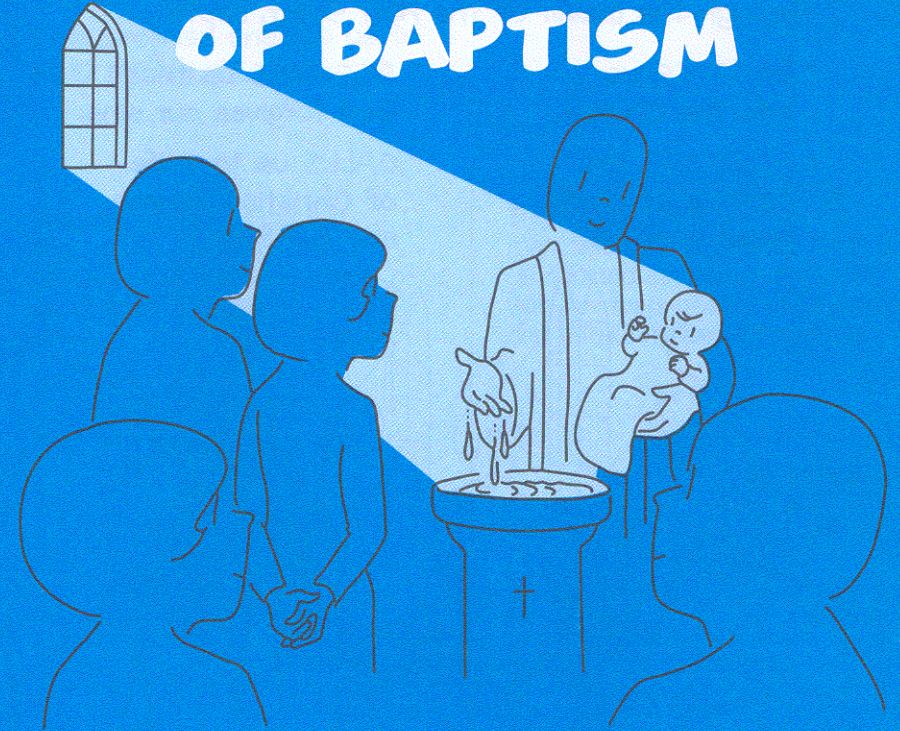


What every Presbyterian should know

ABOUT THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

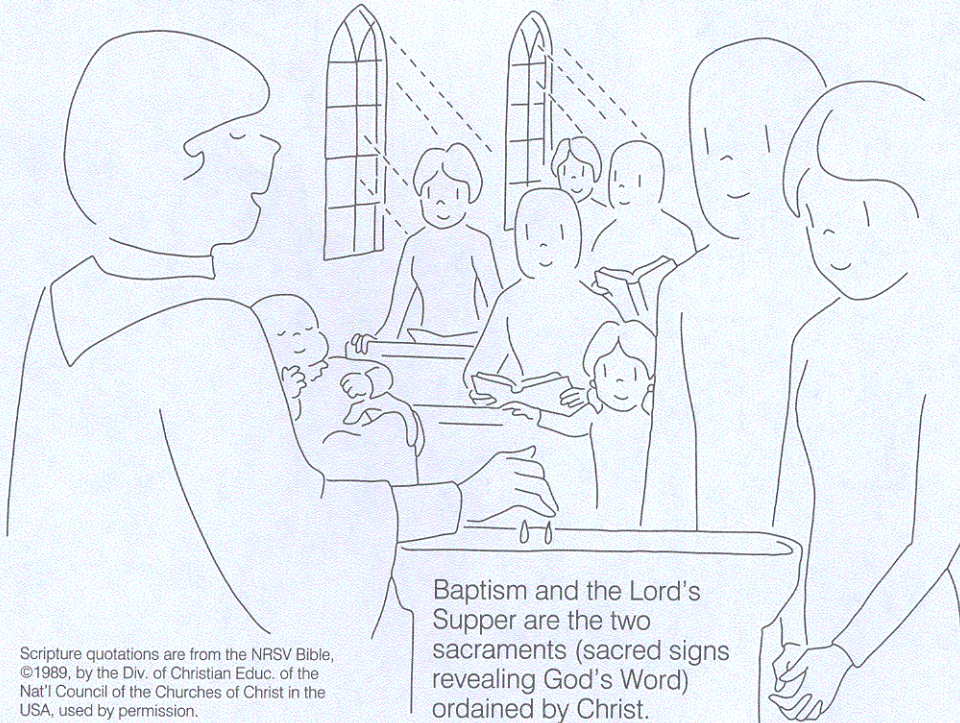


What is BAPTISM?

