



West Grove United Methodist Church

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Baptism Information

West Grove United Methodist Church
The Reverend Timothy Carl Anderman,
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Baptism Is

Receiving God's Covenant, Consecration of Our Lives

Acts 7:8, Genesis 17:10-14

Consecration of Life as Envisioning & Engaging God's Fulfillment

Luke 2:22-40 Jesus is presented by parents Mary and Joseph at the Temple at eight days of age. Baptism is the beginning of a life lived fully with and for God in God's Covenant Promise to us. We grow and mature in faith throughout life.

Sacrament, Manifestation of God, Channel of Grace

In a sacrament, God uses common elements -- in this case, water -- as means or vehicles of divine grace. Matthew 3:1-17; Mark 1:1-11; Luke 3:1-22; John 1:19-34; Colossian 2:12. Water is life; we are born in the water of the womb; the entry into the Promised Land came through the waters.

Incorporation in the Body of Christ

"For we were all baptized by one Spirit into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, slave or free—and we were all given the one Spirit to drink." 1 Corinthians 12:13
Acts 16:33, 15

Forgiveness of Sin, Opening to the Holy Spirit

"Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Acts 2:38. We live to leave the sinful self behind, claimed by God's grace and love there is new creation and creativity in the Holy Spirit.

New Life, New Creation

"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!" Galatians 2:20 & II Corinthians 5:17

Sign of the Kingdom

Through baptism, Christians are brought into union with Christ, with each other, and with the church in every time and place. John 3:5 We are part of the family of faith, Galatians 6:10

Baptismal Information

Church Office: 610-869-9334

Email: pastor@westgroveumc.org

Please submit a picture of the one being baptized
and the Baptism information sheet to the office.

Q: What does United Methodism fundamentally believe about baptism?

A: Baptism is God offering humanity a personal relationship through the Covenant and taking action through the grace of Jesus Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit. Baptism is a sacrament. In a sacrament, God uses common elements, in this case, water, as a way to share divine grace. Baptism is administered by an ordained elder with the church as the Body of Christ.

Q: What is the difference between infant baptism and believer's baptism?

A: In all forms of Christian baptism God claims those being baptized with divine grace, in the Holy Spirit whatever their age or ability to profess their faith. Infant baptism is of a child, believer is of a person of a consenting age. Clearly an infant can do nothing to save themselves, but is totally dependent on God's grace and love, as we all are, whatever our age. We offer baptism to people of all ages who have not previously received Christian baptism in any form. We do not re-baptize those who have already received Christian baptism in any form. When the people being baptized are believing adults and are ready to profess their faith, our first emphasis is upon the gracious action of God who offers the covenant of baptism with us before the individual's decision to receive it.

Q: May we have our baby dedicated instead of baptized?

A: We do not dedicate children because dedication is a human centered decision and act, something we pledge or give to God. Baptism is an act of consecration, recognizing the person fully belongs to God as we are focused on God's decision to love us as a divine act, a holy Covenant that God initiates and entrusts to us as an unearned, generous gift to us. Baptism of infants includes the reaffirmation of their baptismal covenant by parents, sponsors, and the congregation; but chiefly it celebrates what God is doing and will do in the life of the infant. It moves the person being baptized into being claimed by an identity in God first, not by who the world says we are. We need the fullness and identity of a personal relationship with God at the center of our lives as soon as possible.

Q: Is sprinkling the only way that United Methodists baptize?

A: Our church has always offered to people being baptized and to the parents of infants the choice of sprinkling, pouring, or immersion. Each one has a unique emphasis in meaning.

Q: May I be baptized again if I feel the need?

A: No, baptism is an act of God, God always remains faithful. Our side of the covenant relationship with God will need recommitment at various times in our journey of faith. It is vital to pay attention to the feelings in wanting to be rebaptized, understanding God may be inviting us into a deeper relationship in our faith. Throughout life we are called and invited by God to deepen our personal relationship with God and mature in our faith in God's love.

Q: May a person who has not been baptized participate in Holy Communion?

A: Yes, our church shares an open Communion Table, we testify that it is God's table, not our table. You need not be a member of our church, or any church, just receive the love of Christ, earnestly repent of your sins and seek to live in peace with one another. God welcomes all to the table of Jesus Christ who seek to grow into his likeness. An historic and traditional Christian order of the sacraments has been baptism first, as birth into the family, and Communion following, as continuing nurture at the family table. Communion is a means of grace and therefore often a way for God to call us to a deeper relationship and grow our faith. We reach out and encourage those who partake at the Table to share fully in the life of God's people, including coming to the baptismal font after appropriate preparation.

Q: Do I have to be baptized in order to be saved?

A: No, but baptism is a precious gift of God's grace to be received as part of the journey of salvation. To refuse to accept baptism is to reject one of the means of grace to the personal relationship that God offers us.

Q: Does baptism make me a member of the church?

A: Yes, baptism is the act of initiation and incorporation into the universal church of Jesus Christ, The United Methodist Church, and the local congregation, as our ritual makes very clear. For our faith to grow and mature, we need one another in fellowship together. In order for a child to be baptized, at least one parent needs to be a professing, active member of the church's fellowship. Baptism is an affirmation and a beginning of a life in the love of God when we are committed to growing and maturing in God's love for a lifetime.



Baptismal Liturgy
for
FULL NAME
DATE OF BAPTISM
Parents: FULL NAMES
Sponsors/ Godparents: FULL NAMES



The Baptismal Covenant, A Brief Order

Introduction

Dearly beloved, baptism is a sacrament, an outward and visible sign of the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which grace we become partakers of his righteousness and heirs of eternal life. Those receiving the Sacrament are thereby marked as Christian disciples, and brought into the fellowship of Christ's holy Church, into God's mighty acts of salvation and given new birth through water and the Spirit. All of this is God's generous gift, offered to us without price. Our Lord has expressly given to little children a place among the people of God, which is a holy privilege that must not be denied to them. Remember the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, how he said, "Let the children come to me, do not hinder them; for to such as these belongs the kingdom of God

We come to the water --water poured over and immersing us, water flowing freely with life for all who will receive it, water from the streams of God's saving power and justice, water that brings hope to all who thirst for righteousness, water that refreshes life, nurtures growth and strength, as it offers new birth and creativity. Today we come to the waters, bringing **full name of one being baptized** and in each other's presence to reaffirm our faith, renew our commitments the Spirit who has birthed us, to Christ who has reared us, and the Creator who is making all things new.

Renunciation of Sin and Profession of Faith

Pastor to parents, sponsors, and candidates who can speak for themselves:

On behalf of the whole church I ask you, do you reject all that is evil, renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, repent of your sin, and accept the freedom God gives us to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves? (If so, answer, "I do!")

"I do!"

Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior, put your whole trust in God's generosity in 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? (If so, answer, "I do!")

"I do!"

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, grow and mature to profess their faith openly, and to lead a Christian life? (If so, answer, "I do!")

"I do!"

The pastor addresses the congregation, and the congregation responds:

Do you as Christ's body, the Church, reaffirm both your commitment to Christ and your rejection of sin and evil? (If so, answer, "We do!")

"We do!"

The parents and sponsors respond:

With God's help by teaching and example we will guide him/her to accept God's grace for himself/herself to profess his/her faith openly, and to lead a Christian life.

The pastor addressing all the people:

Will you be living witnesses to the gospel, individually and together, wherever you are, and in all that you do?

We will remain faithful members of Christ's holy church and serve as Christ's representatives in the world.

Will you nurture one another in living the faith of the church and include **First name** in your care?

With God's help we will proclaim and live 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 trust of God, and be found faithful in their service to others. We will embody faith, hope, and love so that first name will grow up to trust God and live Love's service in the world.

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

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 (universal) church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.]

Thanksgiving over the Water

The Spirit of the Lord be with you.

And also with you!

Let us pray.

Almighty God, 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.

In the fullness of time you sent Jesus, nurtured in the water of a womb. Jesus was baptized by John, anointed by your Spirit. Jesus calls us to live as his disciples. The life you birthed in us by baptism into Jesus Christ will never die. Your justice never fails. Your mercy is everlasting.

Sing to the Lord, all the earth! Tell of God's mercy each day! Declare his works to the nations, his glory among all the people!

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us and this water this day to bless this gift and all who receive it. Wash away our sins and clothe us in righteousness throughout our lives, that dying to ourselves and being raised with Christ, we 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 forever. Amen.

Baptism with Laying on of Hands

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

Amen.

(Sponsors, friends, and family, gather and lay hands for a blessing:)

May the Holy Spirit work within you, that having been born through water and the Spirit, you may be a faith disciple of Jesus Christ.

Amen.

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

We give thanks for all that God has given you and welcome you in Christian love. As members together with you in the body of Christ in this congregation of the United Methodist Church, we renew our covenant faithfully to participate in the ministries of this church by our prayers, our presence, our gifts and our service, in that everything, God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.

Return this portion to the Church

Date of Baptism: _____

Baptism Service: ___ 8:30 a.m. ___ 11:00 a.m.

Child's Full Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Place of Birth _____

Mother's Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Father's Name _____

Date of Birth _____

Address: _____

Phone Number _____

Email Address: _____

Sponsors: _____

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