

Baptismal Reflection
Pilgrim Congregational Church, UCC, Lexington
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What a beautiful thing, to welcome into the family of God, and into the church universal, and into Pilgrim Church, these three beloveds.

Words alone are never sufficient to describe a sacrament, a holy moment. And indeed we probably don't need a lot more words today.

Jean Vanier, founder of the L'Arche communities for adults with developmental disabilities, told the story of Pierre. "One day someone asked him, 'Do you like praying?' He answered, 'Yes.' He was asked what he did when he prayed. He answered, 'I listen.' 'And what does God say to you?' 'He says, You are my beloved son.' " ¹

Pierre heard the same words that Jesus heard at his own baptism, and the words we have repeated today.

Those are the only words we need. Whispers of belovedness.

When you close your eyes and pray, what do you hear God saying to you?

When you close your eyes, (why don't you do that now (unless you are supervising toddlers) and take a deep breath and find your center, and just listen for God's whispering, still speaking voice, what do you hear God saying to you?

I hope you hear, "You are my beloved child."

Whether this is your church home, or you are part of another faith community or no faith community, remember this essential truth: God loves you, has loved you, will always love you.

Experience yourself enfolded in God's love. Experience yourself enfolded in the love of this community. *You are not alone.*

You can open your eyes.

¹ Resources for Preaching Year A

It is not the moment of baptism that makes us God's beloved children - we are God's beloved children, always. But baptism is one profound moment when we name that, claim that belovedness. Baptism are moments that as a community, we echo God's love in our vows of support. We make a sacred covenant promise. So that we, as we walk through whatever our own journey of Christian faith looks like, can always remember that most important truth: we are beloved, always.

Knowing, deep inside, that we are beloved, cared for, and never alone makes our life of faith possible. From our belovedness we can offer love, compassion, kindness, hospitality. From our belovedness we can proclaim the belovedness of all people.

The rest of our days are opportunities to live out the implications of our baptisms.
(Copenhaver, To Begin At The Beginning, 149)

Thanks be to God for this day, and for God's love which enfolds us all, and the love we have to share in God's name.

Amen.