



Part One: Beliefs and Practices

“The Covenant They Have Made”

St. Joseph’s Episcopal Church

Adult Christian Formation

October 26, 2021

Tonight's Agenda

Opening Prayer

Welcome

Norms for the Course

Reflection on Homework

The Covenant They Have Made





OPENING PRAYER

Father in heaven, who at the baptism of Jesus in the River Jordan proclaimed him your beloved Son and anointed him with the Holy Spirit: Grant that all who are baptized into his Name may keep the covenant they have made, and boldly confess him as Lord and Savior; who with you and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns, one God, in glory everlasting. Amen. (Collect from First Sunday after the Epiphany, BCP 214)



WELCOME



Norms for the Course

BE ON TIME

Late entries to the video conference interrupt the lesson.



TURN ON YOUR VIDEO

It's hard to have a conversation with a black box.



BE PREPARED

It is difficult to participate or ask for help if you are behind with your work.



USE THE CHAT FEATURE RESPONSIBLY

Remember – a record is kept of everything you post in the chat.



MUTE YOUR MICROPHONE

This helps reduce background noise and allows everyone to hear the speaker.



JOIN FROM A QUIET PLACE

Try to avoid places with a lot of activity and distractions.



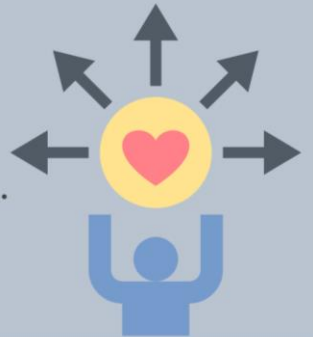
RAISE YOUR HAND

Let your teacher know if you have a question or want to comment.



BE RESPECTFUL

Everyone deserves to have a safe learning environment. Be kind in everything you say, post, and do online.



Homework

How have you experienced inward and spiritual grace through one of the sacraments?

Our scriptures and liturgies make a strong connection between baptism and death. What are some of the things that we die to in our baptism, and how is our relationship with death changed by the waters of baptism?

Through the waters of baptism, we are raised to the new life of grace. What are some of the qualities or characteristics of this new life?





The Covenant They Have Made



INTRO

The Christian journey begins with Holy Baptism

Baptism is usually celebrated on Sunday mornings so the whole church community can join in the occasion

Adults seeking baptism are called Catechumen

Catechumen is defined as an unbaptized adult



INTRO

The Baptism Service has similar but unique components the regular Sunday service

The Baptism service begins on page 299 of the BCP

The service begins with the familiar hymn and opening sentence



INTRO

After the usual words, a special set of responses for baptism are said:
(BCP 299)

Celebrant	There is one Body and one Spirit;
People	There is one hope in God's call to us;
Celebrant	One Lord, one Faith, one Baptism;
People	One God and Father of all.

By placing these words at the beginning of the service, we are reminded that the newly baptized will soon be full members of the Christ's body, the church



INTRO

After the readings and the sermon, the priest invites the candidate(s) for baptism to be presented

For adults and older children, the presenter is a baptized adult who is called a sponsor.

For infants and younger children, the presenters are parents and God parents who will answer the questions for the candidate on the candidate's behalf



INTRO

For Adults and older children, the priest will ask them the following:
(BCP 299)

Celebrant Do you desire to be baptized?

Candidate I do.



INTRO

For infants and young children, the priest ask the parents and Godparents the following: (BCP 302)

Celebrant

Will you be responsible for seeing that the child you present is brought up in the Christian faith and life?

Parents & Godparents

I will, with God's help.

Celebrant

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

Parents and Godparents

I will, with God's help.



INTRO

The first question comes because we are baptizing infants who cannot answer for themselves the parents and godparents must agree to a lifetime commitment of raising the child in the Christian faith

Therefore, it is important that both parents and godparents be active practicing Christians. If they are not then the promise to God, made in front of a congregation, will not be kept

The second question highlights a critical point. Raising the child in faith is not just about knowledge and facts; it is about transformation



INTRO

It is important to not the we pledge to show the child and others how to be like Christ through prayers and witness.

We teach and others learn through both our prayers and action

We must live our lives our lives in a way that shows others who Christ is and how to be like him and we must be people of prayer

These are the promises we are making as parents, sponsors, godparents, the faith community to God to help those newly baptized

Baptismal Practices

In baptism, we are turning toward Christ and turning away from something else, therefore candidates, parents, and godparents renounce Satan. (BCP 301)

Question Do you renounce Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God?

