



# The MBPC Texter

## ... get into scripture – an ancient form of text messaging

Mountain Brook Presbyterian Church  
3405 Brookwood Road; Birmingham, Alabama 35223

Issue 4

Lectionary Year C

The following texts have been chosen by Pastor Lant Davis from Revised Common Lectionary readings (<https://lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu/>) for the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time. When you have a few minutes, look them up and read them.

**Sunday, January 13, 2019**

**1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Ordinary Time**

**Baptism of the Lord**

**Gospel Reading**  
**Luke 2: 15-17 & 21-22 (sermon text)**

**Reading from Old Testament Prophets**  
**Isaiah 43: 1-7**

Ordinary Time consists of two periods in the church's liturgical year, the first of which begins after Epiphany, January 6 (the 12<sup>th</sup> day of Christmas) and ends on the day before Ash Wednesday, when the Lenten Season begins. The second period of Ordinary Time begins the day after Pentecost and ends the Saturday before the first Sunday of the Advent season. The liturgical color for Ordinary Time is green to symbolize growth. Ordinary Time is not called "ordinary" because it is commonplace but because it imposes a structure of order and numbering on the weeks between important Christian seasons. Its name comes from the Latin word *ordinalis*, which refers to numbers in a series.

Read more....



John the Baptist and the Baptism of Jesus



Herod 1 and Herod 2





## John the Baptist and the Baptism of Jesus

The four gospels were written by four different authors. Thus, we can understand how a story in one of the four may not be told in another. For example, Luke is the only gospel that tells the story of the shepherds going from their fields into the town of Bethlehem to welcome the baby Jesus as the long-promised Messiah (2: 8-14). Matthew is the only gospel containing the story of the magi or wise men from the East (2:1-12). At the beginning of the New Testament, the HarperCollins Study Bible (2006) contains a table indexing parallel passages of the four Gospels. In surveying this table, it becomes immediately clear that the great majority of stories appear only in one, two, or three gospels. Even so, the baptism of Jesus as performed by John the Baptist is described in all four (Matthew 3:13-17; Mark 1:9-11; Luke 3:21-22; and John 1:29-34).

By comparing these four versions of the story, one can understand how the authors were all trying to explain the relationship between Jesus and John. Luke tells of John's mother Elizabeth, who is a relative of Jesus' mother Mary. Mary visits Elizabeth's home in the Judean hill country when both women are expecting their sons. We meet the adult John in the Gospels as he preaches a message of repentance and baptizes his listeners in the Jordan River. His clothing is described by Mark as "camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist" and his diet as "locusts and wild honey" (1:6). All the quote Isaiah 40:3 in reference to John as God's messenger for the coming of the Messiah:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord,  
make straight in the desert a highway for our God.


Pages 286-8 in the *Children's Bible in 365 Stories* are stories do a good job of blending the four gospel accounts of John the Baptist and his baptism of Jesus. Additionally, the last story draws from passages in Chapter 1 of John and tells about how John's followers, Peter and Andrew, become disciples of Jesus.






## Herod 1 and Herod 2

Last week's scripture passage from Matthew, "The Visit of the Wise Men" and this week's Luke passage "The Baptism of Jesus" mention a ruler of Israel named "Herod." It's helpful when thinking of these two stories to remember that these are two different people. The Herod of Jesus' infancy, mentioned in Chapter 2 of Matthew, was Herod the Great, but the ruler who imprisoned and executed John the Baptist was Herod Antipas. The HarperCollins Study Bible (2006) has a "simplified" family tree on page 1672.

 **Herod the Great** reigned from 37- 4 B.C. as king of the Jews in Jerusalem. He kept order through his total loyalty to Rome and through his grandiose and magnificent building programs. He constructed the port city of Caesarea Maritima, which became the Roman administrative center for Palestine. He also built impressive fortresses in his eastern territories near the Jordan River, including Cypros, Masada, Machaerus, and Alexandrium. His masterpiece project, however, was his grand-scale reconstruction of the Jewish Temple on Mt. Zion in Jerusalem including the massive retaining walls supporting a plaza and colonnades, which visitors to Jerusalem walk on today. In contrast to these accomplishments, King Herod never shied away from murdering his competitors for power, including his family members. Therefore, it is not surprising that he would order the killing of infants to prevent Jesus from growing up to become a king.

 **Herod Antipas** (4 B.C.-39 A.D.) was a son of Herod the Great, and upon Herod's death in 4 B.C., Augustus Caesar appointed him ruler of Galilee and Perea. This Herod is mentioned in the New Testament in connection with John the Baptist and also with Jesus. According to the Gospels, Herod imprisoned John the Baptist, for criticizing his marriage to Herodias, who was his niece and also the wife of his half-brother. Then, at the request of Salome, daughter of Herodias, John was later executed. Herod Antipas also colluded with Pilate in allowing the crucifixion of Jesus (Luke 23:6-16).



**PROGRAM FOR WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 16, 2019**  
**5:30 – 7:30 P.M. CHILDCARE IS PROVIDED**

5:30 – 6:00 p.m.

Children (Youth Room in Preschool Building): **Bible Book Bonanza** Children learn the names of books of the Bible through songs and games.

Adults (Reception Room):

**Presenting a Big-Picture View of the Bible to Children**

During this half hour, Pastor Lant Davis will lead discussion about the week's selected Bible books and scripture passages. The Bible presented to MBPC first graders on Rally Day, *The Children's Bible in 365 Stories*, will be among resources used. A focal point of these chats will be seeking ways that parents and grandparents might connect particular stories and books of the Bible with children's ideas and questions about God and Jesus.

**Wednesday, January 16: Talking to Children about Baptism**

6:00 -- 6:45 p.m.: **Dinner in the Fellowship Hall**

6:45 – 7:30 p.m.

Children (Youth Room in Preschool Building): Bible-story videos and other activities

Adults (Reception Room):

**Let's Talk it Over**

Pastor Lant Davis will lead a discussion about sermon and scripture passages used in worship on Sunday, January 13.

**Who does the Bible say John the Baptist Was?**