

Re-Birthday Parties and Confirming New Life for yourself:

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We've talked a lot about remembering our baptisms symbolically; when we wash our hands, while we're in the shower, when it's raining, looking out over the river, etc. What about actually throwing yourself a "Re-Birthday Party"?

The day you were baptized may seem like an extremely distant memory for some of you and for others it may be something you remember like yesterday. It may be easier to reflect and remember the baptisms of the children and infants we have seen over the years here at Gethsemane and been blessed to participate and be a part of.

"People of God, will you help *these people* hear the gospel of Jesus Christ within this household of faith?"

"We will, and we ask God to help us."

Those words spoken at multiple baptisms witnessed over the years are just as special as the words spoken on your behalf by you or by your sponsor(s) at your own baptism. Participating in the welcoming of a new brother or sister in Christ is a special day, one that should be celebrated and one that we are fortunate to have Marion Burgess for! -She is wonderful about celebrating our kiddos' baptismal birthdays until they are 11!!!-

Baptisms are so special and deserve celebration because they mark new life as a child of God. We are all God's children, baptism or no baptism, but to mark that acceptance as a child of God – with water, and oil, and a cross on our foreheads – is a day to celebrate.

If remembering your own baptism for a Re-Birthday Party doesn't work for you, maybe remembering your confirmation or affirmation of baptism is right for you. We went over the baptismal promises last week and discussed how we can feed our Holy Spirit by fulfilling those promises. We learned how important that work is, how hard it can be but also how satisfying and surprisingly undemanding keeping those promises can be.

Middle school and high school students in confirmation classes are asked to study creeds, commandments, catechisms, and prayers. For many many years we asked that they were memorized and piled Bible verses on top of those memory exercises. Many of you probably still take pride in having *most* of those words memorized, and we still recite our creeds and the Lord's prayer often. Sometimes it's hard to remember when it felt like you could never memorize any of those words, and other times you still find yourself needing to look at every one of them to follow along. Whatever the case; always finding mystery, love and peace in the words as you speak them is what continues to spark renewed faith.

So; while we are still reflecting on baptisms and sheltering at home when possible to keep each other and ourselves healthy, have yourself a Re-Birthday Party". Have your favorite dinner, top it off with your favorite dessert. Try decorating with shells, candles, and pictures if you have any! Recall as many

memories of your baptism or your confirmation as you can while you celebrate your new life as a child of God in style: who came? Who was your sponsor? Were there family traditions? Turn your favorite baptism hymn up loud and get up and dance the night away; it's your Re-Birthday Party...and you can dance if you want to!