It's the sacrament that **UNITES US WITH JESUS CHRIST** and makes us members of God's family, the Church.

Through the power of the Holy Spirit, baptism:

- **INITIATES** us into the Church.
- **BESTOWS** the promise of God's grace upon us.
- **ASSURES** us that God forgives our sins.
- **CALLS** us to a life of Christian service and fulfillment.



Baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two sacraments (sacred signs revealing God's Word) ordained by Christ.

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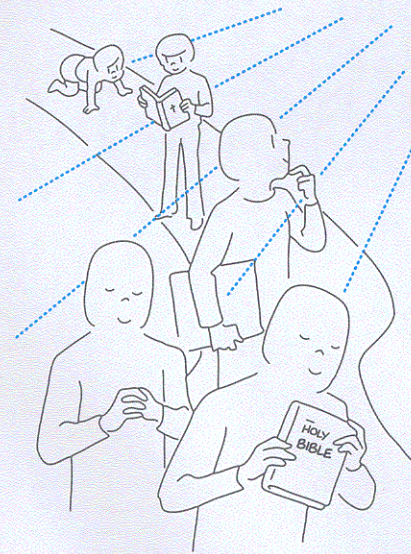
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WHY is Baptism IMPORTANT?

Because at baptism, we receive the promise of God's love. This promise enables us to **FIND NEW LIFE** with:

GOD

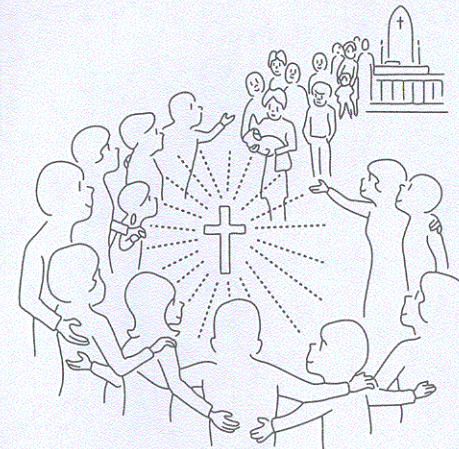
Baptism represents our first step on the journey of faith. It assures us of God's presence as we travel through life.



The Sacrament of Baptism is given only once to a person. But, it's a source of strength throughout life — such is the power of God's love!

THE CHURCH

Through baptism, we become members of God's family. Each of us is joined as brother or sister with members of our congregation and with Christians everywhere.

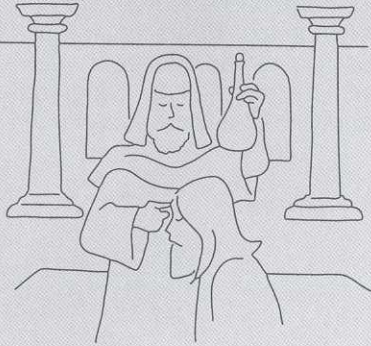


THE HISTORY OF BAPTISM

Through Jesus, God commanded the Sacrament of Baptism.

THE OLD TESTAMENT

Water has always been an important symbol. In Old Testament days, it was used in cleansing rituals to purify the body. In Jewish culture, Gentile converts were immersed in water as part of their initiation into the Jewish faith.



JOHN THE BAPTIST

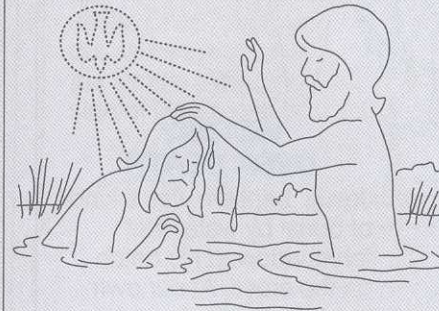
Sinners were baptized in the Jordan River by John the Baptist. He proclaimed that the Day of Judgment was soon at hand, and urged people to confess their sins.

For John, baptism in water was the special sign that a person had repented and accepted God's goodness and mercy.



