

**Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Olympia, WA**

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# Baptism Rotation

## Hollywood Studio: Movie Workshop

Learners will view a movie version of Jesus' baptism, "Jesus of Nazareth" and discuss it in relation to our baptisms. They will become familiar with the story of Jesus' baptism and understand the sacrament of baptism with its promises.

### **Bible Texts and References:**

**Scripture:** Matthew 3:1-17, and Mark 1:1-11, Luke 3:1-22, John 1:19-34

### **Memory Verses:**

#### **Matthew 3:17**

*"And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased."*

#### **Matthew 28:19**

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,"*

### **Concepts:**

- Jesus is God's beloved son. Jesus' baptism is the prototype for our baptism. We enter the covenant community through baptism.

### **Objectives:** Students will understand that:

- Baptism is a gift from God.
- Baptism is a sacrament - an outward sign of God's grace using an earthly element and commanded by Christ.
- Baptism is not simply plain water. Instead it is water used according to God's command and connected with God's Word.
- Baptism is a natural progression of our belief, and a starting point for our growth in faith.
- Know that one promise of baptism is that we are children of God, and nothing in all creation will separate us from that love.
- Know the story of John baptizing Jesus.
- Know that anyone who believes can be baptized.

**Leader Preparation:**

Read the scripture for this lesson.

Read and reflect on the overview material provided for this lesson.

**Gather the following materials:**

- Bibles; at least one purple Adventure Bible
- “Jesus of Nazareth” video cued to the baptism
- Video of a baptism at Gloria Dei - if available - cued to the beginning of the baptismal service
- Pencils
- A photo of your baptism, or your baptism gown if you have one available.

**Opening:**

Greet your students warmly, welcoming them to the Movie Workshop. Introduce yourself and any other adults.

Ask for any prayer requests. Ask if anyone would like to lead the group in prayer. Be prepared to say a prayer yourself, working in prayer requests. A suggestion: “Dear God, we are thankful to be here today among friends. We are thankful we can hear Bible stories that teach us about Jesus. Thank you for the gift of baptism and your unending love. Amen”

**Dig In:**

Share your baptism photo/gown, or something you remember from your baptism. Ask if anyone else has brought in a photo or recalls something they would like to share about their baptism? Spend a short time sharing.

**(Be sensitive to those who have not been baptized. Encourage them to talk to their parents about it, or our pastor or children’s ministry coordinator. Be sure they know that all who believe can be baptized and that God loves them too and would want them to be baptized.)**

Tell students that today we are going to watch a movie about Jesus baptism. (If a video of a baptism at Gloria Dei was obtained, let them know about that as well.)

Distribute Bibles. [Praise those who have brought their own Bibles.]  
Have everyone find Matthew, chapter 3, verse 1 in his or her Bible.  
[Remind them of the quick way to find the New Testament.]  
Have those who are able, take turns reading verses 1-17.

Explain that John was sent by God to prepare the people's hearts to receive Jesus as their Savior. He was called John the Baptist, because he was baptizing people. Where did he baptize people? (The Jordan River) How? (By submerging them and lifting them up again.)

Say: Jesus came to John to be baptized. How did John react? (He said Jesus should be baptizing him. That he was not worthy.) Jesus told John to baptize him. What happened when Jesus was baptized? (The heavens were opened - ripped in two and the Holy Spirit descended from Heaven in the form of a dove. There was a voice from heaven that said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.")

How do you think the people there reacted to this? Jesus was without sin. Why do you think He was baptized? ( Jesus said it was to fulfill all righteousness. He was taking all of our sins on Him. This is also the start of Jesus' ministry. What story do you remember happens right after Jesus is baptized? We studied this one last year. (He went into the desert and was tempted for 40 days.)

Say: How do you picture the scene in the story? How do you picture the events taking place? ( Let them tell you how they imagine the events taking place.)

Explain that there are many ways of interpreting the events of this story, and many ways people picture it. There are also many movies that show someone's interpretation of this event, and that we will watch one.

**Watch the baptism scene** of the movie "Jesus of Nazareth." (This scene is only about 3 minutes long. Be prepared to rewind slightly and re-watch if the children would like to see it again.)

Discuss this portrayal of the story. Let the children tell you their impressions. You may want to ask some questions to elicit responses to the video:

- What was John like? Why do you think there were people coming to the river to see and hear him?
- What was Jesus like? Why did he come to see John?
- What happened in this video when Jesus was baptized? What do you see in the video that is different in the Bible story?
- What would you have thought about the events if you were in the crowd that day?

Explain that Jesus' baptism, with the coming together of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit in this one event, is a model for our baptisms, even though we can't know for sure how it took place from this story. Read the following from Luther's Small Catechism:

**Baptism is not simply plain water. Instead it is water used according to God's command and connected with God's Word.**

**This word is found in Matthew 28:19. Have someone look it up and read it.**

*"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,"*

[Note to teacher: the Lutheran Definition of Sacrament - an outward sign of God's grace using an earthly element and commanded by Christ.]

Ask the students what they remember about baptisms at Gloria Dei? How are they similar to Jesus' baptism as portrayed in the movie? How are they different?

Watch the video - if available - of a baptism at Gloria Dei. Tell the children the name of the child being baptized. (Ask the questions again comparing the baptisms again if they couldn't remember much about baptisms here.) Talk about how some people are baptized as infants and others are baptized when older. (You may get some "why" questions here. Be sure to convey that the age of the person and the method of baptism are not important, but that the sign of God's grace and that we are sealed with God's love are the important elements.

**Closure:**

Read Matthew 28:19. Connect the presence of God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit at Jesus' baptism with our baptisms "in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."

**Journal Time:**

Pass out the Faith Journal Sheets. Ask the children to write down how they feel when they watch a child being baptized.

**Closing:**

Close with a prayer of your own, or use the following:  
Gracious God, at Jesus' baptism we heard you tell the world that he is your beloved child. Help us to live as your beloved children, too. Amen.

**Dismissal:**

Have the children help you tidy up the workshop space, helping you clean up any mess. Shepherds will lead them to Closing Time.

**Special note:**

Be sure to be sensitive to the fact that some children may not have been baptized yet, or that they don't remember if they have or not. Make no judgments about this, and don't allow any discussion of individual circumstances.

**References:**

Lessons Exchange/Baptism of Jesus/Baptism of Jesus-drama lessons from Palma Ceia Presbyterian Church, Tampa, Florida.

<http://rotation.infopop.cc/eve/forums/a/tpc/f/2756088121/m/6756088121>

Lessons Exchange/Baptism of Jesus/Baptism of Jesus lesson set from St. Paul's Presbyterian, Ingersoll, ON.

<http://rotation.infopop.cc/eve/forums/a/tpc/f/2756088121/m/5756088121>