

HOLY BAPTISM

Pastor: Following the tradition of Jesus, who welcomed children into his community, we celebrate the presence of children within this community of faith and offer them the sacrament of baptism. As we invite *parent* and *parent* to celebrate with us the joy which their *daughter/son* has brought into their life together, we cannot help but wonder at the beauty of new life. So, let us rejoice in the Love that we call God, the Source of all being who brought the cosmos into existence. At the very heart of life there is Mystery and in this community we know that the Mystery we call God is beyond our ability to name or to understand. But we know that God is Love and we see that Love expressed in the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. Together we try to embody that Love by following Jesus' example of seeking justice for the oppressed, persecuted, and forgotten people of this world so that all people can live in peace. We trust that the Spirit of God lives and breathes in, with, through, and beyond us, empowering us to be Love in the world. Laurel and Jeff, we see water as a symbol of the life-giving power of Love in the world. In Baptism we remember the waters of our birth and the water that sustains creation. In Baptism we honour possibility and celebrate the sacredness of life. Let this water be for us a sign of our desire to join together in our love for God and for one another.

Parents and sponsors: **We present *child's full name*,
to receive the Sacrament of Holy Baptism.**

Pastor: In Christian love you have presented *child's Christian names* for Holy Baptism. Our hope is that children may grow up to discover for themselves something of the wisdom and wonders of God as they are expressed in the life and teachings of Jesus and in the lives of those who seek to embody the Love we call God. As *she/he* grows in years, we ask that you place in *child's first name* hands the Holy Scriptures and provide for *her/his* instruction in the Christian faith, so that, living in the covenant of *her/his* Baptism and in communion with the Church she may, with confidence follow the path of Christ.

Parents and sponsors: We will.

◆ Prayers of the Body

*God is not some far off person in the sky. Our God is the Ground of our Being,
the ONE in whom we live and breath and have our being.
God lives in, with, through, and beyond us.
So, our prayers rise up among us so that we might become Christs to one another
and move our prayers from words and worries into actions and change.
You will be invited to briefly name your concerns and thereby open us to the possibilities of
reaching out to one another in love so that God's Reign of justice and peace might begin here and
now in, with, through, and beyond us us.
**We will begin by offering prayers of gratitude,
then our concerns for the word,
and then our concerns for the people in our lives.
We do not pray to change the mind of a far off being
but rather to open ourselves to the power of God who lives in us,
so that we might be LOVE in the world.***

Pastor: God is with you.
Congregation: **And also with you.**

As water is slowly poured into the font, the pastor prays:

Pastor: In the presence of the Source of All Life, let us give thanks, for the gift of creation made known to us in water and word. In the stories told by our ancestors in the faith we hear of God's Spirit moving over the waters. Out of the waters of the deep, our ancestors imagined our Creator bringing forth the earth to sustain all life. Our forbearers saw God come to us through water in the stories of Jesus who was nurtured in the water of Mary's womb, baptized by John in the water of the Jordan, and became living water to a woman at the well in Samaria. Jesus washed the feet of the disciples and sent them forth to baptize with water and the Spirit. By the gift of water creation continues to nourish and sustain us, and all living things.

Jesus made water a sign of God's kin-dom and the promise of everlasting peace. In response to the Love embodied in Jesus, we follow the example of Christ's first disciples who used water to baptize in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Together we shall use water as a means of grace to recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit, so that *child's first name* in *her/his* baptism may forever know God's abiding presence.

Congregation: Standing in the midst of God, we offer thanks and praise for the love revealed here on this day as this community and these parents, unite in our desire to impart the wisdom that has been handed down through generations of faithful witnesses. In response to the love that we have found in this community, we promise to walk together in the ways of Christ as we embody the love of God and seek to provide a sanctuary in which children of all ages may grow and play.

Pastor: *parent* and *parent* is this the faith into which you wish to baptize your child?

Parents: **Yes it is.**

Pastor: *parents*, and *sponsors*, on behalf of the Body of Christ assembled here, I ask you now to respond to God's grace by professing the faith we share, the faith in which we baptize. Do you renounce the forces of evil and the empty promises of violence, greed, and war?

Parents & Sponsor: **We do!**

Pastor: Do you believe in God the Creator?

All: **We believe in the One our ancestors called Father and who we know as the Ground and Source of our being who dwells in, with, through, and beyond us.**

Pastor: Do you believe in Jesus the Christ, the Human One who walked among us?

All: **We believe in Jesus the Christ, who loved so greatly and taught so clearly and courageously that he was able to set people free from images, ideas, and religious practices that bound them into fear and a false sense of separation from the Spirit of all Life. Through Jesus we have learned that to love is to share in the Spirit. In Jesus, we see God challenging all of us to make the Love we call God visible and tangible here in the world.**

Pastor: Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

All: We believe in the Holy Spirit who sparks this life and all that exists. We recognize that human life gives the Holy Spirit a particular way of being in the world and that in us the Spirit can sing and dance, speak and write, love and create.

Conscious that we live, move, and have our being in God, we give thanks for the people throughout history who have affirmed this loving presence in all people and who have challenged people to bear witness to this by lives characterized by mercy, gratitude, compassion, generosity, and forgiveness.

We give thanks for the wonderful gift of reflective awareness that allows us to recognize and name the presence of our God, who is beyond our abilities to imagine.

Pastor:

child's Christian names I baptize you in the name of
the One our ancestors called Father, who is the Source of our being;
and of the Son, Jesus the Human One, who walked among us;
and of the Holy Spirit who dwells in, with, through, and beyond us.

Pastor: Joined together by the Love that we call God, let us rejoice that the Holy Spirit who breathes life into all creatures, breathes in, with, through, and beyond this precious child. Let that Spirit empower *child's Christian names* with a growing sense of wisdom and understanding, so *she/he* can become all that *she/he* was created to be. Let *her/him* live fully, love joyously, and work with us to usher in God's justice and peace so all may know the Love that is God. **Amen.**

As the pastor anoints the child with oil:

Pastor: *child's Christian names*, child of God, you have been sealed by the Holy Spirit and marked with the sign of the cross; a sign of the love of Christ forever.

Congregational Representative: Let your light so shine before others that they may see your good works and glorify God who lives in you.

Pastor: The Source of all life lives and breathes in *parent* and *parent*. Let them always rejoice in the Love they share. Let them be teachers and examples of kindness, generosity, and wisdom so that *child's first name* may grow in Love. Let them find strength in their own Baptism so they may share with us in the task of seeking justice in the world so that children everywhere can live in peace.

Congregation: Amen.

Congregational Representative: Through baptism you have been received into the household of God, entrusted with the good news of Jesus Christ, and strengthened to serve by God's holy and life-giving Spirit.

**All: We welcome you into the body of Christ and the mission we share.
Join us as we give praise to God and bear God's creative and redeeming Love to the entire world.**

Pastor: Sisters and brothers, I present to you your new *sister/brother* in Christ!

◆ Peace

P: The peace of God, which surpasses all our understanding, is with you all.

C: **And also with you.**

We greet each other with a sign of God's peace. Early Christians used a kiss to symbolize the peace. Hugs and handshakes are also appropriate.

*As we greet one another with a sign of the peace we say: **"Peace be with you."***

*Text prepared by Pastor Dawn Hutchings.
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