

INTRODUCTION

In baptism* God calls both churches and individuals to a journey of faith. It involves repentance and trust - taking hold of transformation and hope within the grace of God.

For some God's call involves public identification with their earlier baptism; for some returning to faith and discipleship; for some accepting new or wider responsibilities within the body of Christ; for some embracing a new vision of the Kingdom that Jesus proclaimed. For some it may mean more than one of these. For all it depends on the activity of the Holy Spirit, who seals, unites and strengthens the people of God and who brings a foretaste of the world to come.

We remember and proclaim at the start of this service the one baptism into Jesus Christ. God provides the grace and courage that is needed to respond to His call. God creates the fellowship of love in which our response is nurtured and supported.

Those who confess their faith today and receive the help of the Holy Spirit through prayer have been accepted according to the practices of the participating churches of this local ecumenical project. In this we are called to be servants of one another through love.

***From the ecumenical statement Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry (Lima, Peru 1982):**

'Through baptism, Christians are brought into union with Christ, with each other and with the Church of every time and place.'

'Baptism ... is a sign of the Kingdom of God and of the life of the world to come.'

'Baptism is both God's gift and our human response to that gift. It looks towards a growth into the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ (Eph 4:13). The necessity of faith for the reception of salvation embodied and set forth in baptism is acknowledged by all churches. Personal commitment is necessary for responsible membership in the body of Christ.'

WORDS OF WELCOME

OPENING HYMN

All Remain Standing

PROCLAIMING BAPTISM

Minister We invite those who have been baptised to join with us in celebrating our baptism in which we are united with Christ and with each other.

All Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

God is faithful, who calls us to share in the life of His Son

All Grace to those who are set apart in Jesus Christ.

Peace to all who in every place call upon His name.

All By one Spirit we were all baptised into one body and all given one Spirit to drink.

All who have been baptised into Christ Jesus have been baptised into His death.

All We were buried with him by baptism into death.

So that, as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, we also may set out on a new life

If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead you will find salvation.

All **Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved**

Welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you for the glory of God.

All **The Kingdom of God is justice, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.**

Blessed be God the Father:

All **Creator of all things.**

Blessed be God the Son;

AH **Baptised in Jordan, crucified at Calvary, risen and glorified.**

Blessed be God the Spirit;

All **Lord and giver of life.**

Let us pray.

Loving Father, we praise you for our confidence and hope in Jesus Christ. We thank you for our shared life in one Church, our baptism into Jesus Christ, and our experience of your Spirit in fellowship and service.

Anoint your Church with your Holy Spirit. Draw together your divided people. Bless those who now respond to your call and take a further step in the Christian way; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

All **Amen.**

MINISTRY OF THE WORD

Please sit

The reading ends with:

Reader This is the word of the Lord

All **Thanks be to God**

HYMN

Please remain standing for the Gospel reading

when the Gospel reading is announced:

All **Glory to Christ our Saviour**

the Gospel reading ends with

Reader This is the Gospel of Christ

All **Praise to Christ our Lord**

THE SERMON

HYMN

TESTIMONY

HYMN

THE BAPTISM, CONFIRMATION AND RE-AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Those to be Baptised, Confirmed and who are Affirming their Faith stand, and the congregation sits

Minister Sisters and brothers in Christ, in baptism God assures us of his gracious favour, brings us into his family, makes us accepted in the Beloved, and brings us through death to life in Christ Jesus. Therefore I ask you to declare your allegiance to Christ and your rejection of all that is evil.

Do you repent of your sins and renounce all evil, and turn to Christ?

Candidates **I do.**

Do you trust in Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord?

Candidates **I do.**

Will you obey Christ and serve Him in the Church and in the world?

Candidates **With His help, I will.**

Minister I ask you now to stand and affirm with these candidates the Christian faith into which we are baptised, and in which we grow.

Do you believe in God the Father?

All **I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

All **I believe in Jesus Christ,
God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the Virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose again;
he ascended into heaven,
he is seated at the right hand of the Father,
and he will come to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

All **I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.**

The congregation sits

Minister Baptism into Jesus Christ calls us to a life of service. From the beginning, believers have continued in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers.

Will you commit yourself to this way of life?

Candidates **I will, with God's help.**

Will you forgive others as you are forgiven?

Candidates **I will, with God's help.**

Will you seek to love your neighbour as yourself, pray for the world and its leaders, and strive for justice and peace?

Candidates **I will, with God's help.**

Will you accept the cost of following Jesus Christ in your daily life and work?

Candidates **I will, with God's help.**

With the whole Church, will you proclaim by word and action the Good News of God in Christ?

Candidates **I will, with God's help.**

THE BAPTISM

The Sponsoring Minister proceeds to the Baptistry with the candidate(s) for Baptism and says

All Let us give thanks to the Lord our God
It is right to give him thanks and praise.
Father, for your gift of water in creation

All **We give you thanks and praise.**
For your Spirit, brooding over the waters, bringing light and life

All **We give you thanks and praise.**
For your Son Jesus Christ our Lord, baptised in the river Jordan

All **We give you thanks and praise.**
For your new creation, brought to birth by water and the Spirit

All **We give you thanks and praise.**
For your grace bestowed upon us as your children washing away our sins

All **We give you thanks and praise.**
Father, accept our sacrifice of praise; May your holy and life-giving Spirit move upon these waters of your new creation.

All **Lord, receive our prayer.**
So, may your servants who are washed in them be made one with your Son, who took the form of a servant.

All **Lord, receive our prayer.**
May your Holy Spirit bring them to new birth in the family of your Church, and raise them in Christ, our anointed Lord, to full and eternal life.

All **Lord, receive our prayer.**
For all might, majesty and dominion are yours, now and forever.

All **Alleluia. Amen.**

The Sponsoring Minister then baptises the candidate(s) addressing each by name.

"N...", I baptise you in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

The Sponsoring Minister makes the sign of the Cross on the forehead of each one who has been baptised, with the words "I sign you with the Cross, the sign of Christ".

HYMN

THE CONFIRMATION

The Bishop and Free Church Minister administer Confirmation together. The candidates who remain standing

Candidates Our help is in the name of the Lord.
Who has made heaven and earth.

Candidates Blessed be the name of the Lord.
Now and forever. Amen.

They stretch out their hands and say

God of mercy and love, by water and the Holy Spirit you have freed these your servants from sin and have given them new life. Grant that they may grow into the fullness of the stature of Christ.

May your Holy Spirit rest upon them:
the Spirit of wisdom and understanding;
the Spirit of right judgment and power;
the Spirit of knowledge and true godliness;
the Spirit of our Lord Jesus Christ.

All Amen

Those to be confirmed come forward in turn to kneel; the Bishop and Free Church Minister lay their hands together on the head of each one saying

Confirm, O Lord, your servant "N . . ." with your Holy Spirit. Empower him/her for your service, and sustain him/her all the days of his/her life.

All Amen

THE AFFIRM ATION

The Bishop and Free Church Minister administer the Affirmation together, and with the candidates

I now call upon those who are affirming their baptismal faith to renew their commitment to Jesus Christ.

The candidate (s) faces the people and make this declaration:

**Candidates I answer the call of God my creator
I trust in Jesus Christ as my Saviour
I seek new life from the Holy Spirit.**

**All God, who has called you, is faithful
Rejoice in your baptism into Jesus Christ.
Walk with us in the life of the Spirit.**

The presiding ministers extend their hands towards those who seek to affirm their baptismal faith and say

God of mercy and love,
In baptism you welcome the sinner
And restore the dead to life.
You create a clean heart in those who repent,
And give your Holy Spirit to those who ask.
Grant that these your servants may grow
Into fulness of the stature of Christ.
Equip them with the gifts of your Holy Spirit,
And fill them with faith in Jesus Christ
And with love for all your people,
In the service of your kingdom. Amen

Those Affirming their Faith come forward in turn to kneel; the Bishop and Free Church Minister lay their hands together on the head of each one saying

"N...." may God renew his life within you that you may confess his name this day and forever.

