



FAMILY MINISTRIES NEWSLETTER

January 22, 2024

"At least one of the purposes of church is to remind us that God has other children, easily as precious as we." - Barbara Brown Taylor



NEW COMMUNICATION RHYTHM

Hello dear people! I am revamping our communications a little to keep the amount of emails I send y'all's way relatively streamlined while also focusing on Sunday School recaps and spiritual practices that you can bring into your weeks.

- **Monday emails:** A focus on "Table Talk" for the week as well as a broad look at the calendar ahead.
- **Thursday emails:** Your "What to Expect" glance at Sunday and what to plan for as you head into the weekend.

Of course, there might be times where I send a targeted email about one or two things we need to hop on! And know that I am always open to hearing suggestions or thoughts on how to improve communications in such a connected world!



TABLE TALK THIS WEEK

Yesterday in Sunday School, we talked about the baptism of Jesus and looked at **Mark 1:11**. Read below for some ways to keep the conversation flowing (get it?!) at home this week. There is a lot here so certainly choose what works for your time together AND while we have made some age-based suggestions, tailor away for what would bring your table the most joy and conversation.

For all!

1. Reading the baptism story in Mark. Also find the story in another gospel. How do the stories differ?
2. If your child has been baptized, talk about the day and look at pictures if there are any.
3. Tell your child about your baptism.
4. Talk about what our church says about baptism (from our Book of Order): *In Jesus Christ, God calls people to faith and to membership in the Church, the body of Christ. Baptism is the visible sign of that call and claim on a human life and of entrance into the membership of the church. The baptism of children witnesses to the truth that God's love claims people before they are able to respond in faith...Thus, the triune God, incarnate in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, gives to the Church not only its mission but also its understanding of membership.*
5. Talk about the baptismal vows: *Those desiring the sacrament of baptism for their children or for themselves shall make vows that (a) profess their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, (b) renounce evil and affirm their reliance on God's grace, (c) declare their intention to participate actively and responsibly in the worship and mission of the church, (d) declare their intention to provide for the Christian nurture of their child.*

Some suggested prompts: What words stand out from these readings from the Presbyterian church? What actions or verbs do you hear? How does it feel to be claimed by God's love?

For our younger grades!

Have dinner by candlelight and then snuff out the candles. Why? After Jesus was baptized, the Holy Spirit descended on Jesus like a dove. The Holy Spirit is God with us here on earth today. Although we can't see the Holy Spirit, the Spirit is here. We symbolized this during Sunday School by lighting candles and snuffing them out. When you snuff out the candle, you see smoke that then dissipates. That reminds us

of the Holy Spirit's presence.

For our middle grades and youth!

In our tradition, we're instructed to baptize "water from a local source." Take a minute and consider or look up how this might be different in other denominations or faith traditions. Why does this matter? Why is it important or significant that the PC(USA) explicitly tells us that we "the water used for Baptism should be from a local source"? (per our Book of Order)



SCHEDULE UPDATE

Our new semester at Columbia is right around the corner and Courtney Anne and I appreciate all the ways you support our seminary journey! Pray for us as we head into a new rhythm.

My schedule for time in my office at Central is as follows:

- Sundays all day!
- Mondays all day!
- Wednesday mornings (9:30am - 12:30pm)
- Thursday afternoons (12:30pm - 5:30pm)

I work on Central stuff Sunday - Thursday but I wanted y'all to have my "office hours" as well. I'll also be working on observing my Friday sabbath this semester!

SAVE-THE-DATES

Sunday, February 4th - Youth sing in worship with the Chancel Choir!

Saturday, February 10th - Family Ministries Night Shelter Service: Stay tuned for a Sign-Up Genius for our service at the Night Shelter on Saturday evening, February 10th! M.E. is supporting our planning and Vanessa will be our on-site coordinator. We would LOVE to have your family join in for this powerful opportunity for service and fellowship. Block off 5:30pm - 8:00pm!

Go ahead and mark your calendar for **Saturday, March 23rd at 9:30am for the Children's Easter Egg Hunt** at Mary Lillian Walker's! We are so grateful to her for hosting and for getting this scheduled in advance!

UPDATED CALENDAR

Here is the most up-to-date calendar, complete with the overview of what Sunday School will cover week to week. Don't hesitate to let us know what questions you have!

[Download here](#)



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