



Wednesday Prayer

Baptism of Our Lord – 5 words and 5x100 youth

And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him.

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

Matthew 3:16-17

On New Year's Day, I took a walk in a local park with the sun glistening through the ice frocked trees. The trees were covered with feathery crystal needles called hoarfrost. Then I came across a large "5" capturing the sun's reflection. I couldn't resist taking this photo and reflecting on it for much of my walk.



I came up with five words for a New Year's blessing ~ Grace, Peace, Safety, Trust and Truth. I reflected on wishes for the new year as I walked and thought I'll intentionally reach out to five youth to support them with encouragement, a listening ear, reminders of safety when interacting online, hope for the future. If 100 of you do the same, we'll impact 500 youth!

Later at home, I received a call from a friend and deacon who had just stopped on a bridge when he saw a distressed teen who looked as if she was contemplating jumping. He shared who he was and assured her that she was a person who held great value, that she is beloved. He was able to call for support and she went with when they arrived.

God's word to Jesus when he was baptized was that Jesus was Beloved, that God was well pleased. Our young people need to hear over and over how they are worthy, they are loved and we are pleased with them. They need to hear from safe adults so they are more likely to reject those who manipulate in order to exploit young people. Join us in 2023* to reach more youth with messages that they are beloved children of God.

God, we are all your Beloved. May we share messages of grace, peace, safety, trust and truth with the young people in our lives and communities. Amen.

Written by Joy McElroy, Cherish All Children Executive Director.

* Join us January 21, 10am – 12pm for a hybrid event [Supporting Youth Safety & Healthy Choices in the Virtual Playground](#).