BAPTISM OF JESUS

John the Baptist also baptized Jesus in the Jordan River. When Jesus came out of the water, a voice spoke from heaven, and the Holy Spirit descended on him in the form of a dove. In this way, Jesus was united with God's will and found renewed strength to carry out his mission. Jesus was also united with all people who share God's promise and bring their sins to the water of baptism.

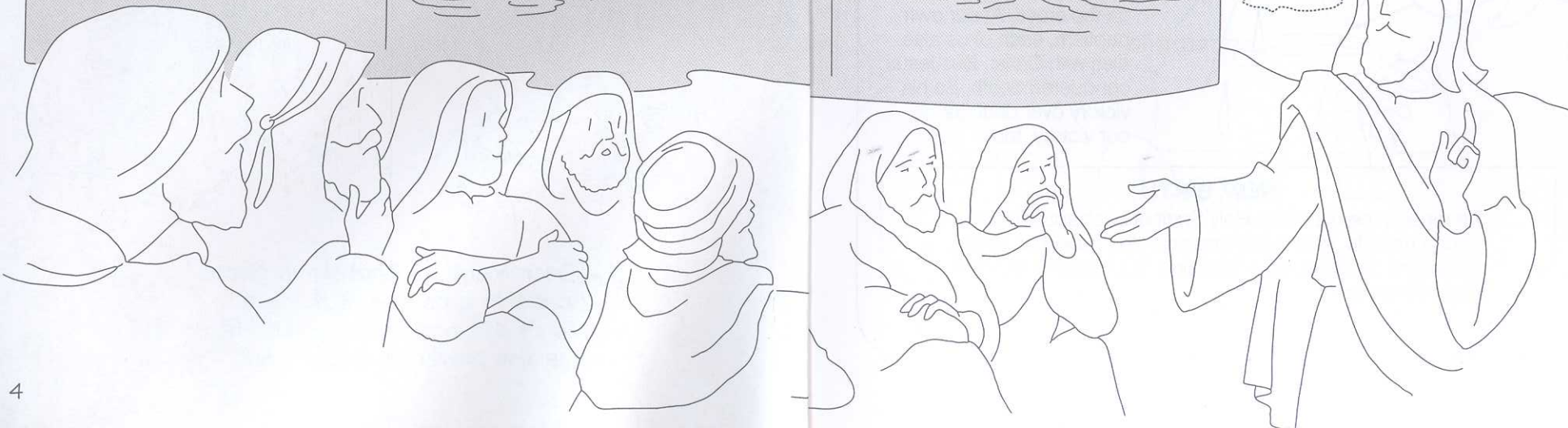


THE COMMAND TO BAPTIZE

Later, on a mountain near the sea of Galilee, Jesus gave this command to the disciples:

"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

(Matthew 28:19)



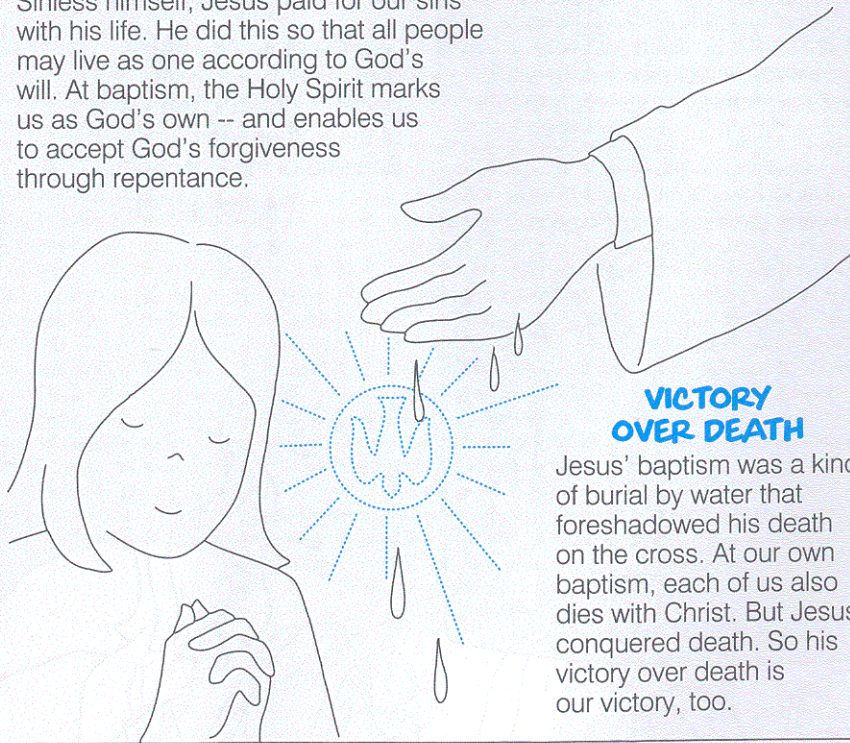
WHAT BAPTISM MEANS

Baptism is the mark of **NEW LIFE IN JESUS CHRIST**

Through the Holy Spirit, God assures us at baptism of:

