

## The Birth of John the Baptist

A form of service for use on 24<sup>th</sup> June – the Feast day commemorating the birth of St John the Baptist.

### INTRODUCTION

We celebrate today the birth of John the Baptist marked out by God  
with special favour  
as the one who prepared the way before His Son.  
His birth brought great rejoicing;  
even in the womb he leapt for joy, so near was our salvation.  
Alone of all the prophets,  
John hailed the Lamb who takes away the sin of the world.  
He baptized Jesus, the author of baptism,  
in waters made holy by the one baptized.  
By shedding his blood  
he gave his last and greatest witness to God's Son.

### INVITATION TO REPENTANCE

John the Baptist proclaimed,  
'Repent for the kingdom of heaven has come near.'  
Let us turn to the Lord in penitence and faith  
and humbly confess our sin.

Lord Jesus, you stand among us, and we do not recognize you.  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, we are not worthy to untie the thong of your sandals.  
Christ, have mercy.  
**Christ, have mercy.**

Lord Jesus, you are the Lamb of God  
who takes away the sin of the world.  
Lord, have mercy.  
**Lord, have mercy.**

## ASSURANCE OF GOD'S MERCY AND FORGIVENESS

Merciful Lord,  
whose prophet John the Baptist  
proclaimed your Son as the Lamb of God  
who takes away the sin of the world:  
may we know your forgiveness and your life-giving love  
and always tell of your mercy and your peace;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen**



## COLLECT

Almighty God,  
by whose providence your servant John the Baptist  
was wonderfully born,  
and sent to prepare the way of your Son our Saviour  
by the preaching of repentance:  
lead us to repent according to his preaching  
and, after his example,  
constantly to speak the truth, boldly to rebuke vice,  
and patiently to suffer for the truth's sake;  
through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord,  
who is alive and reigns with you,  
in the unity of the Holy Spirit,  
one God, now and for ever.



### **The birth of John the Baptist from the Gospel of Luke chapter 1**

When it was time for Elizabeth to have her baby, she gave birth to a son. Her neighbours and relatives heard that the Lord had shown her great mercy, and they shared her joy.

On the eighth day they came to circumcise the child, and they were going to name him after his father Zechariah, but his mother spoke up and said, 'No! He is to be called John.'

They said to her, 'There is no one among your relatives who has that name.'

Then they made signs to his father, to find out what he would like to name the child. He asked for a writing tablet, and to everyone's astonishment he wrote, 'His name is John.' Immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue set free, and he began to speak, praising God. All the neighbours were filled with awe, and throughout the hill country of Judea people were talking about all these things. Everyone who heard this wondered about it, asking, 'What then is this child going to be?' For the Lord's hand was with him.

## PRAYER OF RESPONSE

God of our salvation,  
as we praise you for your servant John the Baptist,  
accept all we bring to you this day,  
and free us to worship you without fear,  
in holiness and righteousness all the days of our life;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

## ACCLAMATION

The Father's voice bears witness to the Son.  
**God the Holy Trinity has revealed himself to us.**  
The Son bows his head beneath the Baptist's hand.  
**God the Holy Trinity has revealed himself to us.**  
The Spirit as a dove descends from the heavens.  
**God the Holy Trinity has revealed himself to us.**  
Submitting to John's baptism, Christ delivers us from bondage.  
**God the Holy Trinity has revealed himself to us.**

## BLESSING

Through the tender compassion of our God  
may the dawn from on high break upon us  
and guide our feet into the way of peace.  
And the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among us and remain with us always.