Answer I renounce them.

Question Do you renounce the evil powers of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?

Answer I renounce them.

Question Do you renounce all sinful desires that draw you from the love of God?

Answer I renounce them



Baptismal Practices

Evil powers are real!

Christians should not be afraid of them because we know that on Easter, Jesus defeated the worst evil

We should be confident that we can defeat evil



Baptismal Practices

In the baptism service we consciously acknowledge the reality of evil and then actively turn away from it (BCP 301)

Question Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Savior?

Answer I do.

Question Do you put your whole trust in his grace and love?

Answer I do

Question Do you promise to follow and obey him as your Lord?

Answer I do.



Baptismal Practices

We turn toward Jesus Christ and the power of love

Putting or whole trust in grace and love is easier said than done!

To trust in Christ's love and grace is to know that we are loved no matter what we do, that Jesus is with us in whatever we face

To follow and obey acknowledges that we don't have the answers but that we find our direction, our compass, our hope in our Lord Jesus Christ

The depth and radical natures of these promises takes a lifetime to understand and fully embrace



Baptismal Practices

After the priest ask the candidates, parents, and godparents these questions, the priest then turns to ask the congregation who are witnessing those being baptized the following: (BCP 303)

Celebrant Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support these persons in their life in Christ?

People We will.

The question is brief, but we are also promising to help those who are baptized

There are no asterisk or exceptions about helping only when it is convenient or when we feel like it; the service of baptism is a full time service and promise to God!



Baptismal Practices

The Baptismal Covenant (BCP 304)

This set of eight question and answers affirms our faith in God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, and then we commit to a life of Christian faith and discipline

First, we are asked to restate our faith in God as three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit

We state our faith using the Apostles' Creed, which has been associated with baptism since the early church

We will talk more about the history of Apostles' Creed and all of the creeds in a later session



Baptismal Practices

The Baptismal Covenant (BCP 304)

Celebrant Do you believe in God the Father?

People I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

Celebrant Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

People I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He 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, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

Celebrant Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

People 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.



Baptismal Practices

The Baptismal Covenant (BCP 304)

The Apostles' Creed summarizes some of the basic teachings of our faith

We profess that God the Father has created everything

We profess that God the Son was born, crucified, raised to new life, and will come again as judge

We profess our trust in God's promise of eternal life and our commitment to the catholic church

The word catholic means universal– the one worldwide church of Jesus Christ



Baptismal Practices

The Baptismal Promises (BCP 304)

After the Apostles' Creed we are asked five questions

These are called baptismal promises

In these promises we make extradentary, impossible commitments that on our own we could not get right but with God we will spend our lifetime trying to fulfill these promises



Baptismal Practices

The Baptismal Promises (BCP 304)

Celebrant	Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?
People	I will, with God's help

We are saying that:

We will participate in Christian worship

We will attend classes to learn about our faith

Join in the celebration of Holy Eucharist

Pray daily as a community and as individuals

This baptismal promise comes from the Book of Acts, when the earliest Christians found great joy in committing to follow Jesus in community



Baptismal Practices

The Baptismal Promises (BCP 304)

Celebrant	Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?
People	I will, with God's help.

We are saying

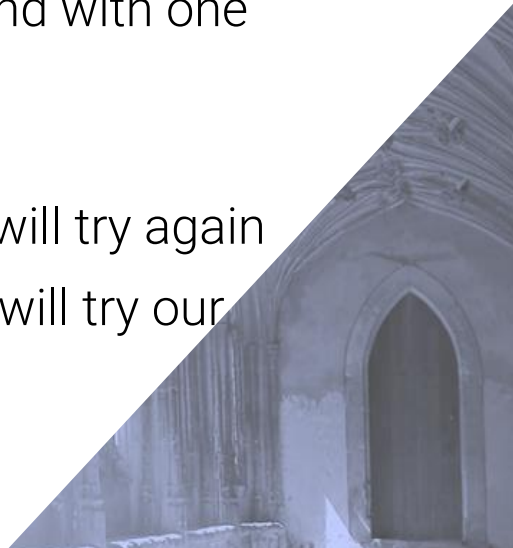
We will actively turn away from those things that we know to be evil

We are promising to do what is necessary to be reconciled with God and with one another when we sin

We promise to resist worldly desires

We acknowledge that we are going to get this wrong and promise we will try again

Our faith gives us many do-overs as we need and this promise to God says we will try our best to return



Baptismal Practices

The Baptismal Promises (BCP 305)

Celebrant Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

People I will, with God's help.

