

## Let's Start Here... **What is Baptism?**

Baptism is God's powerful Word and simple water coming together to do something awesome. In baptism God is giving us a new identity, giving us His Holy Spirit, cleansing us from all sin, and making us a part of His family. He embraces us and forgives us. So it really is a big deal that you've been asked to stand up and be a sponsor. You may be saying, "Tell me more" or "Where in the Bible is this talked about?" Keep reading and then also check out Redeemer's brochure entitled, "The Baptismal Life."

Expectations of godparents are wide ranging. Many parents choose godparents for their children based simply on close friendships or family relationships and obligations. Others put careful consideration to whom they choose.

Traditionally, the assumed role for being a godparent was to help care for the child's physical and spiritual development if the child should lose his or her parents. In other words, you did nothing unless the parents died.

Others view the role of godparents as one of simply buying "religious" books and presents.

But...what if there is more to it? What if being a godparent puts you in a wonderful, privileged role and relationship?

Take a deeper look at baptism.

"Set an example for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity." -1 Timothy 4:12

### **How do I do that?**

Here are simple ways to embrace the role:

- 1) Remind the child that he/she was baptized and what it means. Everyone does birthday cards; think differently. Every year, when this child celebrates his/her "baptismal birthday," think about writing a letter, sending a card, making a phone call or giving them a special gift as a reminder.
- 2) Pray for this child. Better yet, pray with this child. Ask them if they have prayer requests. Teach them the Lord's Prayer. As this child grows in their faith life, he/she will experience struggles and have moments of celebration. Remember both in your prayers.
- 3) Help them understand God's story in the Bible and in their life. Maybe when they're young, this means reading to them from a Bible storybook. As they grow older, maybe you give them a devotional book, a subscription to a Christian magazine or provide Christian music. Later, as the child goes through confirmation, talk with them about the process and the vows they will make, as they reaffirm what God has done in their baptism. Find out what questions they have. Share how God has worked in your life. Ask them if they are taking time to read God's Word and what He's teaching them.
- 4) Encourage this child to attend worship regularly. Encourage them attend Sunday school and youth group. Help them see that worship is where God is present and He wants to talk with us. This is a place where we continue to learn God's story.

Lastly, you should model this behavior! Be an example yourself that Sunday worship is not an option. This is where God meets us, forgives us, guides us, and strengthens us—why would we not want to be there!?

### **So What's My role? What do they need me for?**

A sponsor is someone who comes alongside the parents to play an active role in the faith formation of a child.

You are a representative of the church to support and encourage the parents; and to encourage the child by word, example, and prayer.

On the day of the baptism, you'll stand before friends, family, and church and promise to see that your godchild is:

- Taught the 10 Commandments, the Christian Creed (aka Apostles Creed), and the Lord's Prayer.
- Given the Holy Bible and brought regularly to worship in God's House.
- Prayed for, reminded of his/her baptism, and guided through a strong relationship with Jesus.

We hope and pray that you find great joy in this responsibility. We don't want you to simply recite words and then never encourage your godchild's faith in Jesus again! We don't want you to stand up, say the words and go through the motions, with no intent or desire to fulfill the promises! We want you to be an active part of this child's spiritual upbringing. Plus, we want you to be a living example—talk the talk and walk the walk!

# BAPTISM

## A quick guide to God-Parenting

Am I up for this?  
Do I really have what it takes?



---

## Redeemer Lutheran Church

---

This is a huge undertaking, right? Maybe it's a bit overwhelming. But what an awesome opportunity! You have the ability to shape the spiritual life of this child in a way that impacts eternity. And you are not in this alone!

Do you know how the book of Matthew ends?

After commanding the disciples to go into the world to baptize and teach, Jesus says: "And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." *Matthew 28:20*

Never forget that. Jesus is your partner in this process.

And so is His church.