***Hebrews 9:11-15 But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. 12Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption. 13For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, 14how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? 15And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.***

This morning, we are blessed to participate in the Baptism of our brother Josh. Make no mistake, as much as Josh walking into the pool, as much as me pronouncing words, as much as those that filled the pool or offer towels as we emerge from the water, you have participated. By your presence and your prayers, through your worship and your gratefulness, God is glorified. Yes, when one joins, we are all strengthened.

In John 1:29, we read - *The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”* We know, from Exodus 12, that the Passover Lamb had to be a male, without blemish, of the sheep or goats. Luke 22:20, we read Jesus words - *Likewise He also took the cup after supper, saying, “This cup is the new covenant in My blood, which is shed for you.* Hebrews 9:17 says *For a testament is in force after men are dead, since it has no power at all while the testator lives.* Christ had to die for the New Testament, the New Covenant to come into force. Hebrews 9:28 says *so Christ was offered once to bear the sins of many. To those who eagerly wait for Him He will appear a second time, apart from sin, for salvation.* We believe that Christ has entered the very presence of Almighty God and stands as High Priest, interceding for our sin. Baptism signifies our belief in Him.

Verses 11-12 *But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. 12Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.* Josh we have a High Priest, uncreated, in the beginning Jesus was with God and was God, as John 1 says. He shed His own blood, bringing to us, eternal redemption. He stands for us, as we submit to Him.

Verses 13-14 *For if the blood of bulls and goats and the ashes of a heifer, sprinkling the unclean, sanctifies for the purifying of the flesh, 14how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?* God now sees the blood of His precious Son as the Way of sanctification. Jesus offered Himself, giving His Spirit into the hands of God. Luke 23:46 says *And when Jesus had cried out with a loud voice, He said, “Father, ‘into Your hands I commit My spirit.’ ” Having said this, He breathed His last.* His Spirit was not taken, but committed into the hands of God. Dead works are ended. A life of Service has begun.

Verse 15 *And for this reason He is the Mediator of the new covenant, by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions under the first covenant, that those who are called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance.* Through His death, we have a New Covenant. Through belief and submission, we receive the promise of eternal inheritance. We become children of the God, the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. John 1:14 says - *And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.* The word dwelt here means encamped – The Word, the Messiah, Jesus Christ Who was from the beginning with God and Who was God encamped among us. The Apostle Paul speaking to the church in 1 Cor 3:16 says - *Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?* The word dwells in this verse is different. It means He now resides within us, as the church, in the form of the Holy Spirit, the Spirit He promised, the Helper God sends when we accept His Son. John 14:15-17 Jesus says *If you love Me, keep My commandments. And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever - the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you.* Josh, the word dwells here has yet another meaning – The Holy Spirit will stay with you and within you. You choose relationship with Him each and every day

This morning, as we celebrate, let us never forget. We are now the tabernacle, the vessels of ministry sprinkled with Blood, as told of Moses in Hebrews 9:21 *Then likewise he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry.* May we go from the place, doing the Work of the Savior, being vessels of ministry, boldly shining the Spirit encamped within.