



# River of Life News

Issue No. 5

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## When Water Isn't Just Water

When I'm thirsty, I will often squirt some flavor liquid into my glass of water before I drink it. The water, then, isn't just water, but Berry-Pomegranate water, or some other flavor. In the same kind of way, the water of Holy Baptism isn't just water either. It doesn't have flavoring added to it, but the Word of God! And the Word of God added to the water makes that water something special, which does miraculous things. God promises us the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit and faith in that water when His Word is added to it. That's pretty special! So next time you see a baptism, remember that's not just plain water, but God's water, which does great things!

## SPECIAL OFFERING UPDATE

So how did we do? How much money did we raise? Well, the children donated \$\_\_\_\_\_ , and with Pastor matching those donations, we raised a grand total of \$\_\_\_\_\_ . Thank you so much!

But that's only half of it. The other half is: where will the money be going? What children did our children pick to help? They picked the children in . . .

Haiti                    The Baltic States                    The Sudan

Russia                    China

The children loved learning about children in other lands, and we are fortunate to be able to help them.

## Parents' Column

It happens every year. At the end of VBS week the adults are tired and the children are sad because they want to come back for another week! Thank you for letting us teach your children about the love and forgiveness of Jesus. I will keep them in my prayers through the year and those prayers will include the request that we will see them and be able to teach them again next year!

And know that if there is anything we can do for you throughout the year, please do not hesitate to ask. *We're here for you* and will do our best. Know that you are also always welcome to visit us for a Sunday Divine Service which begins at 10:15 am each Sunday. God richly bless you and your family!

Pastor Douthwaite





# Jesus is Baptized

*Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heavens were opened, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form, like a dove; and a voice came from heaven, “You are my beloved Son; with you I am well pleased.”*

~ Luke 3:21-22

Why did Jesus need to be baptized? That's a question many people ask. If He was not a sinner (and He wasn't!), then why be baptized with sinners? The answer is that in being baptized with sinners, Jesus is identifying Himself with us, for He has come to be one of us and to take our place under God's Law and its obligation - to fulfill it all perfectly in our place. But this, too: the water of baptism washes our sins off us, but washes them *onto* Jesus! We get clean in the water of baptism, but Jesus gets dirty! So Jesus isn't baptized for Himself. He didn't need it. He is baptized for us, because we needed a Saviour! And with His baptism, Jesus is being that Saviour.

Notice, also, what the Father says when Jesus does this; when He identifies Himself with sinners and gets our sins washed upon Him. The Father is pleased! Yes, for this is exactly why Jesus came. He came to do this, for us, and be our Saviour. What wonderful water baptism is!

## China

Did you ever play hide and seek? Of course you have! It's a fun game. But for the people in China, it's not so fun. They have to play hide and seek with the Chinese government when they go to church. The government doesn't want them to be Christians or go to church, so they and their churches have to hide, while the government tries to find them and stop them. It is a dangerous game for them, but Jesus is so important to them that they are willing to do that! Would you?



But since that's how things are in China, Bibles and Sunday School materials are very hard to get. But the children there need them! It is possible to get these books and materials to them, but it must be done very carefully and secretly. It is worth the effort and risk, so that the children and people of China can know their Saviour.

So remember to pray for all the children around the world who need to hear of Jesus, whether they are in Haiti, the Baltic States, the Sudan, Russia, or China. Your prayers are important, and we know that God will hear and answer our prayers. Thank you!