

For those who are watching at home, you might not have noticed that all the paramounts are the wrong color, or you might not have noticed that we have the baptismal font out. Today, we're doing this because today is a very special day. We have a new member joining us. And she's also getting baptized. It's a wonderful wonderful thing for all of us to share, especially considering what's happening in the world today. For confirmation, the first thing I asked when they came in, was what did you notice that was different. And Henry said, Claire has braces Like well, yes, that. That is a very, very prominent thing for you to notice; good job. But I said, what else? What else did we notice? And they didn't know. So I said, okay, well let's go back out front. And they noticed Cindy playing the piano, and they noticed Wednesday, talking about Bluey. But they didn't see the rest of this. They didn't see the paramounts. They didn't see the banners. They didn't see the baptismal. None of this was different to them. And we talked about it. Once I pointed out what was different, we talked about why it was different and everything going on. But none of this is different to them. And at first, I started to think, well, none of this was different to them, because none of this really matters to them. And that sounds terrible.

Well, it's not meant to. The color that these paramounts are doesn't affect how they hear God. Whether we have the right colors out, whether we have banners on that wall, whether we have the font, none of that matters to them because they're here, and they're talking about their relationship with God. And that means more to them than all of the surroundings.

I asked them if they talk about God with their friends and Claire very short and to the point said, no. Claire's answers are always very short and to the point. Henry gave me a long list of everything that he and his friends talk about, and none of that list was about God. At least not our God. And I say that because he talked about other people's gods. He talked about sports. He talked about the Cyclones, which apparently are two completely different things. He talked about Xbox; he talked about all of these other things that people put before God.

So, I asked them why they don't talk about God with their friends. Why they don't start that conversation? And I reminded them that it's okay to say I don't know. If I asked all of you, how often do you talk about God with your friends? Probably about the same amount of time as they do.

Now, you might be surprised, but I talk about God a lot with people. And I've been told that I talk about it too much. Sometimes I've been told that I get too political sometimes in my relationship with God because people no longer see me as me anymore. People see me as the church. They see me as Saint Paul's. So anything I say is reflective of what Saint Paul says. Sometimes that bothers me. This week, it did. This week at dinner it bothered me because more people started coming up to me and saying that they need God. They lost God for whatever reason in their lives. They lost what it meant to feel that love. To feel the joy that we have when talking about it. And they don't know how to get it back. They don't know how to find that relationship with God. Today we are going to celebrate That relationship with God with us and with Adri as she comes up here and becomes a new member.

The Psalm today is a prayer. It's a prayer that King David wrote. I don't know how much you remember about King David. We know he was great. He was wondrous, he was picked by God to lead the Israelites and the Judeans. He was meant to be the beginning of the Messiah. And

we remember all the grand and glorious things that he did. But we forget that he was actually a terrible person. He was a sinner. And I'll stop there. He did a lot of very bad things and he did it justifying himself as he was chosen by God. We have a lot of people in the world that do terrible, terrible things. And they justify it because they believe that they're doing it in the name of God. 39 people died yesterday because somebody made a decision to bomb an area that injured 101 children and killed 39 people. And they justified it by saying that it's okay because God has granted them that power. I don't know any God that would justify killing and injuring children. We do that. We hurt each other; we hurt other people.

In the psalm today. David recognized that he does wrong. That he did wrong. He was born sinful and he's asking for forgiveness. And forgiveness is a very hard thing for us to ask, because then we have to admit that we did something wrong. We have to admit that the choices we've made are not always the right choices.

And the best part about us is that we recognize that; we recognize it. Not everyone is perfect. We recognize that we ourselves make mistakes and on days like today we get to recognize that even though we've made all of these mistakes throughout our life, we know that God still loves us. And he loves us so much that he's giving us an opportunity to come together with somebody else. We get to relish the fact that not only are we God's children, but we are helping somebody else. And we are affirming her belief that she is God's children too. As she is willingly coming up here. Some of us had no choice, some of us were told to come up here and be baptized. We don't remember it at all.

It was hilarious asking the confirmation kids why they were baptized and what they remember from it. And they did everything they could to make up a good story. But Adri gets to choose it. She gets to choose to be a part of us, and she gets to choose to join us and come up here and celebrate our love and her love for God. And we get to celebrate being a part of her life and recognizing that we've all made mistakes. But we are all still a family. And we all still come together. Even when we fight like family, even when we disagree on different things, we are still here together. And the only one that can take that away from us is us. We are the only ones that can decide when we come here and when we don't. We are the only ones that can decide to share God's love. Not just with the people in these four walls. But with everyone out there and most of what we think, a lot of people will not agree with us because we put God before ourselves. And today we're going to put Adri, God before all of us and that's no pressure right there. Now, you're probably going to run out the door. But we are grateful. We are incredibly happy that you're going to become an official part of our family. And with that, let us pray.