

## Service of Baptismal Covenant

(United Methodist Hymnal, 33-39)

“Brothers and sisters in Christ: Through the Sacrament of Baptism we are initiated into Christ’s holy church. We are incorporated into God’s mighty acts of salvation and given new birth through water and the Spirit. All this is God’s gift, offered to us without price.”

### RENUNCIATION OF SIN & PROFESSION OF FAITH

“Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of your sin?”

“Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?”

“Do you confess Jesus Christ as your savior, put your whole trust in his 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?”

“According to the grace given to you, will you remain a faithful member of Christ’s holy church and serve as Christ’s representative to the world?”

### *For those bringing infants/children for baptism:*

“Will you nurture this child in Christ’s holy church, that by your teaching and example, they may be guided to accept God’s grace for themselves, to profess their faith openly and to lead a Christian life?”

# BAPTISM

## DISCOVER MORE

If you would like to learn more about baptism, would like to be baptized yourself, and/or would like to have your child baptized, please speak with the pastor before or after the worship services. You can also contact the office throughout the week.

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## Baptism: Grace by Water and The Spirit

We receive our identity from others, from the expectations of friends and colleagues, from the labels society puts upon us, and from the influence of family. To become a Christian is to receive a **new identity**. You no longer allow others to tell you who you are. Christ now claims you through grace, and instructs you for the purpose of love.

A Christian is one who has “**put on Christ.**” Baptism celebrates *becoming* that new person. That is why the celebration of Holy Baptism begins with putting off the old, renouncing sin and the evil powers of the world, and pledging our loyalty to Christ.

This pamphlet will help to answer – and maybe even bring about – some important questions about baptism, how we understand baptism in The United Methodist Church, and what it means for your life as part of the Grand Blanc UMC family



Grand Blanc  
United Methodist  
Church

# Questions & Answers

## Why Do We Baptize?

As Christians, we believe and even know that we fall short of being perfect in love each and every day. This is true for everyone, even those who seem to be the “best” among us. We call this the Human Condition. More simply, we refer to it as “sin.”

Despite our human condition, and because of Christ’s immense love for all of us, we’re met with God’s amazing grace. This is grace that transforms us and brings us into new life in Jesus Christ.

And so, through the sacrament of baptism, we believe that God moves radically and pours out grace upon us. It is this marvelous grace that meets our imperfection, draws us into the family of God, and makes us whole as God has intended.



...they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus

ACTS 19:5

### Question:

#### Can my child be baptized?

In The UMC, we believe that baptism is open to people of all ages. While some express concern that children can’t knowingly express faith in God, we believe that baptism is less about what we’re doing, and more about what God is doing in and through us. Age is no obstacle for God. And so, instead of asking the infant or child to express faith in God, we ask their parents and/or guardians to express *their* faith. We also ask them to make a promise to nurture their child in the Christian faith as a disciple of Jesus Christ with the hope that, one day, the child will *claim* for themselves their own baptism.

### Question:

#### Does this mean that I need to be re-baptized?

We believe that God is perfect and that God’s perfect grace is poured out completely and fully the first time. To reclaim our baptism (or “remember it,” as we often say) is about reaffirming what God has already done perfectly in our lives. Even when we may walk away from God in our lives (it happens often), God’s grace has no expiration date. We just need to rediscover the grace and love that has always been there.

### Question:

#### Do I need to be baptized in order to be saved?

No. God’s salvation is a promise made to us out of God’s deep compassion *for* us. Baptism is a gift of God’s grace offered to us as part of our salvation journey. Why would we want to refuse that?!

### Question:

#### Do I need to be member to be baptized?

All members in the UMC have been baptized, but not all those who’ve been baptized are members. In other words, no. You don’t need to be a member to be baptized. Baptism always comes before membership. Again, it is through *baptism* that God pours grace out upon us. The later step of becoming a *member* is about reclaiming and reaffirming our baptism, taking the next step in growing as a disciple of Jesus Christ.

### Question:

#### I want my child baptized, but we’re not involved in a church? Can they be baptized?

The grace that comes inwardly through the outward and visible sign of baptism is available to everyone and is not something that God authorizes anyone to withhold. When we talk about baptizing children, we ask for the child’s parents and/or guardians to nurture the child in the Christian faith. This means active involvement in a faith community. Even if you aren’t currently involved in the life a church, you are urged to see your child’s baptism as an invitation to become part of the church family.

We understand that baptism can be a wonderful and beautiful milestone moment for families to experience. That being said, if this isn’t a commitment that you’re ready/wanting to make at this time, perhaps consider waiting until you are ready, or allowing them to make that choice for themselves when they are at a believing age.