

BAPTISM POLICY - APPENDIX B

New Castle Presbyterian Church Policies and Procedures

BAPTISM AT NEW CASTLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Baptism is one of two sacraments celebrated by the Presbyterian Church. The other is the Lord's Supper.

A sacrament is an enactment of God's promises to us and our enactment of response. The experience of a sacrament is of great importance to our understanding of the relationship God offers us.

The central symbol for baptism is water. Ordinary water becomes the seal of God's grace in joining us to Jesus Christ, in washing away sin, and in including us into the family of God that is the church.

By Baptism we join the sacred story of our creation by God, our salvation through the Flood and the Exodus, and our redemption in Jesus' baptism by John the Baptist.

Baptism calls us to repentance, faithfulness and discipleship in the world.

Who May Be Baptized

Anyone of any age may be baptized. The Presbyterian Church practices the baptism of children as witness to the truth that God's love claims people even before they are able to respond. Adults witness to God's grace which calls them to respond in a life of faithfulness.

Vows are made for oneself or one's child that:

- profess faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior
- renounce evil and affirm reliance on God's grace
- declare intention to participate actively and responsibly in the worship and mission of the church
- provide for the Christian nurture of one's child.

Baptism is received only once. The Presbyterian Church (USA) recognizes all Baptisms with water in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit administered by other Christian churches.

How to Plan for Baptism

First contact the Pastor of the Church. Pre-baptismal counseling with the Pastor is required.

A "Request for Baptism" form will be provided by the Pastor.

Baptism is approved by the Session – the governing group of the church – upon recommendation of the Pastor.

Those being Baptized, or at least one of the parents/guardians of an infant or child to be baptized, will ordinarily be active members of the New Castle Presbyterian

Church or another Christian congregation. Exceptions are at the discretion of the Pastor and the Session.

Baptism takes place within a worship service.

Baptism as an Act of the Church

Baptism is a Holy Sacrament and a serious commitment involving public vows before God and the Christian family of faith. It involves responsive participation by the congregation of faith.

Therefore, Baptism is celebrated during a regularly scheduled service of Worship. The congregation promises to guide and nurture those being baptized in their faith and so acts as a community of godparents. Though there are no designated individual godparents, relatives and sponsors are welcome to join those being baptized with the Pastor at the Sacrament of Baptism.

Policies regarding recording during a worship service will be observed. For example, unobtrusive video recording from the balcony and natural light photography may be permitted. Flash photography is not permitted.

Baptism is the sign of God's grace and our response to that grace. We reaffirm the covenant of our baptism throughout our lives that we may be empowered to be faithful disciples in our world.

Reviewed and Approved by Session 13 Aug 2024

MEMBERSHIP/BAPTISMAL VOWS

Affirmation of Faith/Reaffirmation/Baptism Vows:

Relying on God's grace, do you promise to live the Christian faith, and to teach that faith to your child? (for baptism of infants)

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

Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Lord and Savior, trusting in his grace and love?

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

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? (for baptism of adults)

Congregational Vows:

Do you, as members of the church of Jesus Christ, promise to guide and nurture (name or names) by word and deed, with love and prayer, encouraging *him/her* to know and follow Christ and to be a faithful *member* of his church?

Sponsor Vows: (if any)

Do you promise, through prayer and example, to support and encourage (name) to be a faithful Christian?

New Castle Presbyterian Church
25 E. 2nd Street
New Castle, Delaware 19720

REQUEST FOR BAPTISM

Please complete and submit this request form only after contacting the Pastor. You may give it to the Church Administrative Assistant during office hours or mail it to the Church Office and it will be given to the Session for review and approval. (*please PRINT and use **dark ink***)

Individual to be Baptized

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Birth date and age: _____

Place of birth (city): _____

Parents/Guardians of Individual to be Baptized (if applicable)

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Member of NCPC: Yes No

Member of another congregation: Yes No (If yes, name of congregation): _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

Member of NCPC: Yes No

Member of another congregation: Yes No (If yes, name of congregation): _____

Grandparents, Sponsors, Brothers, Sisters:

Name & Relationship to Baptized: _____

Name & Relationship to Baptized: _____

Name & Relationship to Baptized: _____

Others if applicable: _____

Scheduling

Date(s) or Proposed Date(s) of Pre-Baptismal Counseling:

Date(s) Requested for Baptism (include alternate dates)

SESSION APPROVAL: FOR INTERNAL NCPC USE ONLY

Name _____

Pastor Concurrence:

- 1. Are individual/Parents Members of NCPC? Yes: No:
- 2. Do they wish to join: Yes: No:
- 3. Has Pre-Baptismal Counseling been Held? Yes: No:
- 4. Recommendation: Yes: No:

Comments: _____

Session Concurrence:

- 1. Session Consideration Held: Date: _____
- 2. Date Baptism Scheduled: Date: _____
- 3. Session Decision: Approved: Guidelines Unmet:

Comments: _____

Moderator: _____

Date: _____

Clerk of Session: _____

Date: _____