

A SACRAMENT FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS

Baptism is one of two sacraments of the Presbyterian Church. The other sacrament is the Lord's Supper. In the PCUSA we baptize infants and children upon their parent's reaffirmation of faith in Jesus Christ. We baptize adults upon their own profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

OUR VISION

As Everybody's Church we commit ourselves to serving Christ through cultivating Mission, Inclusion and Community



Baptismal Questions

To the parents of the one being baptized:

Trusting in the gracious mercy of God, do you renounce evil and its power in the world, which defy God's righteousness and love?

Do you turn to Jesus Christ and reaffirm him as your Lord and savior, trusting his grace and love?

Will you be a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ, living in his word and showing his love?

Putting all your trust in the grace and love of Jesus Christ, do you desire your child to be baptized?

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

Will you, by your prayers and witness help them to grow into the full stature of Christ?

To the Congregation

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

First Presbyterian Church of
Birmingham, MI

EVERYBODY'S CHURCH

THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM FOR CHILDREN



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WHAT DOES BAPTISM SIGNIFY?



The faithfulness of God: this underlies all the other concepts concerning baptism. Baptism is reminder that God calls and claims us, rather than our calling and claiming God. It is God who acts first, last and always. The waters of baptism are the sign that God is faithful to God's claims on the lives of our children.

The washing away of sin: remembering that there is nothing magical about baptism (it is not spiritual medicine that cures us from sinfulness) it is a reminder that God forgives our sins out of God's own grace, rather than us becoming good enough to be forgiven. The waters of baptism are a sign of God's freely given gracious forgiveness.

Rebirth: baptism reminds us that in Christ we have become new people by the work of the Holy Spirit. Even as infants we believe that Spirit is already making the children of believers,

children of God in a new and unique way. The waters of baptism are a sign that we have been made spiritually new.

Putting on the fresh garment of Christ: one of the great Biblical images is that believers have been given new "Jesus" clothing. This new clothing means we have become Jesus people who are to live lives of love and compassion. The waters of baptism are a sign that we are now to live in a new way.

Being sealed by God's

Spirit: a seal is a mark that the thing sealed belongs to the one whose seal is affixed (like a letter that is sealed with a wax seal). The waters of baptism are a sign that we have been sealed by the Spirit and thus belong to God.

Adoption into the covenant family of the church: baptism is administered by the church in the presence of the church family (we Presbyterians do no private baptisms) because baptism is the community claiming us, and not us seeking private membership. The waters of baptism are the sign of our

incorporation into Christ's mystical body.

Resurrection and Illumination in Christ: baptism symbolizes our "death" to the old life and our being "raised" to a new life through Christ. In addition because we are raised to a new life we become capable of understanding who Jesus is and what Jesus wants us to do (this is the illumination). The waters of baptism are the sign that we are new resurrection people.



All headings in this section come from the PCUSA Book of Order (W-2.3004)

Please feel free to contact any of our pastors with your questions regarding baptism.