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Handout - Renewing Our Baptism

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Renewing

Our

Baptism



One of the key themes of recent liturgical renewal is the insight that baptism is the root and foundation of the Christian life. In our baptism, we are united to Christ in his death and resurrection (Romans 6). The Christian life is an ongoing experience of the dying of our old selves and rising of the new.

Several practices in Christian worship remind us of our baptism. The entire season of Lent is not first of all an extended meditation on the suffering and death of Jesus, but rather a preparation for or remembrance of our baptism. The declaration of pardon following the prayer of confession is, in many churches, read by the pastor from the baptismal font, a reminder of the grace that is sealed to us in our baptism. Several denominations have developed "remembering your baptism" services. In some of these services, worshipers are invited to physically touch the water of the baptismal font as reminder of their baptism. *(continued on inside of program)*

"Whenever I hear the sound of water flowing or see the water poured out in the sacrament of baptism, my soul is deeply moved and built up as I remember the promises claimed at my own baptism and those of my children. The sighs and sounds of that gesture speak so profoundly to me of the renewal we have in Christ Jesus, claimed in baptism and claimed again each time I remember the promises of my baptism." – *a worshipper*

Each of these practices is designed to nurture what might be called a "baptismal piety," a way of living the Christian life that actively recalls the significance of one's own baptism. As John Calvin once argued: "The benefit which we derive from the sacraments ought by no means to be restricted to the time when they are administered to us....The benefit of baptism lies open to the whole course of life, because the promise which is contained in it is perpetually in force." And as Hughes Oliphant Old has recently reiterated: "Baptism is a sign under which the whole of life is to be lived. Our baptism is always with us, constantly unfolding through the whole of life." (For more on this theme, see John D. Witvliet, "Baptism as a Sacrament of Reconciliation in the Thought of John Calvin," *Studia Liturgica* 27 (1997): 152-165).

Touching the water is not in any way a repetition of baptism. Nor does it imply that the water itself bears any spiritual power. Rather, it is a reminder--a tangible, physical symbol--of the event that is at the root or foundation of the Christian life. Part of the Reformed Church in America's "Remembering Baptism" liturgy includes the minister pouring the water into the baptismal font while saying, "Water cleanses, purifies, refreshes, and sustains. Jesus Christ is the living water." The physical act of coming forward and touching the water of the font is a testimony-in-gesture that our faith is rooted in the Living Water, our Lord Jesus Christ.

This morning we invite you, to experience that renewal as you remember the promises claimed in your baptism.

Morning Worship
Calvin Symposium on Worship and the Arts
January 9, 1999

We Gather to Worship God

(all songs are found after the order of worship)

Prelude

My Life is in You, Lord
The Solid Rock/In Christ Alone

Worship Team
D. Gardner
arr. M. Hayes

Call to Worship

Ps. 95:1-7
Come and Let Us Worship God

J. Bell

Songs of Praise

Blessed Be the Name of the Lord
Shout to the Lord
We Bow Down

C. Utterbach
D. Zschech
V. Grafstrom

Call to Confession Hebrews 4:12-13

Prayer of Confession

Words of Assurance

Response *Praise, Praise, Praise the Lord* Cameroon Processional Song

Sharing Christ's Peace

The Peace of Christ be with you.
And also with you.

We Hear God's Word

Hymn *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing*

Come, thou fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace;
streams of mercy, never ceasing, call for songs of loudest praise.
Teach me some melodious sonnet, sung by flaming tongues above.
Praise the mount—I'm fixed upon it—mount of God's redeeming love.

Here I find my greatest treasure; hither by thy help I've come;
and I hope, by thy good pleasure, safely to arrive at home.
Jesus sought me when a stranger, wandering from the fold of God;
he, to rescue me from danger, bought me with his precious blood.

Oh, to grace how great a debtor daily I'm constrained to be!
Let thy goodness, like a fetter, bind my wandering heart to thee;
prone to wander, Lord, I feel it, prone to leave the God I love;
here's my heart, O take and seal it; seal it for thy courts above.

Prayer of Illumination

Scripture Psalm 95: 7b-11, Exodus 17:1-7, Hebrews 4:1-11

Sermon Today, When You Hear His Voice

Prayer of Blessing

We Respond to God's Word

Confession of our Faith

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, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
and born of the Virgin Mary.
He 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,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

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

Prayers of the People

Kyrie Eleison

(sung response following each section of prayers)

Russian Orthodox

Time of Renewal

(Introduction from Psalm 95 and the "Remembering Baptism" liturgy of the RCA)

I ask you now, in the presence of God and this congregation:

Do you renounce sin and the power of evil in your life and the world?

