

A decorative blue floral border with intricate scrollwork and leaf patterns surrounds the central text.

**Baptism of the  
Children of  
Believers: Form**

**3**

**RCNZ**

# Baptism of the Children of Believers: Form 3

## Address to the congregation

Congregation of the Lord Jesus Christ, baptism is a sacrament ordained by the Lord Jesus Christ. It is a sign and seal that the person baptised is included in the covenant of grace. It teaches that we and our children are sinful from the time of conception and birth; it witnesses and seals to us the forgiveness of sins and the gift of all the blessings of salvation through union with Christ. Baptism with water signifies and seals that we are cleansed from sin by the shed blood of Christ, through the work of his Spirit. It also signifies and seals that we have died to sin and have been raised to live a new life through our union with Jesus in his death and resurrection. These gifts of salvation are graciously provided by the triune God; therefore we are baptised into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Since those who are baptised are called to take up the obligations of the covenant, baptism summons us to renounce the devil, the world and our sinful nature and to walk humbly with our God in devotion to his commandments.

Although our young children do not yet understand these things, they are nevertheless to be baptised. For the promise of the covenant is made to believers and to their children, as God declared to Abraham: "I will establish my covenant as an everlasting covenant between me and you and your descendants after you for the generations to come, to be your God and the God of your descendants after you."<sup>1</sup> The children of the faithful are in the new covenant no less than they were in the old. They have a right to the seal of the covenant and to the outward privileges of the church. For the covenant of grace is the same in substance in both Old and New Testament times; however God's grace and salvation are more clearly seen in the New. Jesus himself embraced little children, and blessed them;<sup>2</sup> and the apostle

Paul said that children of believers are holy.<sup>3</sup> So by baptism, the children of the covenant are distinguished from the world, solemnly received into the visible church and are called to respond in faith to the Lord Jesus Christ.

## The vows

*The minister addresses the parents:*

Since you have presented your child for holy baptism, you are asked to answer the following questions before God and his people:

*First:* Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour, accept the promises of God, and affirm the truth of the Christian faith which is taught in the Bible and confessed in this church of Christ?

*Second:* Do you believe that your child, though sinful by nature, is received by God in Christ as a member of his covenant and his church, and therefore ought to be baptised?

*Third:* Do you promise, in reliance on the Holy Spirit and with the help of the Christian community, to do all in your power to instruct this child in the truth of the Christian faith and to lead \_\_\_\_\_ *him/her* by your example to follow Jesus Christ?

*The parents respond:* We do, God helping us.

*The minister addresses the congregation:*

Do you, the people of the Lord, promise to receive \_\_\_\_\_ *name* in love; and as the Lord gives you opportunity pray for \_\_\_\_\_ *him/her*, help care for \_\_\_\_\_ *his/her* instruction in the faith, and encourage and sustain \_\_\_\_\_ *him/her* in the fellowship of believers?

*Or:* I charge you, people of God, receive \_\_\_\_\_ *name* in love; and as the Lord gives you opportunity pray for \_\_\_\_\_ *him/her*, help care for \_\_\_\_\_ *his/her* instruction in the faith, and encourage and sustain \_\_\_\_\_ *him/her* in the fellowship of believers.

## **The sacrament**

\_\_\_\_\_ *name*, I baptise you into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

## **Prayer of thanksgiving**

Almighty God, we thank you for forgiving our sins through the blood of Jesus Christ. Thank you for uniting us with Christ through your Holy Spirit and adopting us as your children, and thank you for sealing and confirming these blessings to us in the sacrament of baptism.

We pray for these parents. Grant them wisdom and patience. Enable them to keep the promises they have just made. May they lead and guide their children by their instruction and example.

We pray for this child and all the children of our congregation. May they grow and develop physically and spiritually. Fill them with your Spirit so they may respond to your promises with faith, hope and love.

We pray all this in Jesus' name. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> Genesis 17:7.

<sup>2</sup> Mark 10:16.

<sup>3</sup> 1 Corinthians 7:14.