***Introduction***

Baptism marks the beginning of a journey with God which continues for the rest of our lives, the first step in response to God’s love. For all involved, particularly the candidates but also parents, godparents and sponsors, it is a joyful moment when we rejoice in what God has done for us in Christ, making serious promises and declaring the faith. The wider community of the local church and friends welcome the new Christian, promising support and prayer for the future. Hearing and doing these things provides an opportunity to remember our own baptism and reflect on the progress made on that journey, which is now to be shared with this new member of the Church.

The service paints many vivid pictures of what happens on the Christian way. There is the sign of the cross, the badge of faith in the Christian journey, which reminds us of Christ’s death for us. Our ‘drowning’ in the water of baptism, where we believe we die to sin and are raised to new life, unites us to Christ’s dying and rising, a picture that can be brought home vividly by the way the baptism is administered. Water is also a sign of new life, as we are born again by water and the Spirit, as Jesus was at his baptism. And as a sign of that new life, there may be a lighted candle, a picture of the light of Christ conquering the darkness of evil. Everyone who is baptized walks in that light for the rest of their lives.

As you pray for the candidates, picture them with yourself and the whole Church throughout the ages, journeying into the fullness of God’s love.

*Jesus said, ‘I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly.’*  John 10.10

**INTRODUCTION**

**The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God**

**and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all**

**And also with you**

Let us pray

Heavenly God,
by the power of your Holy Spirit
you give to your faithful people new life in the water of baptism.
Guide and strengthen us by the same Spirit,
that we who are born again may serve you in faith and love,
and grow into the full stature of your Son, Jesus Christ,
who is alive and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit
now and for ever. **Amen.**

***An Explanation of Baptism***

**PRESENTATION OF THE CANDIDATES**

Faith is the gift of God to his people.

In baptism the Lord is adding to our number those whom he is calling.

People of God, will you welcome *these children/candidates* and uphold *them* in *their* new life in Christ?
**With the help of God, we will.**

Parents and godparents, the Church receives *these children* with joy. Today we are trusting God for *their* growth in faith. Will you pray for *them,* draw *them* by your example into the community of faith and walk with *them* in the way of Christ?
**With the help of God, we will.**

In baptism *these children* begin *their* journey in faith. You speak for *them* today. Will you care for *them*, and help *them* to take *their* place within the life and worship of Christ’s Church?
**With the help of God, we will.**

**THE DECISION**

In baptism, God calls us out of darkness into his marvellous light.
To follow Christ means dying to sin and rising to new life with him.
Therefore I ask:

Do you turn from sin?

**I turn from sin**

Do you renounce evil?

**I renounce evil**

Do you turn to Christ?

**I turn to Christ**

**SIGNING WITH THE CROSS**

Christ claims you for his own.
Receive the sign of his cross.

Do not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified.
**Fight valiantly as a disciple of Christ**
**against sin, the world and the devil,**
**and remain faithful to Christ to the end of your life.**

May almighty God deliver you from the powers of darkness,
restore in you the image of his glory,
and lead you in the light and obedience of Christ. **Amen.**

***We all move to the font***

**Prayer over the Water**

Praise God who made heaven and earth,

*All* **who keeps his promise for ever.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

*All* **It is right to give thanks and praise.**

Father, for your gift of water in creation,

*All* **we give you thanks and praise.**

For your Spirit, sweeping over the waters,

bringing light and life,

*All* **we give you thanks and praise.**

**.**

For your Son Jesus Christ our Lord,

baptized 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 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.

*All* **Lord, receive our prayer.**

Restore through them the beauty of your creation,

and bring those who are baptized

to new birth in the family of your Church.

*All* **Lord, receive our prayer.**

Drown sin in the waters of judgement,

anoint your children with power from on high,

and make them one with Christ

in the freedom of your kingdom.

*All* **Lord, receive our prayer.**

For all might, majesty, dominion and power are yours,

now and for ever.

*All* **Alleluia. Amen.**

Profession of Faith

*The priest addresses the congregation*

Let us affirm, together with these who are being baptized,

our common faith in Jesus Christ.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father,

source of all being and life,

the one for whom we exist?

*All* **We believe and trust in God.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Son,

who took our human nature,

died for us and rose again?

*All* **We believe and trust in God.**

Do you believe and trust in God the Holy Spirit,

who gives life to the people of God

and makes Christ known in the world?

*All* **We believe and trust in God.**

This is the faith of the Church.

*All* **This is our faith.**

**We believe and trust in one God,**

**Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

*If the candidates can answer for themselves,* *the priest says to each one*:

N, is this your faith

**This is my faith**

**BAPTISM**

*N,* I baptize you
in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

May God, who has received you by baptism into his Church,
pour upon you the riches of his grace,
that within the company of Christ’s pilgrim people
you may daily be renewed by his anointing Spirit,
and come to the inheritance of the saints in glory. **Amen.**

***We return to our seats***

**COMMISSION**

We have brought *these children* to baptism knowing that Jesus died and

rose again for *them* and trusting in the promise that God hears and

answers prayer. We have prayed that in Jesus Christ *they* will know the forgiveness of *their* sins and the new life of the Spirit.

As *they* grow up, *they* will need the help and encouragement of the Christian community, so that *they* may learn to know God in public worship and private prayer, follow Jesus Christ in the life of faith, serve *their* neighbour after the example of Christ, and in due course come to confirmation.

As part of the Church of Christ, we all have a duty to support *them* by prayer, example and teaching. As *their* parents and godparents, you have the prime responsibility for guiding and helping *them* in *their* early years. This is a demanding task for which you will need the help and grace of God.

Therefore let us now pray for grace in guiding *these children* in the way

of faith.

Faithful and loving God,
bless those who care for *these children*and grant them your gifts of love, wisdom and faith.
Pour upon them your healing and reconciling love,
and protect their home from all evil.
Fill them with the light of your presence
and establish them in the joy of your kingdom,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*N and N,*today God has touched you with his love
and given you a place among his people.
God promises to be with you
in joy and in sorrow,
to be your guide in life,
and to bring you safely to heaven.
In baptism God invites you on a life-long journey.
Together with all God’s people
you must explore the way of Jesus
and grow in friendship with God,
in love for his people,
and in serving others.
With us you will listen to the word of God
and receive the gifts of God.

**THE LORD’S PRAYER**

Let us pray with confidence as our Saviour has taught us

**Our Father, who art in heaven,**

**hallowed be thy name;**

**thy kingdom come;**

**thy will be done;**

**on earth as it is in heaven.**

**Give us this day our daily bread.**

**And forgive us our trespasses,**

**as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

**And lead us not into temptation;**

**but deliver us from evil.**

**For thine is the kingdom,**

**the power and the glory,**

**for ever and ever. Amen.**

Giving of a Lighted Candle

God has delivered us from the dominion of darkness and has given us a place with the saints in light.

You have received the light of Christ;

walk in this light all the days of your life.

*All* **Shine as a light in the world**

**to the glory of God the Father.**

The Candle Lighting song

 **Light the candle every day**

 **When we come to church to pray**

 **See the flame all glowing bright**

 **Warm and softly bringing light.**

 **Jesus is like a candle too.**

 **He will shine his light on you.**

***The Blessing***

The God of all grace,who called you to his

 eternal glory in Christ Jesus, establish,

 strengthen and settle you in the faith;

and the blessing of God almighty,

the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,

be with you and remain with you always.

*All* **Amen.**

The Dismissal

Go in the light and peace of Christ.

*All* **Thanks be to God.**