



## THE GOOD THAT IS YOURS

by Lisle Gwynn Garrity

Inspired by Luke 3:7-16

*Ink dyes and gold resist on silk,  
with digital collage*

As John the Baptist preaches about transformation, he receives the same question three times from those gathered by the river: “What, then, shall we do?”

His responses are straightforward and practical, but also particular. He tells the crowd to share any excess clothing and food with those who have none. He tells the tax collectors not to use their position of power to launder and steal money. He tells the soldiers not to coerce and threaten, and to be satisfied with their wages.

In other words, he tells them what not to do, which leads me to assume that those showing up to be baptized are carrying some things they need to atone for. And yet, they have shown up. They have journeyed into the wilderness to be baptized and transformed. They long for a new beginning.

At the center of this quilt square collage, a pinwheel of fire spins. It represents the Holy Spirit impelling the world to turn. Surrounding it are four petal shapes that bloom like a flower. They are each filled with branches of fruit. When we align ourselves with the movement of the Spirit, we can do the good that is ours to do. Our actions can bear good fruit.

The petals and pinwheel are encapsulated by the outline of a blue cross. Four walls of the cross contain broken fragments. In stark contrast to the lush fruit, the fragments are like shards of glass. They symbolize the sins John the Baptist sees present amongst the crowds: extortion, coercion, and the hoarding of power and resources. And yet, these fragments are linked together by blue arrows filled with the waters of baptism. There is a way to begin again.

From each cardinal direction, a triangle of Holy Spirit fire faces inward, pointing us to baptism and transformation. When we do the good that is ours to do, we bear good fruit—fruit that repairs and nourishes, fruit that grows into the four corners of the earth. —Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity