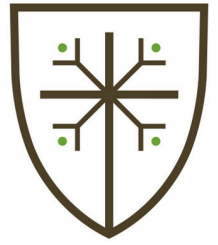


SERMON NOTES



BREAKING INTO OUR
MONOLOGUE
EPIPHANY 2026 SERMON SERIES

January 11, 2026

SERMON INFO

TITLE

"Jesus' Baptism and Ours"

PREACHER

Rev. Tim Frickenschmidt

TEXTS

Isaiah 42:1-4

Acts 10:34-43

Matthew 3:13-4:3; 7:7-8

DISCUSSION QUESTION

1. What is one way in which you've seen the opposition to baptismal life Tim talked about in your own life?
2. How do the gifts given us through Jesus' baptism help us in the face of this spiritual opposition?

SERMON IN SUMMARY

This week, Tim began a new sermon series for the season of Epiphany. He began with the question, "how does baptism, specifically Jesus' baptism, manifest God's grace to us?"

Severity

The setting of John the baptist's preaching is the wilderness, a lifeless, severe place of death. This is also the setting for Jesus' baptism. A dry, dangerous, wasteland. The contrast with the setting for our baptisms seems stark - no infants in clean white gowns, no air conditioned indoor spaces, no donuts and coffee for everyone. But we must not be fooled by our setting or caught unaware of the spiritual wilderness that surrounds us.

It is God's way, from the beginning of creation, to speak into formless, empty, lifeless spaces as he speaks at Jesus' baptism. He speaks into the spaces and fills them with life and he speaks over them and blesses them. Jesus, God incarnate, steps into just such a space, his genealogy and birth story littered with characters whose lives are filled with disorder, characters like us in dire need.

Opposition

John the baptist is confused as Jesus comes forward to be baptized. Why would Jesus come to him and not the other way around? At this moment, Jesus publicly steps into the line with all the sinners throughout history. He enacts in an embodied way God's full plan of righteousness, not only for the Jewish people but for all nations. Jesus stood in the place of repentance for us. He leads us in all things, including Christian repentance.

Jesus' baptism, going under the waters is a foretaste of the cross, the judgement that he took upon himself. But it is also a foretaste of resurrection, rising from the waters as he will rise from the tomb in newness of life. He did all these things on our behalf and can identify with us completely, no matter where we find ourselves. Apart from him, we can do nothing but in him, we can do all things. As soon as the reality of who you are in Christ sets in, you will immediately begin to face opposition, just as we see Jesus doing immediately after his baptism, going further out into the wilderness. This is the baptismal life of Jesus, and it is our baptismal life as well.

Gifts

The gifts of your baptism are the very same gifts given to Jesus. He has access to the heavenly places; he has the Holy Spirit; and he has the pleasure of the Father. These gifts are freely given by him to us that we might participate in his new baptismal life, but they are not freely earned by him. They cost him everything. Your baptism into him cost everything. Christ emptied himself.

Tim closed by calling us to fully embrace the gifts given to us; don't leave them unopened. Seek to know and love God who gave them to us in new ways this Epiphany season.