



Shepherd of the Hills Lutheran Church  
*Pastor Terry's Thoughts of the Week*

## Water of Promise

“But you PROMISED!” How many times have we heard this phrase. Children seem to remember everything. They also have remembered our promises and our lectures to them about what promises are and how we should always keep them. There seems to be no explanation that is satisfactory if we can't go somewhere or do something that we have promised.

Yet, there are times in our children's lives when they learn the hard way, that there are some things we just can do as we promised: economic problems, illness, death in the family, unexpected visitors – all of these take precedence over the promise given. And that's sad. We need to be careful about making promises if we think there is a reason we might have to renegotiate. I'm sure we've all made promises we haven't kept and I suspect there are promises that we even forgot we made. