

An Alternative Revised Liturgy for the Baptism of Children

*Holy
Baptism*



THE CHURCH
OF ENGLAND

¶ Pastoral Introduction to Baptism

This may be read by those present before the service begins.

Baptism marks the beginning of a journey with God which continues for the rest of our lives, the first step in response to God's love. For all involved, particularly the candidates but also parents, godparents and sponsors, it is a joyful moment when we rejoice in what God has done for us in Christ, making serious promises and declaring the faith. The wider community of the local church and friends welcome the new Christian, promising support and prayer for the future. Hearing and doing these things provides an opportunity to remember our own baptism and reflect on the progress made on that journey, which is now to be shared with this new member of the Church.

The service paints many vivid pictures of what happens on the Christian way. There is the sign of the cross, the badge of faith in the Christian journey, which reminds us of Christ's death for us. Our 'drowning' in the water of baptism, where we believe we die to sin and are raised to new life, unites us to Christ's dying and rising, a picture that can be brought home vividly by the way the baptism is administered. Water is also a sign of new life, as we are born again by water and the Spirit. This reminds us of Jesus' baptism. And as a sign of that new life, there may be a lighted candle, a picture of the light of Christ conquering the darkness of evil. Everyone who is baptized walks in that light for the rest of their lives.

As you pray for the candidates, picture them with yourself and the whole Church throughout the ages, journeying into the fullness of God's love.

Jesus said, 'I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.'
John 10.10

Please stay after the service to share refreshments and fellowship.

The minister says to the whole congregation:

Do you receive this child as a gift from God?

We do.

Do you wish to give thanks to God and seek his blessing?

We do.

Will you do all that you can to help and support N and N in the bringing up of N?

With the help of God we will.

Introduction

The president introduces the sacrament of baptism

Our Lord Jesus Christ has told us
that to enter the kingdom of heaven
we must be born again of water and the Spirit,
and has given us baptism as the sign and seal of this new birth.
Here we are washed by the Holy Spirit and made clean.
Here we are clothed with Christ,
dying to sin that we may live his risen life.
As children of God, we have a new dignity
and God calls us to fullness of life.

The Liturgy of Baptism

Presentation of the Candidates

The president addresses the whole congregation:

Jesus said, 'Let the children come to me. Do not stop them'.

We thank God for N who has come to be baptized today.

Christ loves him/her and welcomes them into his Church.

So I ask you all:

Will you support N as s/he begins his/her journey of faith?

We will.

Will you help him/her to live and grow within God's family?

We will.

The president then addresses the parents and godparents:

God knows each of us by name and we are his.

Parents and godparents, you speak for N today.

Will you pray for him/her,
and help him/her to follow Christ?

We will.

The Decision

We all wander far from God and lose our way:

Christ comes to find us and welcomes us home.

In baptism we respond to his call.

Therefore I ask:

Do you turn away from sin?

I do.

Do you reject evil?

I do.

Do you turn to Christ as Saviour?

I do.

Do you trust in him as Lord?

I do.

Signing with the Cross

The president makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of each candidate, saying:

Christ claims you for his own.

Receive the sign of his cross.

When all the candidates have been signed, the president says

Do not be ashamed of Christ.

You are his for ever.

**Stand bravely with him
against all the powers of evil,
and remain faithful to Christ to the end of your life.**

May almighty God deliver you from the powers of darkness,
and lead you in the light and obedience of Christ.

Amen.

Prayer over the Water *(If not at Easter)*

The ministers and candidates gather at the baptismal font.

Praise God who made heaven and earth,

who keeps his promise for ever.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give thanks and praise.

Loving Father, we thank you for your servant Moses,
who led your people through the waters of the Red Sea
to freedom in the Promised Land.

We thank you for your Son Jesus,
who has passed through the deep waters of death
and opened for all the way of salvation.

Now send your Spirit,
that those who are washed in this water
may die with Christ and rise with him,
to find true freedom as your children,
alive in Christ for ever.

Amen.

Profession of Faith

The president addresses the congregation

Let us affirm, together with these who are being baptized,
our common faith in Jesus Christ.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,
source of all being and life,
the one for whom we exist?

I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,
who took our human nature,
died for us and rose again?

I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,
who gives life to the people of God
and makes Christ known in the world?

I believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

This is our faith.

**We believe and trust in one God,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

The Baptism

The president pours water on each candidate, saying:

N, I baptize you
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The president anoints each candidate with the oil of Chrism:

N, God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ has freed you from sin,
given you new birth by water and the Holy Spirit and welcomed you
as one of His holy people. He now anoints you with the Chrism of
salvation. As Christ was prophet, priest and king, so may you always
live as a member of his body, sharing everlasting life.

Amen.

Commission

A minister addresses the congregation, parents and godparents

Faithful and loving God,
bless those who care for these children
and grant them your gifts of love, wisdom and faith.
Pour upon them your healing and reconciling love,
and protect their homes from all evil.
Fill them with the light of your presence
and establish them in the joy of your kingdom,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

The Giving of a Candle

*The president gives a lighted candle to each newly baptized person
to a representative parent or godparent*

When all have received a candle, the president says

God has delivered us from the dominion of darkness
and has given us a place with the saints in light.
You have received the light of Christ;
walk in this light all the days of your life.

Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father.

The Welcome and Peace

There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism:
N, by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.

**We welcome you into the fellowship of faith;
we are children of the same heavenly Father;
we welcome you.**

The president introduces the Peace in these or other seasonal words

We are all one in Christ Jesus.
We belong to him through faith,
heirs of the promise of the Spirit of peace.
The peace of the Lord be always with you
and also with you.

A minister may say

Let us offer one another a sign of peace.
All may exchange a sign of peace.

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