



The Sacrament of Baptism
At the Otisville – Mt. Hope
Presbyterian Church



Baptism...

When I meet with parents, I explain how we understand baptism. I tell them, "The congregation takes a vow that they will provide a place where your child may be nourished and brought up in the Lord so that your child may some day make its own decision about faith in Jesus Christ.

"And you (and any sponsors) take a vow to raise your child in the church, so that your child has the knowledge - from your example as their parent and from being with other Christians - of what it is to be a faithful follower of Jesus Christ.

"Baptism isn't magic. It's not something you do to make sure the kid stays out of hell. Baptism is an act of the gathered Christian community. Your child becomes a baptized member of the church - Jesus' sister or brother - part of God's family.

Baptism is much more than a sentimental act of dumping a little water on the kid's head. God acts in baptism! Parents and the church make a covenant promise to each other with God as a witness. And God makes a covenant promise to this church and to that child and to those parents.

In baptism God prepares the child and strengthens him or her for its future however long it may be. In baptism the Spirit is given. The mark of God is placed upon the child, and it is no longer the same child it was before. This is now God's child. In baptism we set a person apart. They are no longer what they were.

Jesus began his ministry with baptism. He was set apart for special responsibility and God's seal of approval was placed on him. Just so, each person is set apart because you are baptized. God's seal of approval has been placed on you.

Parents can present their children for baptism as a sign and seal of God's promise to them. In presenting a child for baptism parents affirm in public their love of God. The congregation, too, promises to surround the child with their love, so that the child may continue in the community of the church, eventually confess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, and live in God's eternal Kingdom.

Baptism is not to be practiced out of fear. Rather, the goal of baptism includes the personal confession of faith and commitment to be the Lord's follower. Baptism places special responsibilities on parents and congregations for education and witness in the life of the church.

The parents meet with the pastor before the baptism. The significance of what God is doing in baptism will be discussed, and the obligation for the raising of the child in a Christian setting will be explained.

Baptism takes place as part of a regular worship service on Sunday morning. Parent(s) will be asked to affirm their faith in Jesus Christ and to state their intention to raise their child as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

Ordinarily, arrangements for a baptism should be made at least two months in advance of the proposed date for baptism.

Attached is the actual part of the service where parents, sponsors (if there are any) and the baby come forward, along with the pastor and the clerk of Session for the baptism. Standing by the baptismal font, this service takes place during worship, after the prayers and often before the choir sings.

The Sacrament of Baptism

Hear the words of our Lord Jesus Christ: All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

Obedying the word of our Lord Jesus, and confidant of his promises, we baptize those whom God has called. In baptism God claims us, and seals us to show that we belong to God. God frees us from sin and death, uniting us with Jesus Christ in his death and resurrection.

By water and the Holy Spirit, we are made members of the church, the body of Christ, and joined to Christ's ministry of love, peace, and justice.

The Minister prays over the water of baptism
Send your Spirit to move over this water
that it may be a fountain of deliverance and rebirth.
Wash away the sin of all who are cleansed by it.
Raise them to new life,
and graft them to the body of Christ.
Pour out your Holy Spirit upon them,
that they may have power to do your will,
and continue forever in the risen life of Christ.
To you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, one God,
be all praise, honor, and glory,
now and forever.

(Sprinkle Congregation)

An elder presents each candidate for baptism:
On behalf of the session, I present N. and N. to receive the sacrament of Baptism.

The minister addresses parents presenting children for baptism:

Do you desire that N. and N. be baptized? I do.

The minister addresses the candidates for baptism:
N. and N., do you desire to be baptized? I do.

Who is your Lord and Savior? **Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior.**

Will you be Christ's faithful disciple, obeying his Word and showing his love? **I will, with God's help.**

Relying on God's grace, do you promise to live the Christian faith, and to teach that faith to your child? **I do.**

The minister addresses the sponsors, if any are present:

Do you promise, through prayer and example, to support and encourage N. to be a faithful Christian? **I do.**

The minister addresses the congregation:

Do you, as members of the church of Jesus Christ, promise to guide and nurture N. and N. by word and deed, with love and prayer, encouraging them to know and follow Christ and to be faithful members of his church?
We do.

The candidates, other than infants, who are to be baptized by pouring or sprinkling may kneel. Or if there are candidates to be immersed, they walk down into the water.

Calling each candidate by his or her Christian (given) name or names only, the minister shall pour or sprinkle water visibly and generously on the candidate's head, or immerse the candidate in the water, while saying:

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

Prayer for Baptized, Parents, Sponsors, and Congregation.



BAPTISM REQUEST FORM

Child's full name:
Father's full name:
Mother's full name:
(including pre-marriage surname)
Name of Sponsor(s):
Street Address:
City State Zip
Phone number:
(including cell)
Date of Birth:
City of Birth:
Date of Baptism:
Family email address:

Office use:

Entered in data base _____

Entered in Church Books _____