

For week beginning Mon 12th January 2025 **The Baptism of The Lord**

21 Now when all the people were baptised and when Jesus also had been baptised and was praying, the heaven was opened, 22 and the Holy Spirit descended upon him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved;^[a] with you I am well pleased. (Luke 3:21-23)

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The word *wilderness* led my thoughts to the cycle of national and global mercurial – even whimsical at times – changes in attitudes of those in leadership positions, with societal and environmental breakdown, especially in very recent decades. The resulting confusion, despair and sadness from lessons in the past still not learned let alone acted upon means the cycle continues, leaving us as though suspended in a sort of uncertain wilderness – a global wilderness and for many a personal wilderness too – scary and very real.

Although without sin himself, Jesus identified with sinners when he was baptised, showing us the way to Repentance, Redemption and Salvation. Our journeys begin with Baptism, moving through a Confirmation of our growing faith toward a more mature realisation of who we really are as we try to walk the Way of Jesus in our daily lives up the hills, across bumpy grounds and into the deepest of valleys. May each of us worship and cherish The One who is always with us, listening, teaching, guiding and directing us to greater depths of faith and discipleship. Jesus Christ.

Revd Tish Bird