

# Down to the River to Pray

As I went down to the riv - er to pray,  
stud - y - ing a - bout that good old way. And who shall wear the  
star - ry crown, good Lord, show me the way.  
Oh \*broth - er let's go down, come on down, don't you  
want to go down? Oh broth - er, let's go down,  
down to the riv - er to pray.

The musical score is written on a single treble clef staff with a key signature of one sharp (F#) and a 4/4 time signature. The melody begins with a quarter note G4, followed by quarter notes A4, B4, and C5. The lyrics are placed below the notes, with hyphens indicating syllables that span across notes. The score includes a double bar line with repeat dots at the end of the first line, and another double bar line at the end of the sixth line. The tempo and dynamics are not specified.

*\*Sister, father, mother.*

Text: American folk song  
Tune: American folk song; arr. by Robert J. Batastini, b.1942

## Psalm 29 New Revised Standard Version

### Psalm 29

#### The Voice of God in a Great Storm

#### A Psalm of David.

- 1 Ascribe to the LORD, O heavenly beings,<sup>[a]</sup>  
ascribe to the LORD glory and strength.
- 2 Ascribe to the LORD the glory of his name;  
worship the LORD in holy splendor.
- 3 The voice of the LORD is over the waters;  
the God of glory thunders,  
the LORD, over mighty waters.
- 4 The voice of the LORD is powerful;  
the voice of the LORD is full of majesty.
- 5 The voice of the LORD breaks the cedars;  
the LORD breaks the cedars of Lebanon.
- 6 He makes Lebanon skip like a calf,  
and Sirion like a young wild ox.
- 7 The voice of the LORD flashes forth flames of fire.
- 8 The voice of the LORD shakes the wilderness;  
the LORD shakes the wilderness of Kadesh.
- 9 The voice of the LORD causes the oaks to whirl,<sup>[b]</sup>  
and strips the forest bare;  
and in his temple all say, "Glory!"
- 10 The LORD sits enthroned over the flood;  
the LORD sits enthroned as king forever.

11      May the LORD give strength to his people!  
          May the LORD bless his people with peace!

### **Footnotes**

- a. [Psalm 29:1](#) Heb *sons of gods*
- b. [Psalm 29:9](#) Or *causes the deer to calve*

< [Psalm 28](#)

[Psalm 30](#) >

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## Matthew 2:1-12 New Revised Standard Version

### The Visit of the Wise Men

**2** In the time of King Herod, after Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, wise men<sup>[a]</sup> from the East came to Jerusalem, **2** asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews? For we observed his star at its rising,<sup>[b]</sup> and have come to pay him homage." **3** When King Herod heard this, he was frightened, and all Jerusalem with him; **4** and calling together all the chief priests and scribes of the people, he inquired of them where the Messiah<sup>[c]</sup> was to be born. **5** They told him, "In Bethlehem of Judea; for so it has been written by the prophet:

**6** 'And you, Bethlehem, in the land of Judah,  
are by no means least among the rulers of Judah;  
for from you shall come a ruler  
who is to shepherd<sup>[d]</sup> my people Israel.'"

**7** Then Herod secretly called for the wise men<sup>[e]</sup> and learned from them the exact time when the star had appeared. **8** Then he sent them to Bethlehem, saying, "Go and search diligently for the child; and when you have found him, bring me word so that I may also go and pay him homage." **9** When they had heard the king, they set out; and there, ahead of them, went the star that they had seen at its rising,<sup>[f]</sup> until it stopped over the place where the child was. **10** When they saw that the star had stopped,<sup>[g]</sup> they were overwhelmed with joy. **11** On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. **12** And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.

### Footnotes

a. [Matthew 2:1](#) Or *astrologers*; Gk *magi*

b. [Matthew 2:2](#) Or *in the East*

- c. [Matthew 2:4](#) Or *the Christ*
- d. [Matthew 2:6](#) Or *rule*
- e. [Matthew 2:7](#) Or *astrologers; Gk magi*
- f. [Matthew 2:9](#) Or *in the East*
- g. [Matthew 2:10](#) Gk *saw the star*

< [Matthew 1](#)

[Matthew 3](#) >

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## Mark 1:4-11 New Revised Standard Version

4 John the baptizer appeared<sup>[a]</sup> in the wilderness, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. 5 And people from the whole Judean countryside and all the people of Jerusalem were going out to him, and were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. 6 Now John was clothed with camel's hair, with a leather belt around his waist, and he ate locusts and wild honey. 7 He proclaimed, "The one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals. 8 I have baptized you with<sup>[b]</sup> water; but he will baptize you with<sup>[c]</sup> the Holy Spirit."

### The Baptism of Jesus

9 In those days Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. 10 And just as he was coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him. 11 And a voice came from heaven, "You are my Son, the Beloved;<sup>[d]</sup> with you I am well pleased."

