



A Worship Service of Baptism

Adaptable for Infants

Young Children

And

*Older Children Professing Faith**

By Mickie O'Donnell, MRE/DDiv

*for help with teaching children and young teens who were not baptized as infants see my pamphlet called "A Parent Guide on Baptism" available at www.mickieodonnell.com

A Worship Service of Baptism for Infants and Children

- **Red lettering** is for use in the baptism of older age children
- **Green lettering** is for use in the baptism of Infants and young children
- **Blue lettering** is used for either services

This service provides an outline for a Worship Service of the sacrament of baptism. Baptism is celebrated as part of the regular Worship Service experience. Baptism is a sacrament for the entire church family therefore every effort should be made to be sure that the entire family of faith is included in the experience. It is more important to assemble the people of God than it is to use a special location. Private baptisms should be reserved for very special situations only.

In the Baptism Service for children below Confirmation age, it is appropriate and meaningful if the Children's Pastor is involved in the Service. You will note there is a role for this member of your ministry team (should you have one). Be mindful that as the congregation agrees in covenant to help with the spiritual formation of children, that the burden lands on the shoulders of the church's Sunday School/Children's Ministry Director (or Coordinator). Please invite them in the this liturgical experience in front of the Congregation.

Baptisms are best done following the ministry of the Word which is why we suggest Scriptural texts for readings and on which the sermon could be crafted. This will help the congregation understand the meaning and purpose of baptism. We should never underestimate the importance of explaining and teaching about Baptism every time .

APPROPRIATE TEXTS FOR SERMON and READINGS

Matthew 13:44–46;

Matthew 28:16–20;

Mark 1:1–20;

Luke 18:15–17 (Matt. 19:13–15, Mk. 10:13–16);

Acts 2:37–40; Romans 6:1–11;

Ephesians 4:4–16

THE GREAT COMMISSION:

The pastor addresses the congregation

Jesus, on the day of his ascension gathered his faithful eleven disciples and commissioned them:

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, as you go forth, make disciples of all peoples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to follow all that I have instructed you in. And see, I am with you always until the end of the age.”

Matthew 28:18-20

The pastor invites forward all those who are being baptized or are presenting young children/babies to be baptized

PRESENTATION:

Presenting elder of adults and older children: N. (and N.) is/are presented to this congregation by the elders to receive the sacrament of baptism by professing the faithfulness of God, renouncing the power of sin in their lives, and to joyfully committing to the life of discipleship and the mission of the kingdom of God.

Pastor: N (and N) do you desire to be baptized?

Candidates: I DO

Presenting Elder of infants and young children: On behalf of the elders, I present N, the son/daughter/grandchild/guard of N and N to receive the sacrament of baptism in obedience to their own faith in Christ as Godly parents/grandparents/guardians.

Pastor to parents/guardians: N and N do you desire that N (N and N) be baptized?

Parents/Guardians: WE DO

Pastor to Parents/Guardians: Do you promise that with God’s help you will, to the best of your ability, raise this/these child/ren to know God, believe in the truth of the Scriptures, believe the truth of the saving grace of Jesus Christ, to listen for God’s call on his/her/their life, seek to follow that call and desire God’s Kingdom?

Parents/Guardians: WE DO

Pastor to Parents/Guardians: We glorify God for his faithfulness clearly evidenced in our presence today as we witness your faith in Christ, and we rejoice in your declaration of your desire for the baptism of N (and N) in the presence of God's people.

PROFESSION OF FAITH

Pastor/congregation/Candidates/Parents: With the whole church family let us confess what we believe.

Do you believe in God, the Father almighty?

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,**

**was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven**

**he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe in the Holy Spirit?

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.**

COVENANT PREAMBLE:

Pastor: Having confessed your belief in the Triune God of our king Jesus Christ, we come before our king to join his people sealed by his covenant. To join the people of God you must declare your allegiance to our king, reject the authority of sin and evil over your lives, and renounce a desire for lesser goods than the kingdom of God..