When all have been Confirmed and Affirmed their Faith the congregation stands and says

All **Defend, O Lord, these your servants with your heavenly grace, that they may continue yours for ever; and daily increase in your Holy Spirit more and more, until they come to your everlasting kingdom. Amen.**

THE WELCOME

The Bishop and Free Church Minister say together to those who have been baptised, confirmed and re-affirmed their faith

You have been baptised into Jesus Christ and made to drink of the one Spirit; enjoy with us the love of God within the one holy catholic and apostolic church.

Each officiating minister says in turn

Free Church Minister

I welcome you within the life of the Baptist Fellowship, the Methodist Church and the United Reformed Church.

Bishop

I welcome you within the life of the Church of England.

Representatives of the Churches of the Partnership add their greetings, saying together

In the name of ... Ecumenical Partnership we welcome you.

Greetings from individual congregations may follow.

The congregation expresses its welcome

All **May God bind us together in a fellowship of love.
We promise you our friendship and our prayer.
We pray that God will use us together to make his love and goodness known.**

THE PEACE

Minister We are the body of Christ in the one spirit we were all baptised into one body. Let us pursue all that makes for peace and build up our common life.

The peace of the Lord be always with you.

All

And also with you.

The people greet one another in the name of the risen Lord.

As the offering is received

Officiating Minister

Here is bread, God's good gift.

All

It will become for us the bread of life.

Officiating Minister

Here is wine, God's good gift.

All It will become for us the cup of salvation.

THE COMMUNION

Officiating Minister

The Lord be with you.

All And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

All We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All It is right to give our thanks and praise.

Blessing and honour, glory and power,
are rightly yours, all-gracious God.

By your creative word you brought the world to birth;
In your generous love you made the human family,
that we might see your glory and live for ever in your
presence.

All Blessing and honour, glory and power, are rightly yours, all-gracious God.

When we wandered from you in our sin
you sought us with your steadfast love and did not give us up.
In the fullness of time you sent your Son to be our Saviour and Deliverer.
Made of flesh and blood, he lived our life
and died our death upon the cross. -
Death could not hold him and now he reigns at your right hand.

All Blessing and honour, glory and power, are rightly yours, all-gracious God.

Therefore with angels and archangels
and with all the company of heaven
we bless and praise your glorious name, saying:

**All Holy, holy, holy Lord,
God of power and might,
Heaven and earth are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest.**

Blessed indeed is the Lord Jesus Christ who, at supper with his friends, took bread and gave you thanks; broke it, gave it to them and said: 'Take this, all of you, and eat; This is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me.'

When supper was ended, he took the cup and gave you thanks, gave it to them, and said: 'Drink from it all of you. This is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for everyone, for the forgiveness of sins. Do this in remembrance of me.'

**All Dying you destroyed our death.
Rising, you restored our life.
Lord Jesus, come in glory.**

Therefore, Father, we celebrate this passover of gladness;
for as in Adam all die,

even so in Christ shall all be made alive.
Accept, through him, our great high priest,
this, our sacrifice of praise.
Send your Holy Spirit that these gifts of bread and wine
may be for us the body and blood of Christ.
Gather us, who share this feast,
into the Kingdom of your glory
that with all your people in every time and place :
we may praise and worship you for ever;
through Jesus Christ our Lord,

All **By whom, and with whom**
In the unity of the Holy Spirit,
All honour and glory are yours,
Heavenly Father, now and always. Amen.

Officiating Minister

Alleluia! Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.

All **Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia!**

Officiating Minister

We meet the risen Christ in the breaking of the bread. Draw near with faith.

All those who are baptised and communicant members of their church are invited to receive communion. Those not yet confirmed, or not regularly in receipt of communion, are invited to come for a prayer of blessing.

When all have received

Officiating Minister

Let us pray

All **God of power our salvation,**
We thank you for our communion with the risen Christ.
We pray that, strengthened by his grace,
We may serve you faithfully all our days;
Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

DISMISSAL & BLESSING

Bishop God the Father,
By whose glory Christ was raised from the dead,
Strengthen *you/us*
To walk with him in his risen life;

Free Church Minister

And may almighty God bless *you/us*,
The Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,

All **Amen.**

Both Ministers Alleluia!

Go in joy and peace to love and serve the Lord.

All **In the name of Christ. Alleluia!**

Baptist. Church of England . Methodist. United Reformed Church