### Footnotes

- a. [Mark 1:4](#) Other ancient authorities read *John was baptizing*
- b. [Mark 1:8](#) Or *in*
- c. [Mark 1:8](#) Or *in*
- d. [Mark 1:11](#) Or *my beloved Son*

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# New Service of Reaffirmation of the Baptismal Covenant

*This service reframes the structure and vows of the current Baptismal Covenant (UMH 50 and 2004 **Book of Discipline**, para. 217) in fresh imagery and a more interactive style. Text in regular print may be offered by the pastor. Text in bold print may be said by all. Please note that this liturgy is for use for reaffirming the baptismal covenant, but not for receiving new members.*

## **Introduction**

*All standing in body and/or spirit.*

Sisters and brothers in Christ:  
through the sacrament of baptism  
God's Spirit has been poured out upon water,  
water poured over and immersing us,  
water that flows freely for all who will receive it,  
water from the streams of God's saving power and justice,  
water that brings hope to all who thirst for righteousness,  
water that refreshes life, nurtures growth, and offers new birth.

Today we come to the waters,  
to renew our commitments  
in each other's presence  
to Christ who has raised us,  
the Spirit who has birthed us,  
and the Creator who is making all things new.

## **Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith**

And so I ask you, will you turn away from the powers of sin and death?

**We renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness,  
Reject the evil powers of this world,**



**And repent of our sin!**

Will you let the Spirit use you as prophets to the powers that be?

**We accept the freedom and power God gives us  
To resist evil, injustice, and oppression  
In whatever forms they present themselves!**

Will you proclaim the good news and live as disciples of Jesus Christ, his body on earth?

**We confess Jesus Christ as our Savior,  
put our whole trust in his grace,  
and promise to serve him as our Lord,  
in union with the church which Christ has opened  
to people of all ages, nations, and races!**

Will you be living witnesses to the gospel, individually and together, wherever you are, and in all that you do?

**We will remain faithful members of Christ's holy church  
And serve as Christ's representatives in the world.**

Will you receive and profess the Christian faith as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments?

**We affirm and teach the faith of the whole church  
as we put our trust  
in God, the Father Almighty.  
in Jesus Christ, his only Son.  
and in the Holy Spirit,  
one God now and forever.**

**Thanksgiving Over the Water  
The Spirit of the Lord is with us.  
Even so, come Lord Jesus!**

Let us pray.

Almighty God, the life you birthed in us  
by baptism into Jesus Christ  
will never die.

Your justice never fails.

Your mercy is everlasting.

**Your healing river flows.**

**Your Spirit blows where you will.**

**We cannot stop you, God!**

But sometimes we try.

We try to block the flow,

we redirect the winds of the Spirit,

or we walk so far away from the life-giving Stream

that we do not hear its sound,

and we forget its power.

We parch ourselves.

**We are dry and thirsty, O God.**

**Come, refresh us!**

*The pastor offers gestures of calling upon the Holy Spirit to come upon the people and the water.*

*The people are invited to offer the same gestures as they respond.*

Come upon us, Holy Spirit!

**Come upon us, Holy Spirit!**

Come upon these waters.

**Come upon these waters.**

Let these waters be to us drops of your mercy.

**Let these waters remind us of your righteousness and justice.**

Let these waters renew in us the resurrection power of Jesus.

**Let these waters make us long for your coming reign.**

Most Holy God, Abba, Father!

**Glory to you!**

Jesus Christ, Savior, Lord!

**Glory to you!**

Spirit of fire, Spirit over the waters, Spirit of holiness!

**Glory to you!**

Eternal God, One in Three and Three in One!

**All glory is yours, now and forever. Amen!**

*All who are baptized and have renewed their vows are invited to come to the font to use the water as a sign of refreshing. As each uses the water, another says to her or him:*

Remember that you are baptized, and rejoice!

**Servicio para la Reafirmación del Pacto Bautismal** -- Traducción por Julio Vargas-Vidal

Baptism Service

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Steve interviews Phil Meadows who is a professor at Asbury Theological Seminary. Phil’s latest book Remembering Our Baptism: Discipleship and Mi. . .

## AFFIRMATIONS OF FAITH

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## THE NICENE CREED

We believe in one God,  
the Father, the Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth,  
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,  
the only Son of God,  
eternally begotten of the Father,  
God from God, Light from Light,  
true God from true God,  
begotten, not made,  
of one Being with the Father;  
through him all things were made.  
For us and for our salvation  
he came down from heaven,  
was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary  
and became truly human.  
For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;  
he suffered death and was buried.  
On the third day he rose again  
in accordance with the Scriptures;  
he ascended into heaven  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.  
He will come again in glory  
to judge the living and the dead,  
and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,  
who proceeds from the Father and the Son,  
who with the Father and the Son  
is worshiped and glorified,  
who has spoken through the prophets.  
We believe in the one holy catholic\* and apostolic church.  
We acknowledge one baptism  
for the forgiveness of sins.  
We look for the resurrection of the dead,  
and the life of the world to come. Amen.

\*universal

## Blessed Assurance

### **VERSE 1**

Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine!  
O what a foretaste of glory divine!  
Heir of salvation, purchase of God,  
born of his Spirit, washed in his blood.

### **REFRAIN**

This is my story, this is my song,  
praising my Savior all the day long;  
this is my story, this is my song,  
praising my Savior all the day long.

### **VERSE 2**

Perfect submission, perfect delight,  
visions of rapture now burst on my sight;  
angels descending bring from above  
echoes of mercy, whispers of love.

### **VERSE 3**

Perfect submission, all is at rest;  
I in my Savior am happy and blest,  
watching and waiting, looking above,  
filled with his goodness, lost in his love.  
(Refrain)