RENUNCIATION OF SIN

Pastor: Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. (Romans 6:3–4)

Pastor/Candidates/Parents/Guardians: Do you trust that God has been merciful to you, giving you the free gift of rescue from the powers of sin and the world by the work of Jesus Christ in his life, death, and resurrection?

This I trust.

Do you therefore renounce the authority and power of sin in your life?

I renounce the authority and power of sin in my life.

Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as the one who has saved you from this power?

I turn to Jesus.

RENUNCIATION OF LESSOR GOODS:

Pastor: Baptism is the symbol of joining our life to that of Jesus Christ, not simply repenting of our sins, but also submitting our whole life to his reign as disciples. We participate in the death of Jesus and take on an identity given by him, not an identity that comes from ourselves or from the world. In baptism we remove the garments made by the world and put on Christ. In baptism we recognize the surpassing goodness of following Jesus, leaving behind all other goods.

Pastor/Congregation/Parents/Guardians Galatians 3:27–28

As many of you as were baptized into Christ

Have clothed ourselves with Christ

There is no longer Jew or Greek

There is no longer slave or free

There is no longer male or female

For we are all one in Christ Jesus.

Pastor and Candidates: Do you lay down your self-created and world-given identities to be clothed with Christ?

I put on Christ

Pastor and Parents/Guardians: Do you commit to setting aside your self-created and world-given identities to be clothed with Christ especially in the raising of N (and N) in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?

I DO

Pastor and Candidates: Do you submit to Jesus as your rightful king?

I submit to Jesus my king.

Pastor and Parents/Guardians: Do you submit to Jesus as your rightful king and will you model for N (and N) the Lordship of Jesus in your life, work, and home?

I do and I will

JOINING THE COVENANT

Pastor to Candidates: Will you be a faithful partner of this covenanted body of Christ, seeking to be equipped to join in the work of reconciling all things to God our Father? Will you commit to this body your energy, time, gifts, resources, to work together to reveal the goodness of God's kingdom to a world enslaved by sin?

Candidates: We will

Pastor to Congregation: Will you, the assembled body of Christ, commit again to serve Christ your King above all, to disciple one another, and to grow these new followers of Jesus to the full stature of his maturity, so that together we may bear his image to the world?

Congregation: We will

Pastor to Congregation: And do we together commit to the communion of the saints, the breaking of bread together, the teaching of the apostles, and a common life?

Congregation: We do

JOINING THE COVENANT

Pastor to Parents/Guardians: Will you be a faithful partner of this covenanted body of Christ, seeking to be equipped to join in the work of reconciling all things to God our Father? Will you commit to this body your energy, time, gifts, resources, to work together to reveal the goodness of God's kingdom to a world enslaved by sin?

Parents/Guardians: We will

Pastor/Children's Pastor to Congregation: Will you, the assembled body of Christ, commit again to serve Christ your King above all, to disciple one another, and to help this family to join in the spiritual nurture of N (and N) these new members of the Covenant Community so that he/she/they may be raised to the full stature maturity in Christ, so that together we may bear Christ's image to the world?

Congregation: We will

Pastor/Children's Pastor to Congregation: And do we together commit to the communion of the saints, the breaking of bread together, the teaching of the apostles, and a common life with this family? And will you freely give of your talents and gifts to help N (and N) as a new member of the Covenant Community grow in faith?

Congregation: We do and we will

THANKSGIVING PRAYER:

