

Reception of new members and the reaffirmation of the baptismal covenant:

After the sermon, a hymn, canticle, psalm, spiritual, or other suitable music may be sung. Those who wish to reaffirm the covenant into which they were baptized, and to be received into church membership gather at the place of baptism.

This service takes place at the baptismal font or pool, which shall be filled with water, being visibly poured from a pitcher.

Also needed: towel or other cloth; oil.

Presentation

An elder, representing the session, presents those who have been received by transfer from other Christian churches, or by reaffirmation of faith, using the appropriate forms:

For those received by letter of transfer

Elder:

On behalf of the session, I present N_____ & N_____, who have been received into the membership of this congregation by transfer from _____ Church of _____.

For those received by reaffirmation of faith

Elder:

On behalf of the session I present N_____, __, and _____, who have been

received into the membership of this congregation by reaffirmation of faith.

Pastor:

You come to us as members of the one holy universal Christian church, into which you were baptized, and by which you have been nurtured. We are one with each other, sisters and brothers in the family of God. We rejoice in the gifts you bring to us. As you join with us in the worship and service of this congregation, it is fitting that together we reaffirm the covenant into which we were baptized, claiming again the promises of God which are ours in our baptism.

Will the gathered congregation please stand?

Hear these words of guidance from Holy Scripture:

1 Peter 2:9

You are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that

you may proclaim the mighty acts of the One who called you out of darkness into God's marvelous light.

Profession of faith

The pastor, addressing those assembled at the font and the congregation, then says:

Sisters and brothers in Christ, our baptism is the sign and seal of our cleansing from sin, and of our being grafted into Christ. Through the birth, life, death, and resurrection of Christ, the power of sin was broken and God's kingdom entered our world. Through our baptism we were made citizens of God's kingdom, and freed from the bondage of sin. Let us celebrate that freedom and redemption through the renewal of the promises made at our baptism.

I ask all of us who have previously declared our submission to Jesus as Lord, therefore, to once again reject sin, and to

profess your faith in Christ Jesus, and to confess the faith of the church, in which we were baptized:

Renunciations

The pastor continues:

Trusting in the gracious mercy of God, do you turn from the ways of sin and renounce evil and its power in the world?

I do.

Who is your Lord and Savior?

Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior.

Will you be Christ's faithful disciple, obeying his Word and showing his love?

I will, with God's help.

Profession

The pastor continues:

With the whole Christian Church, let us all confess our faith by responding to these

questions:

Do you believe in God the Father?

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

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

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?

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy universal Christian church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The congregation may be seated.

The **pastor addresses those assembled at the font or pool**, using one of the following:

You have publicly professed your faith. Will you be a faithful member of this congregation, share in its worship and ministry through your prayers and gifts, your

study and service, and so fulfill your calling to be a disciple of Jesus Christ?

I will, with God's help.

The **elder** offers the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Faithful God, you work in us and for us even when we do not know it. When our path has led us away from you, you guide us back to yourself. We thank you for calling your servants *N. and N.* to the fellowship of your people. Renew in *them* the covenant you made in *their* baptism. By the power of your Spirit, strengthen *them* in faith and love, that *they* may serve you with joy, to the glory of Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Laying on of hands

The candidates kneel.

The **pastor** lays both hands on the head of each of the candidates in turn, while (an elder?) offers the following prayer. The sign of the cross may be marked on the forehead of each candidate. Oil

prepared for this purpose may be used.

Defend, O Lord, your servant N____, with your heavenly grace, that *he/she* may continue yours forever, and daily increase in your Holy Spirit more and more, until *he/she* comes to your everlasting kingdom.

The candidate answers:

Amen.

After each candidate has received the laying on of hands, the pastor prays:

Ever-living God, guard *these* your servants with your protecting hand, and let your Holy Spirit be with *them* forever. Lead *them* to know and obey your Word that *they* may serve you in this life and dwell with you forever in the life to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Welcome

A representative of the session addresses the congregation in these or similar words:

Let us welcome N. and N. as they join with us in the worship and mission of the church!

The people respond, saying:

With joy and thanksgiving we welcome you to share with us in the ministry of Christ, for we are all one in him!

The Peace

The pastor then says to those assembled at the font or pool:

The peace of Christ be with you.

The new members respond:

And also with you.

It is appropriate for the congregation to share with the new members and with each other signs of welcome & hopes for Christ's peace to be evident in their lives as the new members return to their places.