



LITURGY FOR THE
REAFFIRMATION
OF
BAPTISMAL VOWS

from The Joint Commission on Doctrine of the
Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland

FOREWORD

In 2007 the Joint Commission on Doctrine of the Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland published a study book entitled, *Baptism: Catholic and Reformed*. Now, very much as a fruit of that work, the Joint Commission has drafted a form of words or liturgical service containing a reaffirmation of baptismal vows, to be used in the course of ecumenical gatherings, and offers it to the churches of Scotland for appropriate use.

In order to produce this liturgy, the Joint Commission sought the help of three liturgists: Rev Alan Birss from the Church of Scotland, Fr David Wallace from the Roman Catholic Church and Rev Darren McFarland from the Scottish Episcopal Church. The inclusion of the Scottish Episcopal Church in this part of the project indicates the intention of the Joint Commission to produce this liturgy as a significant ecumenical contribution to the marking of the 450th anniversary of the Reformation Parliament. The three traditions that were to emerge as separate churches from the turbulent period of the Scottish Reformation in the 16th and 17th centuries are now pleased to be able to recognise their common baptism in Jesus Christ. We are not in the same place today as we were four hundred and fifty years ago. Building on our study of Baptism, the liturgy provides a significant step forward in the search for that Christian unity which is Christ's gift to his church.

While the Liturgy is clearly the fruit of the particular study undertaken by the Joint Commission, it is gladly offered for use beyond the bounds of the two denominations on any ecumenical occasion when it is appropriate to recall and reaffirm our baptism. And we pray that, as the liturgy is used, so God may deepen the sense of our common calling to share in his mission to the world in Jesus' name and for his sake.

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SERVICE FOR THE RENEWAL OF BAPTISMAL VOWS IN AN ECUMENICAL SETTING

Before or during the opening hymn, a jug of water may be brought in and placed as a focal point.

HYMN

GREETING

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all
and also with you

OR

Grace, mercy and peace from God our Father and
Christ Jesus our Lord

In the old covenant,
God chose Israel to be his people.
He showed them his ways
And gave them his laws.
We stand within the new covenant
made by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ,
and we bear his name.

continued

We are initiated into this covenant by baptism,
dying with Christ,
being buried with Christ,
and rising with Christ
to a life of faith, hope and love.

In the strength of the covenant,
which he has made with his people,
and mindful of our shortcomings,
let us bind ourselves anew to God
who has so graciously bound himself to us.
and let us gladly
take the yoke of Christ upon us.

This or some other suitable prayer is said

LET US PRAY:

Open the heavens,
almighty Father,
and pour out your Spirit
upon your people gathered in prayer.
Renew the power of our baptismal cleansing
and fill us with zeal for good deeds.
Let us hear your voice once again
that we may recognise in your beloved Son
our hope of inheriting eternal life.
Grant this through Jesus Christ, your Word made flesh,
who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit,
in the splendour of eternal light,
God for ever and ever
Amen¹.

THE WORD OF GOD

Two or three readings
(one of which should be a reading from the Gospels).
A psalm may be said or sung between the readings
or a hymn sung.

The following readings may be suitable for this service:

Old Testament

Exodus 17. 1-7

Ezekiel 36. 24-28

Psalm

Psalm 23 (22)

Psalm 27 (26)

Psalm 42 (41)

Psalm 99 (100)

New Testament

Acts 8. 26-40

Romans 6. 3-11

1 Corinthians 12. 12-27

Gospel

Matthew 28. 16-20

Mark 1. 4-11

Mark 12. 28-34

ADDRESS

A period of silent reflection may follow

AFFIRMATION OF BAPTISM

All stand

Do you believe in God the Father?
**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe in God the Son?
**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 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.**

This is the faith of the Church.
**This is our faith in one God, Father Son and Holy Spirit
We are proud to profess it together**

The jug of water brought in at the beginning of the service is now taken and poured into the font or some other suitable container in a place where it can be seen by all. If circumstances permit, it may be appropriate for all to gather round the font at this point in the service.

Praise to you, almighty God and Father,
for you have created water to cleanse and to give life
Blessed be God.

Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, the Father's only Son,
for you offered yourself on the cross,
that in the blood and water flowing from your side
and through your death and resurrection
the Church might be born.
Blessed be God.

Praise to you, God the Holy Spirit,
for you anointed Christ at his baptism in the waters of the Jordan,
so that we might all be baptised in you.
Blessed be God².

At this point, those present may wish to recall their own baptism by immersing a hand in the water and, if they wish, making the sign of the cross.

A Hymn may be sung

² Excerpts from the English translation of *Rite of Baptism for Children* © 1999, International Committee on English in the Liturgy, Inc. All rights reserved.

COMMITMENT TO THE CHRISTIAN LIFE

As a disciple of Christ will you continue
in the Apostles' teaching and fellowship,
in the breaking of bread
and in prayer?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you proclaim the good news by word and deed,
serving Christ in all people?

With the help of God, I will.

Will you work for justice and peace,
honouring God in all creation?

With the help of God, I will.

This is the task of the Church.

**This is our task;
to live and work for the kingdom of God.**

THE SHARING OF CHRIST'S PEACE AND THE LORD'S PRAYER

God has made us one in Christ.
He has set his seal upon us and, as a pledge of what is to come,
has given the Spirit to dwell in our hearts.

The peace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.
and also with you.

Those present may greet one with other with such words as:

The peace of Christ be with you.

Having renewed our baptismal vows and having committed ourselves to live and work for the kingdom of God, we are more confident to call God our father and to pray:

Our Father in heaven hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial and deliver us from evil.
(For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever.)
Amen

OR

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

OR

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
(For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever.)
Amen

BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

The blessing of almighty God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit,
be with you and remain with you, for ever

Amen

Go in the peace of Christ.

Thanks be to God.

A hymn may be sung

Appendix 1

Suitable hymns include:

- Baptised in water (*tune Bunessan*)
- Be thou my vision (*tune Slane*)
- Bless the Lord, my soul (*Taizé*)
- Christ when for us you were baptised (*tune Billing*)
- Dear Lord and Father of mankind (*tune Repton*)
- Lord, you have come to the sea-shore
(*Cesareo Gabarain, English translation: Robert Trupia*)
- Love divine, all loves excelling
(*tunes Love Divine, Blaenwern, Hyfrydol*)
- Jesus I have promised (*tunes Wolvercote, Thornbury*)
- On Jordan's bank (*tune Winchester New*)
- Praise to the holiest (*tune Gerontius*)
- Sing to the Lord's goodness (*Ernest Sands, 1981*)
- The Lord's my Shepherd (*tune Crimond*)
- The sinless one to Jordan came (*tune Solemnis haec festivitas*)
- We have a gospel to proclaim (*tune Fulda*)
- When Jesus came to Jordan (*tune Offertorium*)
- Your love is finer than life (*Marty Haughen, 1982, from psalm 62[63]*)

REAFFIRMATION OF BAPTISMAL VOWS

In 2007 the Joint Commission on Doctrine of the Church of Scotland and the Roman Catholic Church in Scotland produced a study booklet entitled *Baptism: Catholic and Reformed*.

In the light of this study, the Joint Commission has continued its work on Baptism by commissioning this liturgy for the Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows with a view to offering it as a resource to all churches for use on appropriate ecumenical occasions. The production of the liturgy reflects the remarkable breakthrough in our understanding of Baptism as the sacrament that binds us at once to Christ and to one another.

Ideally it should be used in conjunction with the study booklet and with a short PowerPoint presentation, *A Catholic and Reformed Perspective on our Common Baptism*, which gives the background to these developments.

