

## THE FIVE BAPTISMAL PROMISES

When we were baptized, promises were made. Either our parents made them for us, if we were too young to consent or we made them for ourselves, if we were baptized as a young person or adult. Then, on our confirmation day, (also known as affirmation of baptism) we reaffirmed our commitment to living out those baptismal promises in our daily lives.

Many of us probably haven't thought about those baptismal promises in years, if at all. So here is a little reminder for us all. During the worship service, in the sacrament of holy baptism, the pastor asked:

- ***Do you intend to continue in the covenant God made with you in holy baptism:***
- ***live among God's faithful people;***
- ***hear the word of God and share in the Lord's Supper;***
- ***proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed;***
- ***serve all people following the example of Jesus; and***
- ***strive for justice and peace in all the earth?"***

**And we responded:**

***We do, and ask God to help and guide us.***

(Evangelical Lutheran Worship, pg. 236)

Being a disciple of Jesus is about more than just coming to worship once a week. Yes, worship is one of the five promises. In fact, it is the promise that grounds us in God's word and equips us for living out the other four. Many say that for Lutherans it is the center of our life together. However, if we only worship, we miss out on the joy and the challenges of a holistic faith journey.

So, for the next five months, we will take a little time to explore each baptismal promise in order to remind us and encourage us to grow each day in the gift of our resurrection life in Christ.

**Promise One: Live among God's faithful people**

(From our Evangelical Lutheran Church in America)

"As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:27-28).

“They devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers ... Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people” (Acts 2:42, 46-47).

“... their abundant joy and their extreme poverty have overflowed in a wealth of generosity on their part. For, as I can testify, they voluntarily gave according to their means, and even beyond their means, begging us earnestly for the privilege of sharing in this ministry to the saints — and this, not merely as we expected; they gave themselves first to the Lord and, by the will of God, to us ...”(2 Corinthians 8:2-5).

Living in community as God’s faithful people is a gift of love, and an invitation to serve in mission. We are chosen not for position or privilege, but to live as faithful witnesses to the good news of Jesus Christ. In our baptism we were made children of God and members of the body of Christ, the church. God’s message of hope and reconciliation strengthens us in our faith walk. Our life in Christian community supports us as we experience the joys and struggles of life. In our walk we are encouraged to equally

embrace all differences and celebrate the diversity of gifts that can strengthen us.

As we live among God's faithful people we:

- **Read and study God's word**
- **Celebrate God's presence in our lives through regular participation in worship**
- **Receive gratefully God's blessings and return a portion of God's abundance through our giving**
- **Live a new life in Christ by caring for and encouraging others**
- **Pray daily for each other, our communities and all of creation as we move into God's future**
- **Renew daily a connection with baptism by making the sign of the cross on your forehead**
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I encourage you to take time this month to reflect on this first baptismal promise. Try out some of the practical ways of living in community (**in bold**). We know that living in community has been quite a challenge during this pandemic. Yet, with the Spirit's creativity and help, we have found ways to stay connected to God, to our own souls, and to our fellow human beings. Even though we have not been able to continue some much-loved traditions during this

difficult time, God has opened new ways for us to live in community. God is good. All the time!

Peace to you as you seek new ways to “live among God’s faithful people”

Pastor Sharon Taylor