FORGIVENESS OF SINS

Sinless himself, Jesus paid for our sins with his life. He did this so that all people may live as one according to God's will. At baptism, the Holy Spirit marks us as God's own -- and enables us to accept God's forgiveness through repentance.



VICTORY OVER DEATH

Jesus' baptism was a kind of burial by water that foreshadowed his death on the cross. At our own baptism, each of us also dies with Christ. But Jesus conquered death. So his victory over death is our victory, too.

NEW BIRTH

We receive the gift of the Holy Spirit at our baptism, and enter a new life, new family and new love based on Christ. Death and darkness are left behind. We become a part of God's Kingdom.

Baptism is the sign and seal of our **ONENESS WITH CHRIST**

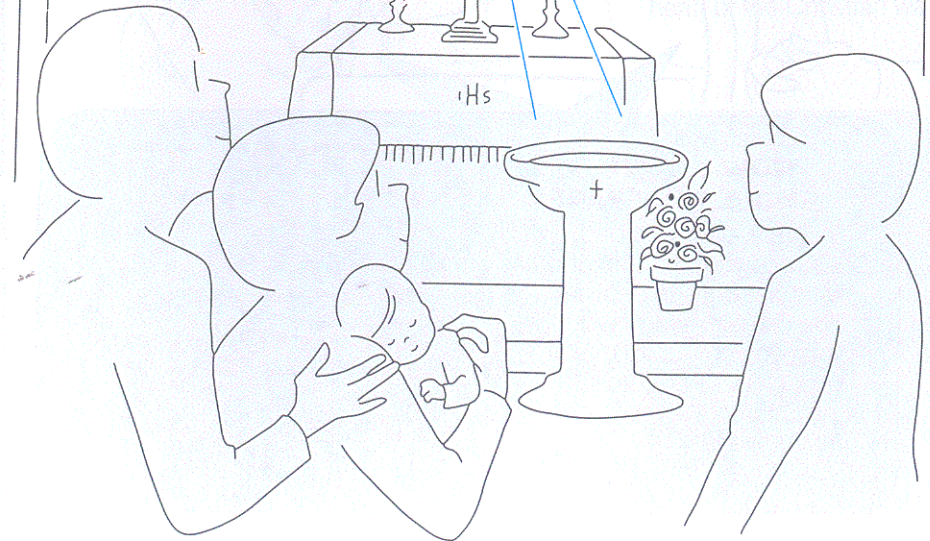
WATER

is the special sign of our oneness with Christ. It is the everyday element by which God's promise at baptism comes to us. Water cleanses and renews us, just as Jesus Christ cleanses our sins from us. It is the simple life-giving sign of God's grace.



THE HOLY SPIRIT

is the seal that confirms our union with Christ at baptism. Through the action of the Holy Spirit, baptism brings us God's promise of love. It nourishes our faith. It unites us in fellowship with Christ and with all people who accept Christ.



WHO CAN BE BAPTIZED

INFANTS

Bringing your newborn to be baptized is one of the most important things you can do as a parent. No matter how young the child is, God sends the gift of the Holy Spirit.

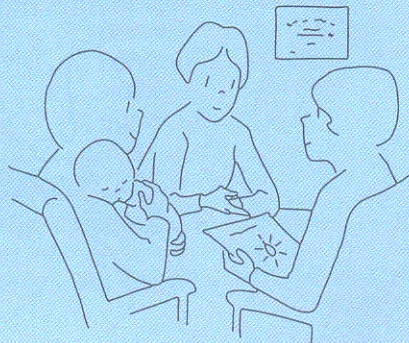
BAPTISM ENCOURAGES FUTURE FAITH

Naturally, a baby is too small to know what baptism is all about. So, parents bring their child for baptism on the basis of their own faith, with the hope that the child will grow in faith, and love and serve God.



