

The Sacrament of Baptism

THE BAPTISM OF BELIEVERS

AN EXTENDED SERVICE OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

THE BAPTISM OF INFANTS OR YOUNG CHILDREN

THE DEDICATION OF INFANTS OR YOUNG CHILDREN

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(Ritual for Single Parent or Guardian)

THE BLESSING OF ADOPTION AND DEDICATION

THE BAPTISM OF BELIEVERS

DEARLY BELOVED: Baptism is the sign and seal of the new covenant of grace, the significance of which is attested by the apostle Paul in his letter to the Romans as follows:

“Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection” (Rom. 6:3-5, NIV).

The earliest and simplest statement of Christian belief, into which you now come to be baptized, is the Apostles’ Creed, which reads as follows:

“I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth;

“And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

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“I believe in the Holy Ghost, the holy Church of Jesus Christ, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.”

Will you be baptized into this faith? If so, answer, “I will.”

Response: I will.

Do you acknowledge Jesus Christ as your personal Savior, and do you realize that He saves you now?

Response: I do.

Will you obey God’s holy will and keep His commandments, walking in them all the days of your life?

Response: I will.

The minister, giving the full name of the person and using the preferred form of baptism—sprinkling, pouring, or immersion—shall say:

_____, I baptize thee in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

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The following service order may be followed where a more expansive service is desired.

GATHERING

Prelude

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERVICE

As candidates for baptism come forward, an appropriate hymn of worship or testimony may be sung.

When the candidates are in place, the minister may make the following statement to the congregation:

DEAR FRIENDS: Through the sacrament of baptism, our entrance into the Body of Christ through the new birth is given visible expression. Having been incorporated into God's mighty act of salvation in Christ, we follow Him in baptism, publicly identifying with Him and testifying to our having appropriated by faith the benefits of the atonement that Christ has provided us in His suffering, death, and resurrection.

We join these persons in a celebration of the grace of God in their lives and unite our hearts in praise to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES

A representative of the congregation presents the can-

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didates to the minister and the congregation with appropriate statements:

I present _____ for baptism.

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD OR TESTIMONY OF CANDIDATES

At this point in the service, a sermon regarding the significance of baptism may be preached, or the candidates may give a personal testimony to their Christian faith and experience. Where a small class of candidates is presented or time permits, both may be included.

RENUNCIATION OF SIN AND PROFESSION OF FAITH

The vows of Christian baptism have consisted, from the earliest periods of the Church, in a personal renunciation of sin and profession of faith. The minister may here address the candidates and ask them for their avowals of faith and obedience as follows:

On behalf of Christ and the Church, I ask you:

Do you renounce Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God?

Response: I renounce them.

Do you renounce the evil powers of this world that corrupt and that destroy the creatures of God?

Response: I renounce them.

Do you renounce sinful desires that draw you from the love of God?

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Response: I renounce them.

Have you repented of your sins, turned to Christ, and accepted Him as your Savior?

Response: I have.

Have you put your whole trust in His grace alone for your redemption?

Response: I have.

Do you promise to follow and obey Him as your redeeming Lord?

Response: I do.

After the candidates have responded, the minister addresses the congregation, saying:

Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support *these persons* in *their* life in Christ? Will you pray for them, encourage them, instruct and lead them, and will you so live before them that they may follow your example in Christian living?

People: We will.

The minister then says these or similar words to the congregation and the candidates:

Let us join *those* who *are* following Christ in baptism and reaffirm our faith.

Minister: Do you believe in God the Father?

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People: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth.

Minister: Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People: I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended to the dead; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

Minister: Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

People: I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy Church universal, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

Minister: Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayer?

People: I will, with God's help.

Minister: Will you continue in resisting evil, and, should you fall into sin, will you repent and turn to the Lord?

People: I will, with God's help.

Minister: Will you proclaim by word and example the good news of God in Christ?

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People: I will, with God's help.

Minister: Will you earnestly seek to purify yourself from everything that contaminates body and spirit, perfecting holiness out of reverence for Christ?

People: I will, with God's help.

Minister: Will you serve the present age, fulfilling in your life and ministry the call of Christ to make disciples of all nations?

People: I will, with God's help.

BAPTISM OF CANDIDATES

Candidates are ushered to the water by sponsors or congregational assistants. The chosen mode of baptism is administered, the minister using the given name of the candidate as follows:

_____, I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

WELCOME OF THE NEWLY BAPTIZED BY THE CONGREGATION

Pastor: Let us welcome the newly baptized.

People: We receive you into the household of God. Confess the faith of Christ crucified, proclaim His resurrection, and share with us in His eternal priesthood.

DOXOLOGY

BENEDICTION