I renounce them.

Who is your Lord and Savior?

Jesus Christ is my Lord and Savior.

Do you, by the grace of God, promise to be Christ's disciple, to follow in Christ's way to show love, to practice justice, to resist evil, and to witness to the living Christ.

I promise, with the help of God.

Do you promise to devote yourself to the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and in prayer, to celebrate Christ's presence and to further Christ's mission in the world?

I promise, with the help of God.

The Invitation

Come to the Water

Foley

*Benediction

*Response

Praise, Praise, Praise the Lord

Cameroon Processional Song

Postlude

Following this response, please greet your neighbor in the name of Christ, after which we will be seated for the Plenary Session.

Participants:

David Bast, preaching;

Worship Team, Fifth Reformed Church (Grand Rapids):

Betty Jo Bast, Mary Behm, Mike Danielson, Steve Eldersveld, Leslie Overway,

Philip Rose, Steve Robbins, Amy Van Gunst, Mark Vogel,

Matt Vogel, Randy Wolthuis, leading;

Lisa Eldersveld, Carole Fields, Paula Vanderzee, Susan Wilson, sacred dancers.

Come and Let Us Worship

1 Come and let us wor-ship God—
 2 Though so - ci - ety goes a - stray—
 3 Let us hear our Ma-ker's voice—

turn to serve the liv - ing Lord.—
 keen to find an ea - sier way,—
 and let Christ in - form each choice.—

Come and wor-ship God serve the liv-ing

Move from where we are mis - led.—
 let our eyes be on God's care.—
 Sis - ter wo - men, bro - ther men,—

do as an - cient pro - phets said.—
 ev - i - dent and ev - ery - where.—
 let us turn to God a - gain.—

Lord. are mis-led

Oh, our ev - er lov - ing God,— we the crea - tures of your Word,—

come to make our home in you,— know - ing that your Word is true.—

The Name of the Lord

Bless-ed be the name of the Lord, — bless-ed be the name of the Lord, —
Je - sus is the name of the Lord. — Je - sus is the name of the Lord. —

bless-ed be the name of the Lord, most high. — Bless-ed be the name of the Lord, —
Je - sus is the name of the Lord, most high. — Je - sus is the name of the Lord. —

bless-ed be the name of the Lord, — bless-ed be the name of the Lord, most high. —
Je - sus is the name of the Lord. — Je - sus is the name of the Lord, most high. —

The name of the Lord — is a strong tow - er, the right-eous run in -

to it and they are saved. — The name of the Lord is

a strong tow - er, the right-eous run in - to it and they are saved. —

Words and music by Clinton Utterbach; arr. by Carol Cymbala.

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We Bow Down

Four staves of music in 3/4 time, key of D major. The lyrics are: We bow down and confess You are Lord in this place. We bow down and confess You are Lord in this place. You are all I need; it's Your face I seek. In the presence of Your light we bow down, we bow down.

Words and music by Viola Grafstrom
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Praise, Praise, Praise the Lord

Four systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: Praise, praise, praise the Lord! Praise God's ho - ly name. Al - le - lu - ia! Praise, praise, praise the Lord! Praise God's ho - ly name. Al - le - lu - ia! Praise God's ho - ly name. Al - le - lu - ia! Praise God's ho - ly name. Al - le - lu - ia! Praise God's ho - ly name. Al - le - lu - ia!

Collected by Elaine Hanson, arr. Ralph M. Johnson
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Kyrie Eleison

The image shows a musical score for 'Kyrie Eleison' in Russian Orthodox style. It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a basso continuo line. The key signature is three sharps (F#, C#, G#) and the time signature is 4/4. The first system contains two phrases: 'Ky - ri - e e - lei - son Lord, have mer - cy;' and 'Ky - ri - e e - lei - son. Lord, have mer - cy;'. The second system contains the phrase 'Ky - ri - e e - le mer - cy - on i - son. Lord, have mer - cy on i - son. us.' The music is written in a style characteristic of Russian Orthodox liturgical music, with a focus on the text and a simple, rhythmic accompaniment.

Words: Greek litany
Music: Russian Orthodox liturgy