



## ST. ANDREW'S IN THE PINES EPISCOPAL CHURCH

### SERMON

1-10-16

- I. There is one Body and one Spirit; There is one hope in God's call to us; One Lord, One faith, One Baptism, One God and Father of all." From Ephesians and start of our service of baptism. Today we recall the baptism of Jesus.
  - II. Story of a baptism – at Fremont Lake.....
    - a. Grandfather – I just love the Lord so much.
  - III. Baptism starts with love – this is my beloved with whom I am well pleased.
    - a. Love of God for us, love of parents for the infants, older being drawn by love to something beyond themselves.
  - IV. Baptism starts with love – and it starts our identity, our heritage, our journey of faith.
    - a. Baptism is the start – the start of the journey into our identity.
    - b. Then we have the baptism of the Holy Spirit and Fire – imagine what that baptism is like – it's easy for us to handle the water bit – very tangible. Holy spirit and fire????? Sounds amazingly powerful
  - V. Each year renewing the baptismal promises – because they are our training steps.
    - a. Did we respect the dignity of every human being/
    - b. Do we continue in the fellowship of Church community, participating in the breaking of the bread and the prayers?
    - c. Do we spread the Good news of God through our words and examples?
    - d. Do we repent, do we strive for justice and peace, do we love our neighbor as ourself?
  - VI. We answer those questions and experience the fullness of baptism – the baptism of Jesus with fire and the Holy Spirit.
    - a. Depending on how we respond to our baptismal promises we must allow the fire to burn away our chaff and the Holy Spirit to guide our steps and words.
    - b. Bible accounts of God purifying us by fire
    - c. Bible accounts of the Holy Spirit as our counselor, our spiritual director.
  - VII. This in an ongoing baptism – this is the cleansing and directing for the rest of our lives.
    - a. Until as baptized disciples and peacemakers we grow into a maturity that brings us into broader, wider relationships.
    - b. Relationships across denominations like the church in south India.
    - c. Relationship across other barriers like racism and sexism and ageism.
  - VIII. Pulled, stretched, burned, purified, Not our own, Baptism is the commitment of a lifetime.
- Thanks be to God.