



Dear Parents,

Your child's baptism is a special day for both your family as well as your church family. Baptism tells us who we are. We are created in the image of God and initiated into the Body of Christ which is the church. Baptism joins us together with Christians everywhere. Although a parent presents the child for baptism, Baptism itself is God's gift. We are adopted as God's children and through baptism we are offered God's active grace and saving love. Baptism and Holy Communion are the two sacraments of the Methodist Church.

I. Baptism

You will be asked the three questions listed below and the congregation will respond with their commitment to love and nurture the child.

Baptismal questions from Book of Worship:

- First, do you believe in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior?
- Second, do you promise to rear your child in the Christian faith, to see that he or she is raised in the church and taught the teachings of Jesus Christ?
- Third, will you live before your child a life that becomes the gospel and show God's love in your life so that this child can see it and make it part of his or her own?

Baptismal response by the congregation:

"With God's help we will so order our lives after the example of Christ, that these children, surrounded by steadfast love, may be established in the faith and confirmed and strengthened in the way that leads to life eternal." Book of Worship

II. Communion

Children are welcome to join their parents at the communion table. Communion is offered on the first Sunday of each month. In the United Methodist Book of Worship it states, "All who intend to lead a Christian life, together with their children, are invited to receive the bread and the cup."

We remember that when some of Jesus' disciples tried to keep children away from him that he said: "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs." Mark 10:14

Children may not fully comprehend what is going on, but they know when they are excluded. In accordance with the scripture let them come.

III. The Child's own confirmation of the Baptismal vows

Youth enrolled in the sixth grade at Highland Park United Methodist Church spends a year in a confirmation program in preparation for the confirmation service. They study theology, church history, and doctrine in order to "confirm" the vows made by their parents and the congregation at the time of their baptism. The confirmation service is held at the end of twelve months of study and exploration. This is the child's own "Yes" to the vows made at his/her baptism.

Blessings, Mary Bishop

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