HOW PARENTS SHOULD PREPARE

Before your child's baptism, talk with your minister about what happens in baptism. You can also learn about what you can do to make your child's first step into the Church a joyous and fruitful event.

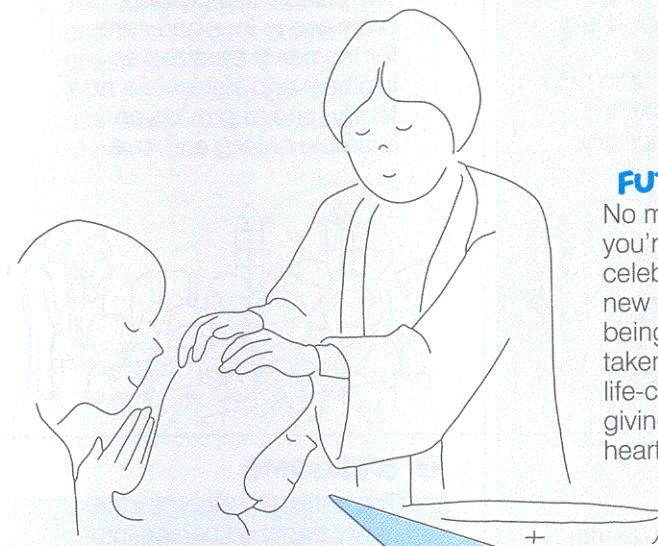


YOUNG PEOPLE AND ADULTS

Adults and youth who wish to publicly confess their faith and enter the Church (and who haven't been previously baptized) can be baptized.

BAPTISM PROMOTES FUTURE GROWTH

No matter at what age you're baptized, baptism celebrates the start of a new life with Christ. By being baptized, you've taken the first step on a life-changing (and life-giving) journey into the heart of the Christian way.

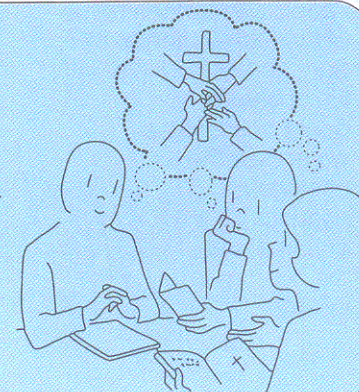


PREPARATION

Young people and adults are baptized after:

- a period of instruction
- a public profession of faith in Christ.

The goal of preparation is to help persons coming to baptism claim the faith as their own, so they may share actively in the life, work and mission of the Church.

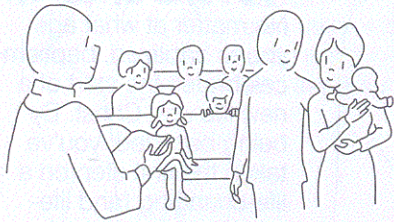


HOW BAPTISM IS CELEBRATED

Baptism is truly a faith celebration...
shared by the whole community of believers!
The rite includes:

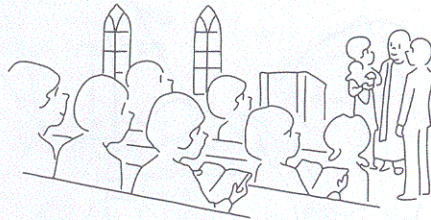
1 PRESENTATION

After the minister proclaims God's Word in a sermon, parents (or guardian) bring their child forward for baptism and promise to help him or her grow in faith. Adults ask to be baptized.



2 PROFESSION OF FAITH AND PROMISE

The entire congregation promises to love and care for the newly baptized as brothers and sisters in a new family, and to provide an example of faith and love.



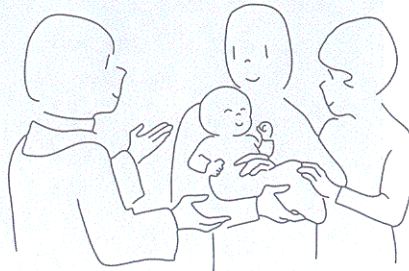
4 WASHING WITH WATER

The minister says: "(name), I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." He or she then pours or sprinkles water over the candidate's head, or dips or immerses the person in water.



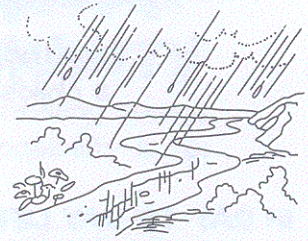
5 WELCOME

The minister welcomes the newly baptized person into the congregation and proclaims him or her a member of God's family.



