

OUR BAPTISMAL PROMISES

The Foundation of Christian Mission

Experiences and Pilgrimages

Celebrant: “Will you continue in the apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?”

People: “I will, with God’s help.”

Celebrant: “Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?”

People: “I will, with God’s help.”

Celebrant: “Will you proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ?”

People: “I will, with God’s help.”

Celebrant: “Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving your neighbor as yourself?”

People: “I will, with God’s help.”

Celebrant: “Will you strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being?”

People: “I will, with God’s help.”

Book of Common Prayer, pp 304–305

Sound mission experiences and pilgrimages are built on the foundation of the promises made in our Baptismal Covenant. These fundamental promises define who we are as Christians and Episcopalians and they are the skills we are sent out to practice in mission experiences and pilgrimages.

Mission experiences and pilgrimages can and should challenge young missionaries to embrace the promises made at Baptism in new and deeper ways.

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As you prepare for your mission experience, let the Baptismal Covenant become part of the fabric of the experience by keeping it close to your heart and in your thoughts and prayers. If appropriate, invite the community you will be in mission with to do the same.

Additionally, encourage all members of your faith community to reaffirm their commitment to the Baptismal Covenant as they commit to support the young people of their community in their life in Christ and as they are preparing for a mission experience or pilgrimage.

Here are some ideas for ways you can incorporate the Baptismal Covenant into the essence of your mission experience or pilgrimage:

- Print out the Baptismal Covenant and hang it on your office or youth room wall.
- Distribute a laminated copy to your young people. Maybe even print it (or parts of it) on your trip t-shirts.
- Commit to reading it nightly or weekly and at every Mission Team gathering.
- Read and distribute it at your Commissioning Service.
- Organize your preparation meetings or your retreat around the Baptismal Covenant. Use *I Will with God's Help* (Church Publishing, 2000) or other resources to create your event. (Purchase *I Will with God's Help* here: <https://www.churchpublishing.org/products/indexcfm?fuseaction=product&productID=1423>)
- While you are traveling, consider organizing your mission experience or pilgrimage around the questions of the Baptismal Covenant. You can read and reflect upon one question at your morning meeting and ask your Mission Team to notice the ways they were called to live into that promise throughout the day. Talk about those experiences at the evening meeting.

Much of how we live and move and have our being as Christians is embedded deeply in the promises made at Baptism.

Using the Baptismal Covenant as the framework and foundation for your trip will breathe depth and meaning into your mission experience or pilgrimage and provide a framework for transformation in the lives of everyone involved.