



And Jesus came and said to them, "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." Matthew 28:18-20



***The Sacrament of Holy Baptism
for infants and children***

***First Presbyterian Church
Jefferson City, MO***

BAPTISM

Presbyterians celebrate two sacraments—baptism and Holy Communion. Sacraments are outward signs of inner truths. These two are celebrated because Jesus told us to do them. "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19) "Then he took a loaf of bread, and when he had given thanks, he broke it and gave it to them, saying, 'This is my body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'" (Luke 22:19)

People may be baptized at any point in their lives. Presbyterians recognize the baptism from any other Christian denomination. Persons may be baptized by dunking or immersion, by pouring of water or by sprinkling (the most common form).

The vows spoken at the time of baptism are sacred promises made by parents and the congregation. Obviously, infants and children are not mature enough to make these vows, but the parents are affirming their own faith and promising to raise their child in the faith.

PROCEDURE

Parents should contact a Pastor to talk about baptizing their child

Pastor and parents will visit

Parents (and child, if possible) will come to a Session meeting and request the baptism of their child, giving the date and service that has been discussed with the Pastor

ON THE DAY . . .

Family will be seated on the first pews on the pulpit side. Parents are encouraged to invite extended family and special friends to be part of this celebration! Generally, the parents or the parents and grandparents come up to the baptismal at the time indicated in the service. You stand facing the Pastor as your vows are repeated and then the Pastor introduces your child by walking down the aisle with the child, while the congregation sings.

At the end of the service, you are asked to be in Knox Hall so that the congregation may greet and congratulate you!

BAPTISM: A SUMMARY

WHO: any infant or child who has at least one parent who is a member of the church.

WHAT: the sacrament of baptism is the acknowledging by parents or individuals that they love and trust God and know their need for God and a community of faith in order to raise their child in a responsible and grace-filled manner.

WHERE: the child, parents, and any siblings are invited to stand in front of the baptismal font to repeat their vows.

WHEN: baptisms are done as a part of a regular worship service. Extended family are welcome to be part of this celebration.

WHY: baptism is a two-way commitment with God—the family promises to raise their child knowing God, the Bible, faith stories, and participating regularly in a community of faith—the church promises to help love and nurture the child in the faith and share and support the entire family on their faith journey.

PROMISES MADE BY THE PARENTS

In this sacrament parents are asked to live a Christian life and to teach their child the faith. In making their own profession of faith parents are stating that Christ is their Lord and Savior; that even though evil exists in our world, they will turn from evil ways; and that they will raise their child to be a faithful disciple of Jesus. These faith promises require active participation in a faith community, regular attendance in worship, study of the faith, and commitment to mission in the community and world. Baptism is not an activity to be checked off the list once it is done, it is not a guarantee of an easy life, but it is the promise of God that you will never be alone.

PROMISES MADE BY THE CHURCH

The church promises to continue trying to follow Christ to the best of our abilities and to nurture and love this family and this child. We will teach the importance of mission and offer opportunities to be in mission. Sunday School will be available from age 2, children's activities in a variety of forms—singing, Bible school, and camps will be offered, and friends in faith will be willing to offer support and prayer at any time as we grow together in our spirituality.

WHY IS BAPTISM SO IMPORTANT?

"People were bringing even infants to Jesus that he might touch them, and when the disciples saw it, they sternly ordered them not to do it. But Jesus called for them and said, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.'" Luke 18:15-17

Jesus loved children. Jesus knew of their trust and simple, but sure faith. Jesus also knew that each child is loved by God just for being who he or she is and that God has a wonderful plan for each child.

The times we live in are difficult—it is hard to raise a child who is kind, thoughtful and giving when the culture we live in says that you are entitled to anything you want and you are all that matters. All people have difficulties to face in this life. The difficulties won't go away if you are part of a family of faith, but the support and love you find in this family can help you through those dark times. Children who

grow up knowing that they are loved by God and Jesus, learning how God wants them to behave, and knowing that Jesus is always with them, have a foundation of faith that will be able to sustain them forever. They learn to be kind and generous and forgiving. They also have the best role model to follow!

Our world is growing more complex and it is not enough to care about just our immediate neighbors, but our children will need to see the entire planet as neighbors. Some of these neighbors hold different values and beliefs, many speak different languages, but all are part of God's perfect creation—a creation that must be protected and appreciated.

The children of our congregation are invited to be close to the baptismal as a child is being baptized to help them "remember" their own baptism and to empower them to tell this new child about God and Jesus and share the stories of faith.

The step of baptism means that you want these things for you and for your child!

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM (Name of Candidate and date)

Words of Introduction

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.”
--Matthew 28:18-19

Pastor: Obeying the word of our Lord Jesus, and confident 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. Let us remember with joy our own baptism, as we celebrate this sacrament.

Presentation of the Candidate

Elder: On behalf of the session, I present **(Name)**, son/daughter of **(Parents' Names)**, to receive the sacrament of Baptism.

Charge to the Parents

Pastor: Do you desire that **(Name of Child)** be baptized?

Parent(s): **(We/I)** do.

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

Parent(s): **(We/I)** do.

Charge to the Congregation

Elder: Do you, as members of the church of Jesus Christ, promise to guide and nurture **(Name of Child)** by word and deed, with love and prayer, encouraging **(him/her)** to know and follow Christ and to be a faithful member of his church?

People: **With God's help we will seek to follow Christ ourselves that this family shall be strengthened and confirmed in their resolve and that they, surrounded by steadfast love, may be nurtured in the faith and strengthened in the way that leads to life.**

Profession of Faith

Pastor: Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as Lord and Savior, trusting in his grace and love?

Parents: **We do.**

Pastor: Trusting in the gracious mercy of God, do you turn from the ways of sin and renounce evil and its power in the world?

Parents: **We do.**

Pastor: By the power of the Holy Spirit will you raise your child to be Christ's faithful disciple, obeying his word and showing his love?

Parents: **We will.**

The Pouring of The Waters Of Baptism Thanksgiving over the Water

Pastor: Let us pray: We give you thanks, Eternal God, for you nourish and sustain all living things by the gift of water. In the beginning of time, your Spirit moved over the watery chaos, calling forth order and life. We thank you, O God, for the water of baptism. In it we are buried with Christ in his death. From it we are raised to share in his resurrection. Through it we are reborn by the power of the Holy Spirit. Send your Spirit to move over this water that it may be a fountain of deliverance and rebirth. Amen.

The Baptism and the Blessing

Pastor: **(Name)**, I baptize you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Baptismal Hymn

Children of the heavenly Father, Safely in His bosom gather;
Nestling bird nor star in heaven, Such a refuge e'er was given.
Though he giveth or He taketh, God his children ne'er forsaketh,
His the loving purpose solely to preserve them pure and holy.
Amen.

Presentation of the Child

Welcome

Elder: **(Name)** has been received into the one holy catholic and apostolic church through baptism. God has made **(him/her)** a member of the household of God, to share with us the priesthood of Christ. Let us welcome the newly baptized.

People: **With joy and thanksgiving we welcome you into Christ's church to share with us in his ministry, for we are all one in Christ.**

The congregation is invited to share words of congratulations and blessing following the worship service.