



Liturgy for the Reception of New Disciples

Pastor: Brothers and sisters in Christ, today we rejoice to participate in receiving these persons before you into membership and discipleship in our community of faith. They have expressed the desire to join us on our journey of faith and life in this congregation. They have all previously been baptized into the Christian faith and today they reaffirm their baptismal covenant.

Lay Leader: It is a joy to participate in this sacramental act, for it means not only the increase of our congregation, but the building up of the Body of Christ, which is a grace-filled expression of God's love for the world. Through the vows they take or reaffirm today, these new friends acknowledge what God is already doing in their lives and commit themselves to grow, along with us, as disciples of Jesus Christ.

PRESENTATION OF CANDIDATES

Lay Leader: I present to you these candidates for membership in Community United Methodist Church:

Lori Benzoni, Matthew Benzoni and Anita Hernandez

We welcome them to a shared journey of faith and to grow together with us as disciples.

RENUNCIATION OF SIN AND PROFESSION OF FAITH

Pastor: Jesus invites us to come to the living water poured out for each of us through his life, death, and resurrection and available to all through God's Holy Spirit. By faith, that same Spirit that dwelled in Jesus, dwells in us, and we become vessels of living water. For as the scripture says, "Out of the believer's heart shall flow rivers of living water."

As those who join with us affirm these vows, I ask all of you to join in the responses, to reaffirm your own baptismal vows and commitments to this community of disciples. So, I ask you,

Pastor: Will you proclaim the good news and live as disciples of Jesus Christ, his body on earth?

***People:* We confess Jesus Christ as our Savior, put our whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as our Lord, in union with the church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations, and races!**

Pastor: Will you strive to live in the way that Jesus laid out for his disciples?

***People:* We will strive to love God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength and to love our neighbors as ourselves. We will learn to love one another as Jesus loves us.**

Pastor: Will you be living witnesses to the gospel, individually and together, wherever you are, and in all that you do?

***People:* We will remain faithful members of Christ's holy church and serve as Christ's representatives in the world.**

Pastor: Now I ask the whole congregation gathered today: Will you nurture one another in living the faith of the church and include these persons in your care?

***People:* With God's help we will live the gospel of Jesus Christ. We will embody faith, hope, and love so that we and they will continue to grow in their trust in God and live Love's service in the world. We will pray for them on their journey of discipleship among us. We will faithfully participate in this community with our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service, and our witness. We will do all in our power to strengthen its ministries.**

THANKSGIVING OVER THE WATER

Pastor: Surely, the Spirit of the Lord is in this place.

Let us pray. Loving God, the life you birthed in us by baptism into Jesus Christ will never die. Your justice never fails. Your mercy is everlasting.

***People:* Your healing waters flow over us. Your Spirit embraces and inspires us. Bless this water and those who receive it that by your grace, their sins may be washed away and they may be clothed in righteousness.**

Pastor: Loving God, pour out your Holy Spirit to bless this gift of water and those who receive it, to wash away their sin and clothe them in righteousness throughout their lives. Remind us that we are all your children and that nothing can separate us from your great love.

BLESSING OF THE DISCIPLES

Pastor: I invite you to lay a hand on each person joining this congregation as we invoke the work of the Holy Spirit upon his or her life:

Lori, Matthew and Anita, you have been touched and blessed by living water. Remember your baptism and be thankful. May the Holy Spirit work within you may grow in faith, hope, and love and commit yourself to life as a disciple of Jesus Christ. Amen.

COMMENDATION AND WELCOME

Pastor: Members of the household of God, I commend these persons to your love and care. Do all in your power to increase their faith, confirm their hope, and perfect them in love.

***People:* We give thanks for all that God has done in your lives and we welcome you in Christian love. As members together with you in the body of Christ and in this congregation of The United Methodist Church, we renew our covenant faithfully to participate in the ministries of the Church by our prayers, our presence, our gifts, our service, and our witness that in everything God may be glorified through Jesus Christ.**

Pastor: Now, with joy and thanksgiving, let us welcome our sisters and brothers in Christ.