



## Preparing for “Walking Wet” with First Lutheran Church

We thank and praise God for the gift of new life you have received in the birth of your child. And we thank and praise God for the gift of new life He has promised us in Jesus Christ.

Baptism is a marvelous event that sets the tone and begins to lay the foundation of faith for a life time. There are two promises around which we gather during baptism. **The first most fundamental is the promise that God makes to us in the waters of baptism...the promise of forgiveness & peace with God...the promise of victory over death, in all the various ways we taste the sting of death in life...the promise of salvation and of life in God’s kingdom.** Through the Word of God attached to the visible element of water we are assured of God’s presence with us and love for us come what may!

But nurturing this faith in God’s presence and action is not something that happens automatically. Growing in this faith is not a one time event that can be located at baptism or confirmation. Cultivating this faith is not something that happens in isolation. Nor is it something that can be grown merely through classes for the children here through the congregation. **Nurturing faith happens through close, trusted relationships, often in our own homes. Nurturing faith happens in partnership with the congregation and the household. Nurturing faith happens through simple, daily practices in which God in Jesus Christ promises to meet us again anew to renew and build faith.** Thus, the language of describing baptism as “Walking Wet”—not a one time event at which some water is sprinkled but a whole-life endeavor in which God continually comes to us in Jesus Christ and we respond through lives of discipleship, that is, “walking wet.” (Please refer to the enclosed blue pamphlet “Passing on the Faith: Principles in Faith Formation in Partnering Home & Congregation” for a little bit more on this theme.)

So there is another set of promises around which we gather during the event of baptism, as well, and that second set of promises grows out of the first. On the day of baptism, we ask you, your sponsors, and your congregation to make some promises, as well:

- **We will ask you and your sponsors to promise to teach your children to pray, to nourish and to grow your children’s faith and life through active participation in worship, education, and in the life of the congregation.**
- In addition, your congregation will make some promises to you, as well. **We will promise to welcome you as we ourselves have been welcomed by Christ, and we will promise to pray for, to aid, and to support you as parents seeking to raise your children in the Christian faith.** And we will make visible those promises to you with some gifts that signify the partnered ministry between your household and congregation for faith formation. These gifts are intended to be the first tools you will need in your household to begin teaching the faith to your children—because the **top four factors that determine whether our children will have faith are: 1. What Mom does; 2. What Dad does; 3. What Mom says; and 4. What Dad says.**

In addition, our promises together begin even before the moment of baptism. In order to prepare you and our congregation for the wonderful event of baptism, here is what to do:

1. **Enrollment:** Enroll your child for baptism—In order to have your child enrolled for baptism, please fill out the enclosed “Baptism Information Form.” This will help the parish office with its record keeping and to make sure that we have names spelled correctly and dates listed accurately on your baptismal certificates.

In addition, over the course of the year, First Lutheran hosts a number of “Enrollment Sundays” for the families within our congregation who preparing for the baptism of a child. During a brief moment of the service, we will recognize you and your family and introduce you and your family, and if possible your baptismal sponsors to the congregation. **(Please bring your family, grandparents, godparents, and friends to be a part of this day.)** We will mark the beginning of your baptismal journey with a small gift. And will begin our time of prayer with and for you and your family. **The purpose of this “Enrollment Sunday” is to draw the congregation in to joy and excitement of the up-coming event and to recognize the partnership between the congregation & household when it comes to nurturing faith.** Those Enrollment Sundays are generally scheduled for the first Sunday of: February, April, June, August, October, and December.

2. **Pre-Baptism Teaching: “Preparing for Walking Wet”**—In order to prepare you and your family for the day of baptism, and more so for following through with the promises you will make on the Sunday of baptism, you will need to attend a pre-baptism event called “Preparing for Walking Wet.” These events also take place on a quarterly basis and correspond to the Enrollment Sundays described above.

Who should come?

- Parents, grandparents, godparents, baptismal sponsors, family members, friends—whomever will be primarily responsible for the welfare and faith of this child.
- Members from our congregation will also be present at this event. These members will be chosen for their active and visible discipleship and likely encouragement for you and your family.
- If childcare is needed for children 3<sup>rd</sup> grade and younger, we can make those arrangements here at the church, as well.

What will happen at this event?

- A meal—at no cost and no trouble for you. **YOU will be OUR guest!**
- At this event, we will go through...
  - ...some of the basic teachings surrounding baptism;
  - ...a quick run-down of what the Saturday/Sunday of baptism will look like; and
  - ...some beginning information that we believe will help you grow a child of faith.
- **Note:** the events and activities at the “Preparing for Walking Wet” event are handled in a cross-generational sort of way and are perfectly appropriate for even for children older than 3<sup>rd</sup> grade. **Please be encouraged to include them in this event, as well.**

Where will this event take place?

- Depending on the size of the guest list of those who are preparing for baptism, the “Preparing for Walking Wet” event will take place somewhere at First Lutheran.

How do we set up the “Enrollment Sunday” and the “Preparing for Walking Wet” event?

- Enclosed with this packet of information are the dates that are scheduled for our “Enrollment Sundays” and the “Preparing for Walking Wet” events. Please use those for planning and scheduling your desired Saturday/Sunday for baptism, your participation in the Enrollment Sunday, and attending the “Preparing for Walking Wet” event.
- On the enclosed “Baptismal Information Form,” please indicate which Enrollment Sunday and which “Preparing for Walking Wet” event you will be attending. Make sure the church office receives this information as soon as possible.
- **You will need to have some conversation with one of the pastors to make sure your desired date for baptism can be accommodated.**

We look forward to “walking wet” with you. **If you have any other questions, please contact the Church Office at 852-4853.**