WATER

is the natural symbol of baptism, because it is the symbol of life. Water cleanses, purifies and renews. Plants, animals, and people depend on it to live. The water of baptism is the water of life itself.



3 THANKSGIVING AND PRAYER

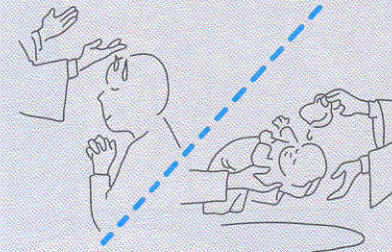
The congregation stands and offers God a prayer of praise and thanks. It then calls on the Holy Spirit to make each baptism a sign of new life in Christ.



METHODS OF BAPTISM INCLUDE:

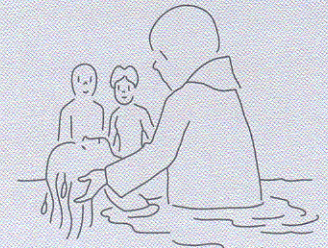
SPRINKLING (OR POURING)

This symbolizes the cleansing action of water and the Holy Spirit.

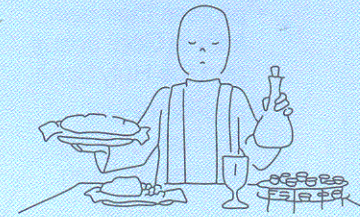


IMMERSION

This symbolizes the death, burial and resurrection of Christ.



The rite of baptism may be followed by the Lord's Supper.



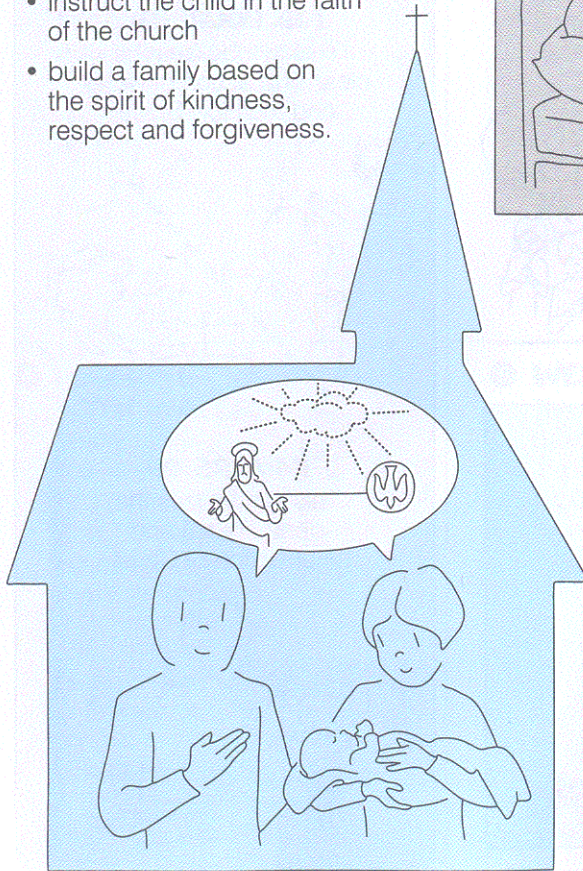
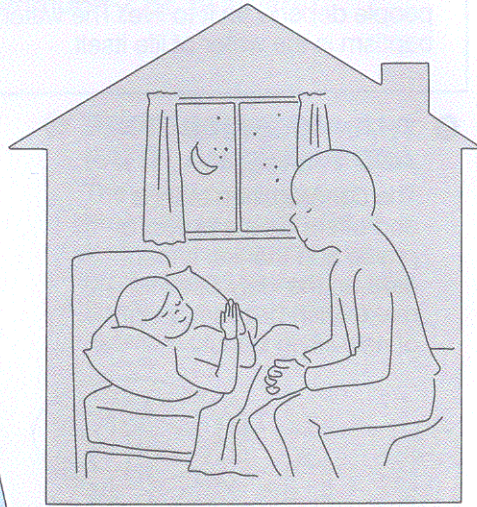
PARENTS

are the vital force in fostering a child's spiritual growth.

