



**THE SERVICES OF THE
BAPTISMAL COVENANT
IN THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT II

*AS REVISED TO ALIGN WITH
THE 2008 BOOK OF DISCIPLINE AND BOOK OF RESOLUTIONS*



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THE BAPTISMAL COVENANT II
HOLY BAPTISM
FOR CHILDREN AND OTHERS UNABLE TO
ANSWER FOR THEMSELVES

This service is designed for use when the only persons being baptized are (1) infants or children who cannot take their own vows or (2) youth or adults who have not reached the developmental stage of making such commitments themselves. It is not designed for the baptism of persons who take their own vows, or for confirmation or reaffirmation of faith.

INTRODUCTION TO THE SERVICE

As persons come forward, an appropriate baptismal hymn may be sung. A deacon or pastor addresses the congregation:

Brothers and sisters in Christ:

Through the Sacrament of Baptism

we are initiated into Christ's holy Church.

We are incorporated into God's mighty acts of salvation

and given new birth through water and the Spirit.

All this is God's gift, offered to us without price.

PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES

A representative of the congregation presents the candidates:

I present Name(s) for baptism.

If desired, Thanksgiving over the Water (section 10) may precede the Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith.

RENUNCIATION OF SIN AND PROFESSION OF FAITH

Since the earliest times, the vows of Christian baptism have consisted first of the renunciation of all that is evil and then the profession of faith and loyalty to Christ.

Parents and other sponsors reaffirm these vows for themselves and take on the responsibilities of sponsorship.

The pastor addresses parents and other sponsors:

On behalf of the whole Church, I ask you:

Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness,
reject the evil powers of this world,
and repent of your sin?

I do.

Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you
to resist evil, injustice, and oppression
in whatever forms they present themselves?

I do.

Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior,
put your whole trust in his grace,
and promise to serve him as your Lord,
in union with the Church which Christ has opened
to people of all ages, nations, and races?

I do.

The service continues with prayers including thanksgivings and intercessions for those who have participated in these acts.

Services of the baptismal covenant most appropriately lead into the celebration of Holy Communion, in which the union of the new members with the body of Christ is most fully expressed. The new members, including children, may bring the bread and wine to the Lord's table, receive first, and assist in serving.

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hands and/or other signs, the pastor invites the congregation to welcome them:

Now it is our joy to welcome
our new sisters and brothers in Christ.

**Through baptism
you are incorporated by the Holy Spirit
into God's new creation
and made to share in Christ's royal priesthood.
We are all one in Christ Jesus.
With joy and thanksgiving we welcome you
as members of the family of Christ.**

COMMENDATION AND WELCOME

Those who have been baptized into Christ's holy Church are now welcomed into this congregation of The United Methodist Church.

The pastor addresses the congregation:

Members of the household of God,
I commend these persons to your love and care.
Do all in your power to increase their faith,
confirm their hope, and perfect them in love.

The congregation responds:

**We give thanks for all that God has already given you
and we welcome you in Christian love.**

**As members together with you
in the body of Christ
and in this congregation
of The United Methodist Church,
we renew our covenant
faithfully to participate
in the ministries of the Church
by our prayers, our presence,
our gifts, our service and our witness,
that in everything God may be glorified
through Jesus Christ.**

The pastor addresses those baptized and their parents and sponsors using an appropriate gesture of blessing:

The God of all grace,
who has called us to eternal glory in Christ,
establish you and strengthen you
by the power of the Holy Spirit,
that you may live in grace and peace.

One or more laypersons, including children, may join the pastor in acts of welcome and peace. Baptized children may be welcomed by a kiss of peace or other acts or words immediately following Baptism with Laying on of Hands.

An appropriate hymn, stanza, or response may be sung.

Will you nurture these children (persons)
in Christ's holy Church,
that by your teaching and example they may be guided
to accept God's grace for themselves,
to profess their faith openly,
and to lead a Christian life?

I will.

A deacon or the pastor addresses the congregation, and the congregation responds:

Do you, as Christ's body, the Church,
reaffirm both your rejection of sin
and your commitment to Christ?

We do.

Will you nurture one another in the Christian faith and life
and include these persons now before you in your care?

**With God's help we will proclaim the good news
and live according to the example of Christ.**

**We will surround these persons
with a community of love and forgiveness,
that they may grow in their service to others.**

**We will pray for them,
that they may be true disciples
who walk in the way that leads to life.**

The Apostles' Creed in threefold question-and-answer form appeared at least as early as the third century as a statement of faith used in baptisms and has been widely used in baptisms ever since. The candidate(s), sponsor(s), and local congregation join with the universal Church across the ages in this historic affirmation of the Christian faith.

The pastor addresses all, and the congregation joins the parents and sponsors in responding:

Let us join together in professing the Christian faith
as contained in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments.

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

Do you believe in Jesus Christ?

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

**is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and will come again 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.]**

THANKSGIVING OVER THE WATER

A deacon or lay leader may pour water for baptism and reaffirmation into the font at this time in such a way that the congregation can see and hear the water.

This prayer is led by the pastor and joined by the people. It recalls scriptural images and meanings of Holy Baptism and is comparable to the Great Thanksgiving at Holy Communion. All may stand.

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

The pastor may raise hands in the ancient Christian posture of prayer, and invite the congregation to do likewise.

Eternal Father:

When nothing existed but chaos,
you swept across the dark waters
and brought forth light.

In the days of Noah

you saved those on the ark through water.

After the flood you set in the clouds a rainbow.

When you saw your people as slaves in Egypt,
you led them to freedom through the sea.

Their children you brought through the Jordan
to the land which you promised.

****Sing to the Lord, all the earth.
Tell of God's mercy each day.**

In the fullness of time you sent Jesus,
nurtured in the water of a womb.

He was baptized by John and anointed by your Spirit.

He called his disciples

to share in the baptism of his death and resurrection
and to make disciples of all nations.

****Declare Christ's works to the nations,
his glory among all the people.**

The pastor may place hands in or over the water, stir the water, or lift the water.

Pour out your Holy Spirit,
to bless this gift of water and those who receive it,
to wash away their sin
and clothe them in righteousness
throughout their lives,
that, dying and being raised with Christ,
they may share in his final victory.

****All praise to you, Eternal Father,
through your Son Jesus Christ,
who with you and the Holy Spirit
lives and reigns for ever.
Amen.**

BAPTISM WITH LAYING ON OF HANDS

In all services of the baptismal covenant, water should be used generously as a living sign of the abundance of God's grace, cleansing, and life-giving power.

Each candidate is baptized and receives the laying on of hands individually. The pastor uses the first (Christian) name(s), but not the family name:

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

Immediately after the administration of the water, the pastor places hands on the candidate's head and invokes the work of the Holy Spirit. Persons nearby, including baptized members of the candidate's family, may join the pastor in this action. Others present may join by extending their hands toward the candidate. All say the Amen.

Pastor, laying hand on the newly baptized:

The Holy Spirit work within you,
that being born through water and the Spirit,
you may be a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

If desired, one or more of the following acts may be added: anointing, presentation of new clothing, presentation of a baptismal candle, or presentation of a certificate of baptism. (See Baptismal Covenant I for more detail about each of these acts).

When all candidates have been baptized and have received the laying on of