

Living in the Joy of Our Baptism!



Growing in the Grace of Baptism!

“People were bringing their newborn babies to Jesus,
to have Him touch them!” Luke 18:15

The Care of Baptized Children

Grace Evangelical Lutheran Church

Durham, NC



Mission Statement: Baptism is a Sacrament of God's Word and Grace in which He calls us by name, assures us of our salvation, and knits us into the Body of Christ. He binds us to the cross of Christ, so that we may know the fullness of His love through His forgiving grace, and He gives us His Holy Spirit, that we may serve Him and others through the wisdom and strength which He alone provides.

As witnesses of God's saving action, and as fellow believers who share the core identity of being forgiven sinners, chosen saints, and beloved children, we pledge to pray for these children as they grow in faith, and for their parents as they teach the lessons of Christian faith in the home.

The Care of Baptized Children provides Congregational celebrations of faith life milestones, which includes the presentation of supportive gifts, and age-appropriate resources for parents to use in home worship and teaching.

Dimensions of this supportive/connective ministry include:

- 1) Grace-ing Babies: Birth – 1½; Baptism; Grace Friends; First year Baptism birthday celebration on Easter Sunday; Teaching resources for parents.
- 2) Pictures that Teach: Age 2 - Presentation of Picture Bible; Visual teaching resources for parents.
- 3) Learning to Pray: Age 4 – Presentation of Resources for Family Prayer/Devotions.
- 4) Words from God: Age 6 – Presentation of Children's Bible; Teaching resources for parents.
- 5) Joyful Servants: Age 8 – Presentation of Towel & Basin; Home-centered serving activities.
- 6) Disciple Life: Age 10 – Presentation of First Catechism; Home teaching resources for parents.

Newborns in Grace: Teaching Resources for Parents

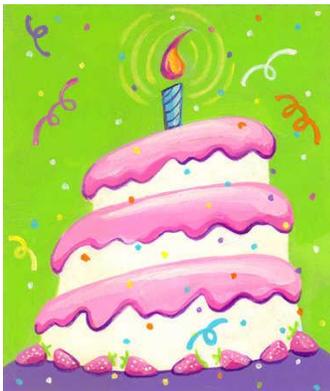
We teach and believe that in Holy Baptism, your child receives true and saving faith! This helps us understand that faith is not primarily an intellectual formulation, but rather, that it is a trust in the loving God Who holds us. You see this truth with your child even now, as they respond to your voice, recognize your face, and rest most securely in your arms.

Much of what you will teach your child about faith will be non-verbal. You will teach with your touch and your attitudes, by how you respond to the challenges from your child and from the world. We are praying for God to help you with this tremendously precious and important vocation of being a parent. As you teach many things, may the Holy Spirit help you also to teach faith in Jesus Christ!

Following are suggestions on how you may teach and model Christian faith to your child in a variety of settings. Remember that you yourself are a Baptized Child of the Father, and He will keep His promise to be with you and to do His good work through you!



Candles/Light: At your child's Baptism, you received a candle that was lit from the Christ Candle, symbolizing that the new life in faith is rooted in the eternal life of Jesus Christ! Light is a powerful and positive experience for your young child. When you turn on lights and light candles, you can say, "God shines in the darkness!" or "Jesus is the Light of the world!" Songs such as "This Little Light of Mine" and "Shine, Jesus, Shine!" are happy ways to celebrate God's loving presence with your child.



Baptismal Birthday: You certainly will always remember your child's birthday! How special to also remember and celebrate their Baptismal Birthday! The bib you received at Baptism and the Banner you received at Easter are marked with this special date for your child. Perhaps you can light their Baptism candle every year on this date.

Mealtime: Feeding a baby can be quite a challenge! As they spit out their food, remember that God spoon-feeds us with His grace. We know that it is sweet, but somehow we resist His goodness and spit it out. God is such a loving Parent that He tries again and again, until we are fed!