IN DAY-TO-DAY LIFE

Their responsibility is to:

- make the child aware of God
- pray with and for the child
- set a good example of Christian living
- instruct the child in the faith of the church
- build a family based on the spirit of kindness, respect and forgiveness.



AT BAPTISM

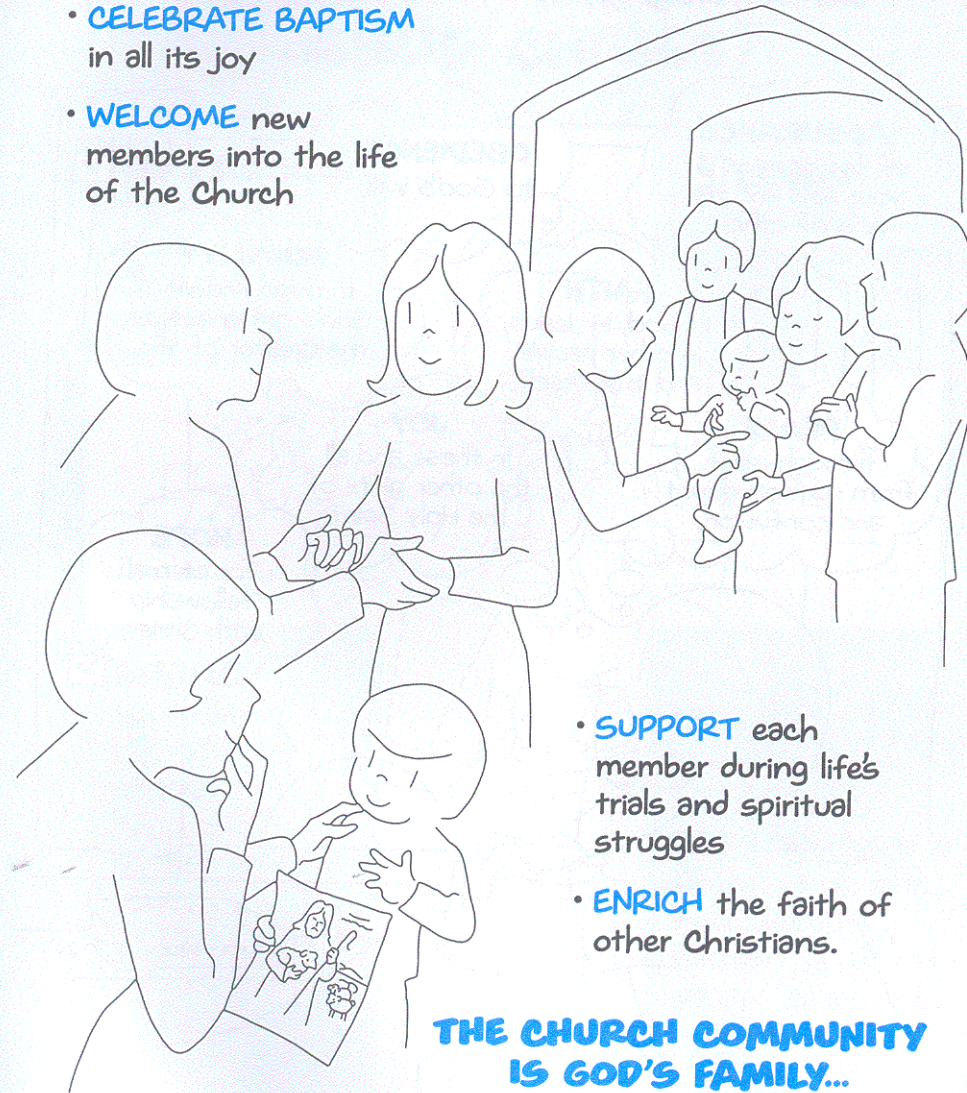
They have the responsibility to:

- bring their child to God to be baptized
- promise to raise their children in the Christian faith
- profess their own faith in God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit
- receive God's promise of grace for their children.

THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH COMMUNITY

finds in God a constant and unfailing source of strength and faith. Its responsibility is to:

- **CELEBRATE BAPTISM** in all its joy
- **WELCOME** new members into the life of the Church

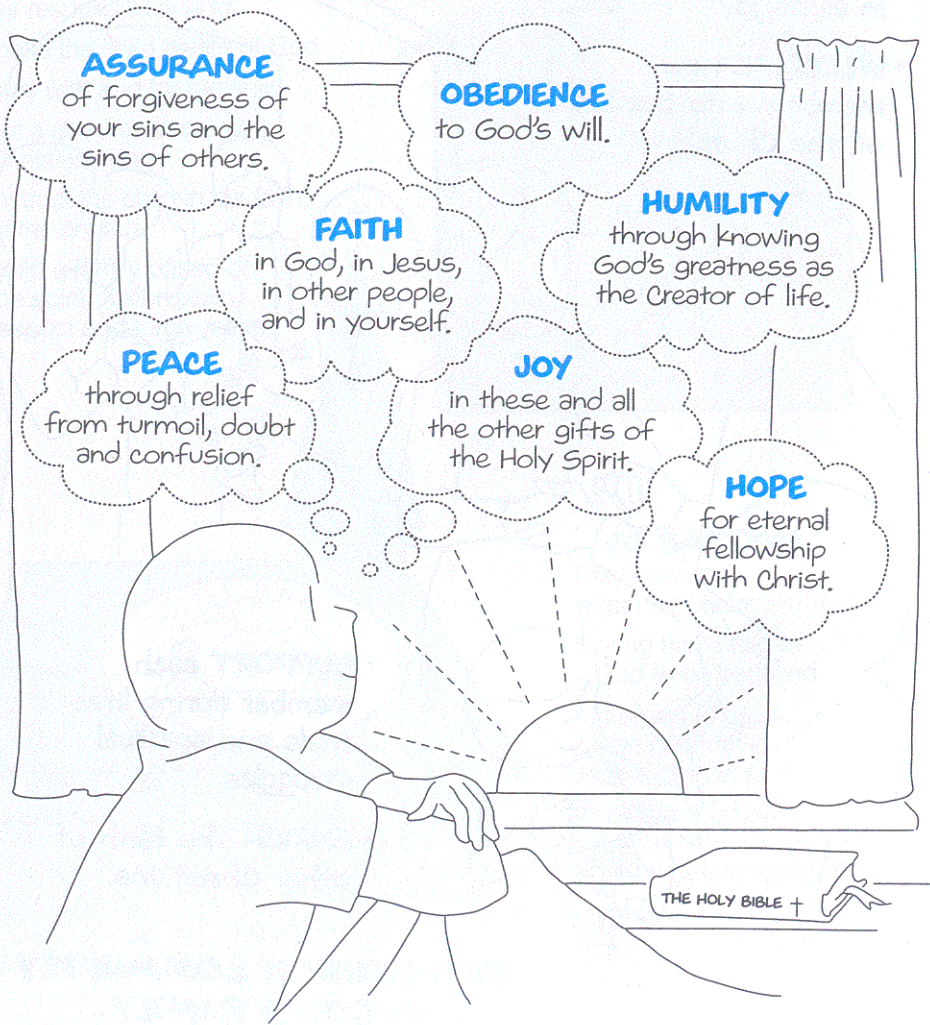


- **SUPPORT** each member during life's trials and spiritual struggles
- **ENRICH** the faith of other Christians.

THE CHURCH COMMUNITY IS GOD'S FAMILY... YOUR FAMILY.

HOW BAPTISM AFFECTS YOUR DAILY LIFE

Because of the power of God's love, your baptism can be a never-ending source of spiritual strength each day, bringing you:

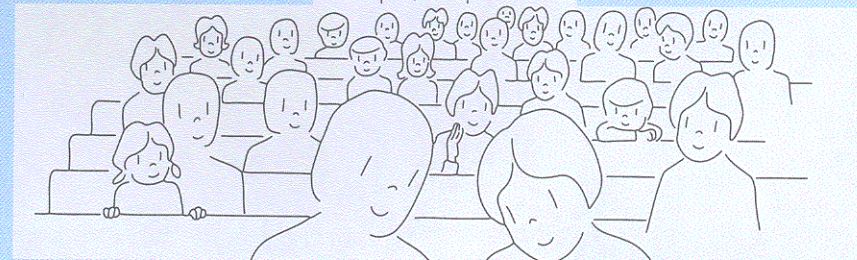


So--

BAPTISM marks the beginning of a NEW LIFE WITH JESUS CHRIST!

UNDERSTAND
the role of baptism in Christian life and worship.

LEARN
to help the newly baptized grow in Christ.



SHARE
your faith in God with others, by living your baptismal vows.

"So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!"

(2 Cor. 5:17)