereal, canned tuna, and ramen.
 - **Volunteers** – Anyone under 65 and healthy is welcome to assist with the Food Bank distribution on the first Monday of the month between 9:00 and 11:30 AM. Please contact Bill Eldon (billeldon@gmail.com, 562.234.9920) for more information about the Food Bank.

Your continued support of our feeding ministries, through product and monetary contributions, is greatly appreciated!

Gratitude for Your Support of the Parish: We continue to be humbled and so incredibly grateful for your generosity in supporting our parish and its ministries! While you may not be able to drop your donation in a real offering plate, there are still ways you can make sure your donation gets to the parish:

- You can mail your check to the parish office.
- Make donations through our online payment account, accessible through the parish website at <http://stgregoryschurch.com/4721-2/>.
- Scan the QR code found in the Sunday bulletin.

And again, THANK YOU for your continued support!

Parish Directory: Our online parish directory is at <https://www.instantchurchdirectory.com/>. This is a secure site and can be accessed using the email address you had published in the parish directory. You can also download the “Instant Church Directory” on your smart phone. Versions are available for Android, iPhone, iPad, and Kindle.

One Body & One Spirit Emergency Appeal: The Diocese has established an emergency fund to assist congregations, diocesan institutions, and their employees, who have been affected by the COVID-19 shutdowns. We are encouraged to prayerfully consider making a donation to help others in need, if we have the capacity to do so. More information is available at https://diocesela.org/uncategorized/covid-19_emergency-appeal/.

Assistance for Our Parishioners: During these difficult times, it may be a challenge for some of our more vulnerable parishioners to get out to get groceries or other necessities. If you need such assistance, please let the Parish Office know and we will figure out how we can help you out. And if you are willing to help out by shopping or running errands for your fellow parishioners, please let the Parish Office know.

In Case of Emergency . . . Notify Your Priest! In the event of a pastoral emergency (i.e., hospital stay, illness, being homebound), please notify Fr. Michael or the Parish Office. You can call the Parish Office at 562-420-1311. If no one answers, dial 302 for Fr. Michael’s extension and leave a message on his voicemail. Or you can call Fr. Michael directly on his cell phone at 909-373-6478. And PLEASE, no excuses about not wanting to bother me. That’s why I’m here – for YOU!

PRAYER LIST

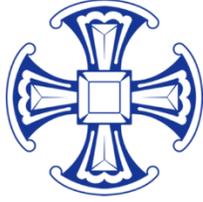
Lydia Gibbs, Michael Carr, Ralph Wong, Suzan Laverty, Martin Nemitz, Ferdinand Gonzalez, George Gillespie, Roberta Raymer, Patrick McDonough, Darlene Feit-Pretzer, Lisa Fincher Bailey, Molly Dawes, Charles Malonson, Mike Laverty, Michael S., Kathy Stein, Kim White, Jack Reidy, Debbie Fields, Charlene Rice, Ruth McClune, Robert Huff, Jared Baker, Gina Baker, Bob Gergen, Larry Curry, Grace Stinson, Cindy Beck, Barbara Smuck, Fr. Doug Judson, Nika Sherbakova, Betty Peacock, Anne Ruffner, Gordon Thomas, Mother Beryl, Lorena Ann Dunkly, Dave DeMent, Fr. Charles Burger, Cindy Rodi, and Rosy Ixco

Note: Unless we are aware of on-going concerns, names only stay on the Parish Prayer List for a month. If names need to be re-added, please notify the Parish Office.

Texts of Sunday sermons are available on our parish website, at
<http://stgregoryschurch.com/sermons-archive/>

To make secure, online donations to St. Gregory's, simply scan:





ST. GREGORY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH

6201 E. WILLOW STREET, LONG BEACH, CALIFORNIA 90815
562-420-1311 WWW.STGREGORYSCHURCH.COM

WELCOME TO ST. GREGORY'S EPISCOPAL CHURCH!

St. Gregory's is a warm and caring community of families and singles, young and old, committed to sharing the good news that Jesus is the Lord of all life. We are an Episcopal Church, having members from all backgrounds and religious traditions, many of us had no church involvement before coming here. We want to offer to you the same welcome and friendship that were extended to us when we came to St. Gregory's.

ST. GREGORY'S MISSION STATEMENT

God has called us into Christian community and gifted us for ministry:

- To worship and glorify God
- To transform faith into action
- To share the love of Jesus Christ

The Right Reverend John Harvey Taylor
Bishop of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles

The Reverend Michael K. Fincher, Rector
909-373-6478
rector@stgregoryschurch.com

David J. Feit-Pretzer, Director of Music
714-899-1902

Kevin Wood, Parish Administrator
562-420-1311
info@stgregoryschurch.com