Pastor and Congregation: The Lord be with you

And also with you

Lift up your hearts

We lift them to the Lord

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God

It is right to give the Lord our praise and thanks

We thank you God that in the waters of baptism you save us from the power of sin and death. Through water you created this earth and give life. Through the living water of Christ you give us eternal life. With water you flooded the land to wash evil from your creation. With water you wash us from our sin and uncleanness. Noah's ship preserved your creatures from your waters of judgment, and through your church we are preserved for your kingdom. Through the waters of the Red Sea you rescued your people, Israel, from slavery. Through water you rescue us from our slavery to sin. Through the waters of Jordan your people entered your Promised Land, and through the waters of baptism we gain entrance to a land you are preparing for us in the great Sabbath rest. In water you confirmed the call of Jonah to his enemies, and through water you have made your enemies your family and commissioned us to make disciples of all peoples. You turned water into wine, and turned the water of cleansing into the forgiveness of sins. By your death and the blood and water that poured forth from your wounds, you have opened the way for us to be presented clean and righteous before the Father. And we thank you that the river of life will flow from your throne when you reign again on earth and will heal this creation. Give us a thirst for the living water which is Christ Jesus, so that we will drink deeply from the never ending well of life, now and always.

BAPTISM

For adults and older children: Candidates are led to the water. If pouring or sprinkling, they should approach the baptismal one at a time and kneel if able. If immersed, the pastor invites them one at a time down into the water by their Christian name only.

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

---- ----

For infants and younger children: Parents will hand the baby/toddler to the Pastor or accompany the young child to stand next to the Pastor. Each baby or child should approach the baptismal font one at a time. (Anointing or sprinkling is the preferred method for this younger age)

Pastor to Parents/Guardians: What is the Christian name of your child?

Parent/Guardians: N

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

Pastor: N. child of God's covenant, you have been marked as heir of the kingdom with Christ and been sealed with the promise of the Holy Spirit.

The Pastor then hands the child to the Children's Pastor (or equivalent): As a symbol of the importance of the congregation's verbal and spiritual commitment to join this family in bringing N to an understanding of his/her position as a child of the Covenant, and to help her/him come to know Jesus personally through the educational ministry of the church, I hand N to N.

Children's Pastor to the Congregation: Thank you for your willingness to join together as a family of faith to help with the work of the church in helping N grow in faith.

Children's Pastor then hands N back to the parents and stands with them.

Children's Pastor to the Parents/Guardians: N is now a child of the Covenant Community, and we are blessed to walk with you in partnership to teach, train, and encourage the spiritual growth of N so that he/she may come to appropriate the faith for her/himself on her/his own. **The Children's Pastor at this point is encouraged to give the child a special "Life Verse" that can then be used at other significant moments in the child's spiritual journey (Gift Bible Sunday, Graduation to Middle School, Confirmation, etc.)**

LAYING ON OF HANDS:

Pastor: King Jesus, defend your servant N. as he/she learns to love by walking in your wise instruction. Continue to empower him/her by your Holy Spirit to bear your image and your light to a darkened world.

Pastor: Our King is called "Christ" because he is the Messiah, the anointed one of his people. This anointing symbolizes the conveyance of divine authority by a divine seal.

Pastor: N. child of God's covenant, you have been marked as heir of the kingdom with Christ and been sealed with the promise of the Holy Spirit.

Candidate: Amen

WELCOME:

Pastor: N. (and N.) have become part of the great communion of saints through baptism. Let us welcome them!

Pastor: N (and N) are now (a) child/children of the Covenant through baptism. Let us welcome them.

Congregation: Applause

Pastor: Let us Pray. “Almighty God, we thank you that you have been steadfastly faithful to us, though we all like sheep have gone astray and have turned to our own ways. Thank you for adding to the number of your kingdom daily, and for making us your heirs and fellow laborers in your great mission of reconciliation.”

Pastor: Let us pray, “Almighty God, we thank you that you have been steadfastly faithful to us. Thank you for this family and for this child/these children for whom you have died and have called to be Yours. Give us wisdom as we journey with them in spiritual growth and nurture. Help us to remember that you speak to and through children, as you did Samuel, Josiah, and the children you gathered to yourself. Help us to listen to them and respect them as you do. Remind us that we must be like a child to inherit the kingdom”

Pastor: Now, let us extend a sign of the peace we have with each other through Jesus Christ. The peace of the King be with you.

Congregation: And also with you!

It is now appropriate for the congregation to share a sign of God’s peace. Ideally, the Lord’s Supper is celebrated after a song appropriate to the occasion with the newly baptized receiving the Lord’s Supper first.