

## **Need another way to raise spiritually healthy children/ grandchildren besides worship and Sunday School? Here's one and it's free!**

Remember your baptism and any of those stories surrounding it, along with the people involved in it. If you were baptized as an infant, who else would have been involved intimately? Parents? Grandparents? Siblings? Pastor(s)? Elders? If they were baptized in a Presbyterian Church there are records with the specific Sunday and officiating clergy. Many congregations even give a baptism certificate like SHPC. Kathleen Bostrom and her book "99 Ways to Raise Spiritually Healthy Children" says Baptisms can be times to give pause and thanks for the gifts of life. Consider adding baptism celebrations like birthdays and anniversaries and other occasions that are marked with special celebrations.

Bostrom shares, "Baptism is a big deal. When a parent brings a child to the church for baptism, much thought goes into the preparation. Parents meet with a pastor so they can understand the meaning of Baptism. Particular clothes are chosen for the child to wear. That day is chosen that accommodates family and friends who want to attend. Baptism marks the entrance of that child or adult into the family of faith. God's grace and love are already active in our lives; in Baptism, we claim that and promise to cherish the life we have been given, not just of the day of the Baptism, but forever."

Why not remember our baptism with a party or special prayer over lunch after worship. Celebrate Baptism each year, the stories are told and retold and become embedded in the child's memories. Share with your children and grandchildren with the stories of your Baptism. What do you remember about that day, if anything? What stories did your family tell about your baptism? Do you have photos? What did you wear? Some families have a special baptism gown, passing down through the generations. Children love to hear the stories, and it's a fair wager that the adults enjoy telling them.

Celebrate the anniversary of your child's baptism each year, as you do your birthday. Have a special meal, consider lighting a candle and offering a prayer to grow in the faith. Recall the ways that God has guided and blessed you and your children during the past year and voice your hopes for the future. Give thanks for the family of faith that has and will continue to nurture your child. Rather than being momentary events in our lives, the sacraments have meaning for our everyday living as God's faithful people. Read and discuss Ephesians 4:4-6.