The Sign of the Cross: This sign was made on your child when they were baptized. It is a reminder that we are marked with the cross – that we belong to Jesus and we are His. As the priest in your home, make the sign of the cross on your child’s forehead before they go to sleep. This is the first and great unspoken prayer – we rest in Christ!

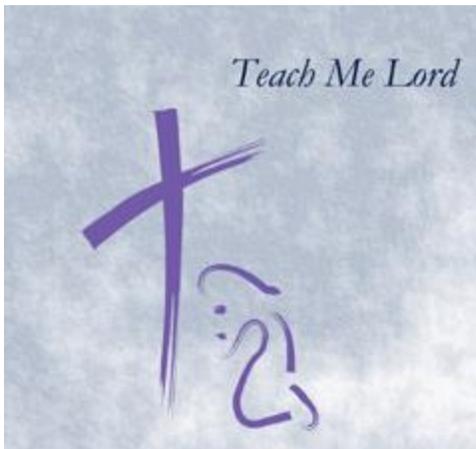
The Name of Jesus: Help your child to associate their name with Jesus. A wonderful way to do this is to sing “Jesus Loves Me” and simply to insert their name in the place of “me.”

Bath Time: As you wash your child, a fun way to celebrate how wondrously God has made them is to sing this song to the tune of “The Wheels on the Bus,” using many different body parts for the verses:

“Your cute little toes are the Body of Christ, Body of Christ, Body of Christ, Your cute little toes are the Body of Christ, all through your life!”



Diapers and other Messes: Cleaning up after your child, from diapers to the high chair and the crib and the car seat, can seem never-ending. As you clean up mess after mess, remember that God continually enters our messy lives to bring us His love and grace. He does not tire of cleaning/forgiving us, nor does He become disgusted with the mess/sin we have made. Pray to God to help you with these daily challenges. He is a Parent Who understands and He will help you!



A Fun Game: Peek-a-boo is just too fun! Add a meaningful rhyme – “God loves you!”

Please & Thank You: These are for you! Your child is too young to learn to say these words, but you can, and your child can learn these words because they hear them so often from you. You can say, "God, please help me!" and you can say, "Thank You, God, for ...!"

The Power of Touch: Your child will gladly grasp your finger. Teach that this holding onto someone you trust is love. Make this a time to teach - "Mommy loves you! Daddy loves you! God loves you!"



Colors: Your child may not appreciate this now, but in pictures they will see later, they may recognize the time of year when the picture was taken by the colors of their clothing. Dress them in "Holy Day" colors that reflect the celebrations of the life of Christ!

Hugs: You will hug your child often and naturally convey your love for them. Assure them at these times that "God hugs you!" and celebrate that God is hugging you as well, so that when it looks like only 2 people are hugging each other, there are actually 3 people present!

Car Seats: Car seats can be their own special challenge! They are certainly a great aid in safety, yet they can be a burden to operate. Turn this frequent task into a prayer, using the clicks of the buckles as petitions: "Here's a click to keep you safe; Here's a click because God is great! Here's a click to remind us to pray; Here's the last click - we're on our way!"

The Blessings of Worship: Bring your child to church! They will respond to the music and colors. Be glad if they sing along with their own noises!

