

Baptisms

Approved July 17, 2023

Earlier version 2013

As United Methodist we practice two sacraments, baptism and communion. Baptism is a sacrament, a ritual practice that connects us to the mystery of God's love and grace and calls us to respond in faith. Baptism is our welcome to the family of God, while communion sustains and nourishes us on our journeys of faith. Baptism is the beginning of a journey of faith that is a continuing process throughout our entire lives.

As United Methodists we believe that baptism is part of a covenant between God and the church, is by water and the spirit, and symbolizes that we are part of the Body of Christ, having received forgiveness of sins, and the beginning of new life in Christ.¹

Because of the importance of baptism, Carlisle UMC has the following requirements for baptism:

- ◆ Due to the significant meaning of baptism to our church family at Carlisle UMC, and the need for the church to commit to its part in supporting faith journeys, baptisms need to be celebrated during services of worship. Exceptions can be made only in rare circumstances and emergencies.
- ◆ Persons of any age can be baptized because Christ's body (the Church) includes persons of all ages. If a child is baptized, the parent/s make promises on behalf of a child and supports the child's spiritual growth until the child is of age to make faith commitments personally (often through Confirmation at 12+ years old).
- ◆ All persons who are about to take upon themselves the vows of baptism, or parents of a child to be baptized, must understand the meaning of baptism and be fully aware of the promise made in baptism. Those being baptized, or parents, will receive instruction as to its significance and meaning..
- ◆ When children are baptized, the Parents/sponsors are to be followers of Jesus and members of Christ's church. That does not mean that they need to be members of Carlisle UMC, but Carlisle UMC highly encourages all parents to become active church members so that we can provide parents the resources and help they will need to live out the vows they take upon themselves in baptism. In a case where both parents do not attend CUMC, we must confirm that all legal guardians approve of the baptism prior to the service in worship.
- ◆ Regardless of the age of the person(s) to be baptized, Carlisle UMC commits to providing opportunities for you to grow and be nurtured in your faith. We also understand the importance of supporting and resourcing parents through the development of your child.

¹ Taken from the official baptismal statement of the UMC "By Water and the Spirit: A United Methodist Understanding of Baptism" in *The Book of Resolutions of the United Methodist Church* – 2000 (The United Methodist Publishing House: Nashville, TN; 2000), pp. 798-817

- ◆ All baptisms will be recorded in the permanent records of Carlisle UMC. A certificate will be issued; and in the case of infants and young children, they will be enrolled as baptized members until such time as they choose to complete confirmation and become full professing members by affirming the vows spoken by their parents/sponsors at their baptism.
- ◆ We also understand that baptism is not to be administered more than once. God's promise to us in the sacrament are steadfast.

If you have any questions at all about baptism or would like to schedule an appointment with one of our pastors to formally begin the process of preparing for baptism, please call our church office at any time. We can be reached at (717) 249-1512 or office@carlislepaumc.org