We are saying

We will share our faith, share the gospel, share the message of Jesus with anyone and everyone

We will proclaim it with both words and with our lives



Baptismal Practices

The Baptismal Promises (BCP 305)

Celebrant	Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?
People	I will, with God's help.

We are saying

We will look for Jesus in all we meet, even when it might be hard for us to see him in the other

We will serve others whether we feel like it or not

We are promising that we will speak the truth in love when others need to hear it

We will help the stranger just like we would our family

Christian love is not the same as being nice, and it has nothing to do with convenience



Baptismal Practices

The Baptismal Promises (BCP 305)

Celebrant Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

People I will, with God's help.

We are saying

We will actively work for justice and peace

We will actively work to respect every human being whether we like them or not, agree with them or not



Baptismal Practices

Thanksgiving over the Water (BCP 306)

After praying for the candidates, we finally get water

Water is the main symbol of baptism, the outward and visible sign

The celebrant blesses the water that speaks to the sacred purpose of the water from the beginning of creation and throughout salvation history

The prayer recalls the fundamental purpose of baptism, and it ends with praise to God



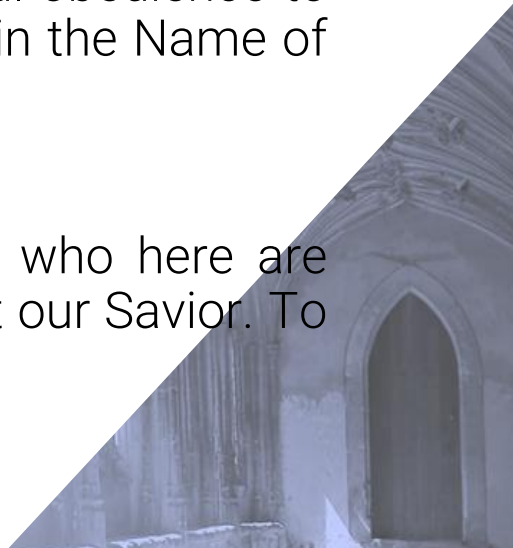
Baptismal Practices

Thanksgiving over the Water (BCP 306)

We thank you, Almighty God, for the gift of water. Over it the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation. Through it you led the children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt into the land of promise. In it your Son Jesus received the baptism of John and was anointed by the Holy Spirit as the Messiah, the Christ, to lead us, through his death and resurrection, from the bondage of sin into everlasting life.

We thank you, Father, for the water of Baptism. In it we are buried with Christ in his death. By it we share in his resurrection. Through it we are reborn by the Holy Spirit. Therefore in joyful obedience to your Son, we bring into his fellowship those who come to him in faith, baptizing them in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Now sanctify this water, we pray you, by the power of your Holy Spirit, that those who here are cleansed from sin and born again may continue for ever in the risen life of Jesus Christ our Savior. To him, to you, and to the Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and for ever. Amen.



CONCLUSION

Candidates are baptized, starting with their name and then with the same phrase Christians have used for hundreds of years:

N., I baptize you in the Name of the Father, and of the Son,
and the Holy Spirit (BCP 307)

The newly baptized is anointed with oil. This oil, called chrism has been blessed by the bishop during holy week, through this blessing is, is a symbol of connection to the universal church

N., you are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ's own for ever. Amen (BCP 308)



CONCLUSION

After the anointing the entire congregation welcomes the newly baptized, using these words:

We receive you into the household of God. Confess the faith of Christ crucified, proclaim his resurrection, and share with us in his eternal priesthood. (BCP 308)

Once we are baptized , we have been claimed as Christ own forever. Nothing we do or say can take away the spiritual mantle of Christ that we have receive in baptism



Homework

Thinking about your life and actions, what does it mean to renounce Satan and evil powers and sinful desires? What does it mean to turn to Jesus Christ and put your whole trust in his grace?

Which of the baptismal promises is most difficult for you to live out in your practice of the Christian faith?

What's your favorite moment in the baptismal liturgy and why?





Next Class November 9, 2021

A Wonderful Sacrament

Eucharistic Beliefs

Notes Taken From:

Walk in Love: Episcopal Beliefs & Practices by Scott Gunn & Melody Wilson Shobe

The Book of Common Prayer (BCP)

The Book of Occasional Service 2003