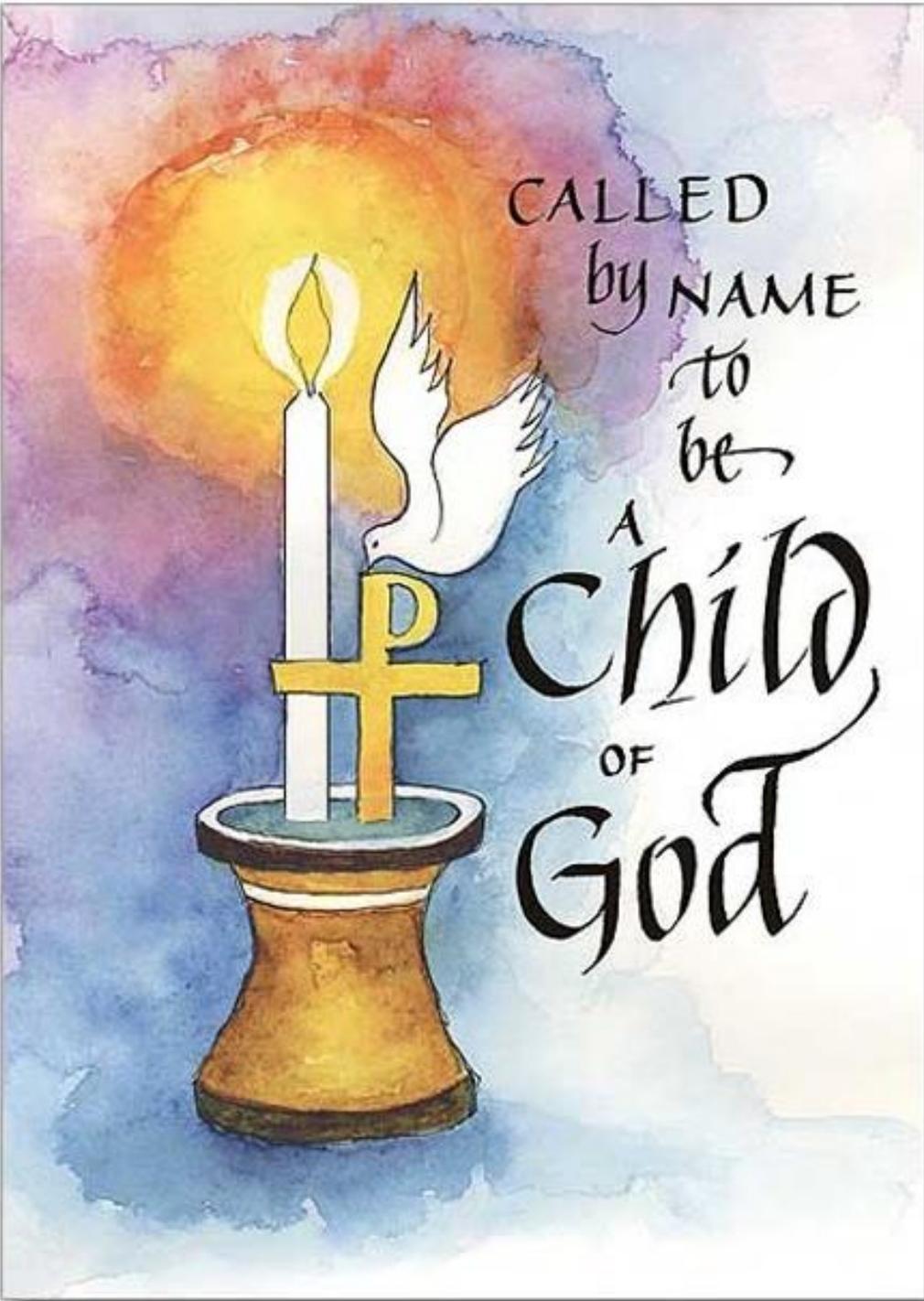
Don't be embarrassed if they cry - babies cry! How well it has been said, that a baby's cry is God's "Yes!" that the world should go on! You can take a break in the narthex when crying goes too long, and you can still see and hear the service. This connection with worship is also a connection with fellow worshippers, who will get to know your child and who will keep your family in prayer and encourage you in your parenting. We give thanks for the mutual encouragement of believers.



Blessing at Holy Communion: Bring your child to the altar for a blessing at Holy Communion, and give thanks for how God blesses you to be a family which is supported by His love every day.

Amazing Love: It is amazing what your child cannot do! They cannot walk, talk, feed or bathe themselves. Yet you love them so! This confirms that God loves us not for what we can do, but for who we are - for we are His beloved children. What amazing love!





CALLED
by NAME
to
be

A
Child
OF
God