



**Saint John in the Wilderness Episcopal Church**  
**2175 1<sup>st</sup> Street**  
**White Bear Lake, MN 55110**  
**651-429-5351**

***Dear Friends in Christ,***

Welcome to our Baptism preparation workshop for parents and sponsors of infants and children. The workshop itself is not a “test” for anyone, but is simply a way for those presenting children for Baptism to understand the process better, and to be able to discuss their own ideas about Baptism and raising a child in the Christian church.

Christian Baptism is more than a rite of passage or of admission into the church community, although these are components of it. In Baptism we make promises for our children and ourselves to be part of God’s people in a Christian community. Our promises become a covenant with each other and with God. Through them we acknowledge that we are set apart to live a life that recognizes God as the center, and that all of Creation – including each person – is a gift from God. The occasion of Baptism is a one-time event; it is not an end in itself, but the beginning of a lifelong commitment to live into this covenant with God and God’s people. In joining with others being baptized, we also recommit ourselves to being part of this covenant.

In this workshop we will explore the meanings of the portions of the baptismal ritual which asks questions of parents, sponsors, and community members. There are no right or wrong answers, but simply a way to better understand the relationships among individuals, community, and God.

The Baptismal Covenant begins with questions about traditional Christian teachings. The responses are within the story we teach and trust: the Apostles’ Creed. We will not review them here, but you may want to consider the responses on pages 304-305 of the *Book of Common Prayer*. (For the entire service of Holy Baptism, see the *BCP*, pages 298-314.)

May God bless you and your loved ones on your spiritual journey. We welcome all seekers in the Name of Jesus Christ.

***Sincerely,***

***The Community of Saint John in the Wilderness***

# Saint John in the Wilderness Baptism Preparation Worksheet Infants and Young Children

## I. *Presentation and Examination of the Candidates*

### A. Presentation of Infants and Younger Children

Parents and Godparents

I present N. to receive the Sacrament of Baptism.

*Celebrant*

Will you be responsible for seeing that the child you present is brought up in the Christian faith and life?

Parents and Godparents

I will, with God's help.

**What does "having faith" mean to you? How do you understand your own commitment to the Christian life? How will you model this in bringing up your child?**

*Celebrant*

Will you by your prayers and witness help this child to grow into the full stature of Christ?

Parents and Godparents

I will, with God's help.

**What role do prayer and witness play in your own life? In what ways will your example help your child grow in faith?**

### B. The Renunciations

*Question* Do you renounce Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God?

*Answer* I renounce them.

**Satan is a Hebrew word meaning "adversary" or "tempter." 'Satan' is a personification of all the negative and life-destroying forces that oppose God and Godliness. When you say this for you child, what does it mean for you? From what negative or life-destroying influences do you want to turn away as you raise your child?**

*Question* Do you renounce the evil powers of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?

*Answer* I renounce them.

**From what "evil powers" (political, social, economic, or other systems) do you wish to protect your child? In what ways will you do this?**

*Question* Do you renounce all sinful desires that draw you from the love of God?

*Answer* I renounce them.

**What are some of the human failings which inhibit God's children from becoming what God has intended them to be? How will you help your child recognize their own humanity, and the propensity of each of us to turn away from God?**

### **C. The Affirmations**

*Question* Do you turn to Jesus Christ and accept him as your Savior?

*Answer* I do.

**How do you understand a relationship with a savior? How will you teach your child to recognize their needs, and to ask for and accept the support of God and others in their life's journey?**

*Question* Do you put your whole trust in his grace and love?

*Answer* I do.

**What does it mean to you to "put your whole trust" in God's love? How will you teach your child to trust in God's mercy and love for them?**

*Question* Do you promise to follow and obey him as your Lord?

*Answer* I do.

**What does it mean for you to promise to "follow" and "obey"? How will you teach your child to follow the Christian way of life?**

*The Celebrant addresses the congregation, saying*

Will you who witness these vows do all in your power to support *these persons* in *their* life in Christ?

*People* We will.

**How do you understand Christian community? How will you teach your child to become an active part of the Christian community, and to be open to and supportive of others?**

## II. *The Baptismal Covenant*

*Celebrant* Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

*People* I will, with God's help.

**What does it mean for you to raise your child as an active Christian in regular fellowship with the community? How will you do this?**

*Celebrant* Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

*People* I will, with God's help.

**We recognize that we are human, and will fail at times, but we will not give up on God's mercy or the support of the community. How will you raise your child to understand that commitment?**

*Celebrant* Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?

*People* I will, with God's help.

**What does "proclaiming the Good News" mean to you? How will you raise your child to proclaim the Gospel in all aspects of life?**

*Celebrant* Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?

*People* I will, with God's help.

**What does seeking and serving "Christ in all persons" mean to you? How will you teach your child to recognize Christ's presence in others?**

*Celebrant* Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?

*People* I will, with God's help.

**What is your own commitment to affirming dignity, peace, and justice among all people? How will you teach your child to do this?**