



# Baptism Milestone

Baptism is foundational to a life in Christ. It is through baptism that we are “first received into the Christian community” (Martin Luther). God’s love, forgiveness, and peace come to us through baptism, through water and the word. Baptism is the most natural beginning point in the lifelong process of nurturing faith lives. Baptism does not only bring blessings and provide support to the newly baptized, but to all who participate in this milestone.

This Baptism Milestone is intended to take place prior to the baptism of one or more individuals and is for family, friends, and the larger congregation. It provides that rare opportunity for public and thoughtful conversation about how we, as Christians, live out our baptism and support one another in that daily faith journey.

The Baptism Milestone incorporates a simple structure that includes:





**Naming** – It is important to recognize and celebrate baptism as an essential step in beginning one’s lifelong faith journey.

**Equipping** – This milestone provides an opportunity for family, friends, and larger faith communities to experience the foundational baptismal practices of the Four Keys and apply them to the various ages and stages of individuals and households.

**Blessing** – Prayers for those participating in this milestone provide a special blessing for the baptized as well as family, friends and the entire congregation.

**Gifting** – You may give a visible item as a physical reminder of this occasion, such as a candle, Baptism Stone or blessing bowl. (See Appendix 1.)

**Reinforcing** – Follow up after the Baptism Milestone by connecting one more time to tell stories about the baptism and talk about the use of a variety of faith practices in the home. The Baptism Milestone Follow Up is on page 7.

		<b>Four Keys for Practicing Faith</b>		
<b>Caring Conversations</b>	<b>Devotions</b>		<b>Service</b>	<b>Rituals and Traditions</b>



# + Milestone Event for Small Groups or Home

There are times when celebrating a milestone can be done in a small group setting, or more intimately, in homes. Take time to enjoy a meal or dessert together and to invite conversation using the following outline. You may also wish to use portions of the Cross+Generational Event found in this Baptism Milestone.



## Caring Conversations

Begin with conversation:

- What is your favorite activity to do with family and friends?
- Baptism and the Lord's Supper have been referred to as "the mysteries." We will never know everything there is to know about them. What is a question you have about baptism?
- What is something you know about baptism?



## Devotions

Read Scripture: Galatians 3:27 (CEV)

*And when you were baptized, it was as though you had put on Christ in the same way you put on new clothes.*

Take some time to answer these questions:

- Will new clothing be worn for the baptism?
- What is customary dress for baptism in your congregation?
- What word captures your attention in this verse? Why?



## Service

Encourage families and those gathered to pray for others. Take time to select a name of someone in the congregation or community to pray for each week. This is a meaningful way to begin a service project that emphasizes the practice of praying as a family. Commit to praying for others nightly. Keep a journal of names and revisit it over time to track prayers.



## Rituals and Traditions

Pray together:

*Dear Jesus, Thank you for your presence as we gather. Bless each one here and help us in a meaningful way to prepare for a very special event, the baptism of \_\_\_\_\_, you have given to our care.*

(If a gift is being given, present the gift and lay hands on the soon-to-be baptized.)

*We ask for a special blessing on this gift. May it be a reminder of your baptism and this time we have spent together on this day the Lord has made.*

Close with blessing one another: "Child of God, may you know you are loved."

Commit to choosing a blessing to give to one another every morning or every evening to establish as a tradition in your home.

*Resources and tools to encourage faith talk and faith practices in the home are helpful and remind us that home is church, too!*

A suggestion for building rituals and traditions in the home:

## 4 Key Faith Practices Mat



Place a candle in the center

Place a blessing bowl in the center



Add a milestone to the bowl to encourage caring conversations

