

The Giving and Blessing of a Name

This rite was written for use when the individual receiving the blessing and name are younger than a worshipping community world consider as an adult (i.e. they wouldn't be answering questions asked of them in baptism but rather they would be represented by parents or guardians).

Those receiving a name and blessing are presented by a sponsor or another representative to the congregation.

P. The Lord be with You.

C. And also with you.

P. Let us pray. Holy One of Blessing, in baptism you bring us to new life in Jesus Christ and you name us Beloved. We give you thanks for the renewal of that life and love in [Name], who now fully claims *his/her/their/other pronoun* name. Strengthen and uphold [Name] as *she/he/they/other pronoun* grows into the power, and authority, and meaning of this name; we pray in the Name above all names, Jesus your Son, whom with you and the Holy Spirit, the Triune God, we adore. Amen.

Isaiah 45:3-4

³I will give you the treasures of darkness
and riches hidden in secret places,
so that you may know that it is I, the LORD,
the God of Israel, who call you by your name.

⁴For the sake of my servant Jacob,
and Israel my chosen,
I call you by your name,
I surname you, though you do not know me.

Genesis 32:24-30

²⁴Jacob was left alone; and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. ²⁵When the man saw that he did not prevail against Jacob, he struck him on the hip socket; and Jacob's hip was put out of joint as he wrestled with him. ²⁶Then he said, "Let me go, for the day is breaking." But Jacob said, "I will not let you go, unless you bless me." ²⁷So he said to him, "What is your name?" And he said, "Jacob." ²⁸Then the man said, "You shall no longer be called Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with God and with humans, and have prevailed." ²⁹Then Jacob asked him, "Please tell me your name." But he said, "Why is it that you ask my name?" And *this/her/their/other pronoun* he blessed him. ³⁰So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying, "For I have seen God face to face, and yet my life is preserved."

Matthew 16:17-19

¹⁷And Jesus answered him, "Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah! For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my *Fathis/her/their/other pronoun* in heaven. ¹⁸And I tell you, you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not prevail against it. ¹⁹I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven."

The presiding minister addresses the candidate(s).

P. In Baptism we promise: to live among God's faithful people, to hear the word of God and share in the Lord's supper, to proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed, to serve all people, following the example of Jesus, and to strive for justice and peace in all the earth.

"Happy is the mortal who does this, the one who holds it fast, who keeps the Sabbath, not profaning it, and refrains from doing

any evil. Do not let the foreigner joined to God say, ‘God will surely separate me from the people’; and do not let the eunuch say, ‘I am just a dry tree.’ For thus says God: to the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose the things that please me and hold fast to my covenant, I will give, in my house and within my walls, a monument and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that shall not be cut off.”

We are here to affirm the name of [Name]. This name symbolizes all that *she/he/they/other pronoun* is and all that *she/he/they/other pronoun* is becoming, through the grace of God. We honor the name given to [Name] by *his/her/their/other pronoun* parents and acknowledge that the time has come to declare a new name. This name is the culmination of a journey of discovery and, at the same time, its beginning.

The minister addresses the parents and/or sponsors.

Will you do all in your power to assist [Name], to maintain justice, to do what is right, to honor God and hold fast to God’s covenant?

℞. We will with the help of God.

The minister addresses the assembly.

P. Will you honor [Name] in name and in spirit as *she/he/they/other pronoun* continues on God’s path?

C. We will with the help of God

P. Dynamic and holy God, we remember how you changed the names of Abraham and Sarah, as they set out to follow you. We know that you changed the name of Jacob, after a long night of wrestling with you. We now declare publicly and affirm the name you have bestowed upon [Name].

Sponsors, family and others may come forward and lay hands upon the candidate’s head, or upon the shoulders of those around the candidate.

[Name], receive the blessings of God, In the name of the Father, and of the ✙ Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

C. Amen.

Walk in the Spirit, this day and always, knowing that God has made an everlasting covenant with you that shall never be cut off.

Those receiving a name and blessing may stand and face the assembly. A representative of the congregation addresses the assembly.

P. Jesus said, 'Rejoice that your names are written in heaven!'

C. Amen!

P. O God, in renaming your servants Abraham, Sarah, Jacob, Peter, and Paul, you gave them new lives and new tasks, new love and new hope. We now hold before you your child *[Name]*. Bless *her/him/them/other pronoun* with a new measure of grace as *she/he/they/other pronoun* takes this name. Write *[Name]* again in your heart and on your palm. And grant that we all may be worthy to call ourselves Christian, for the sake of your Christ whose name is Love, and in whom, with you and the Spirit we pray.

C. Amen.

This rite was compiled from many existing resources. With special thanks to the folks at Many Voices (<http://www.manyvoices.org/>) and House for all Sinners and Saints (<http://houseforall.org/>) for sharing their experience.

- <http://www.manyvoices.org/blog/resource/liturgy-for-the-claiming-of-a-new-name/>
- <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/nadiabolzweber/2012/01/liturgical-naming-rite-for-a-transgendered-church-member/>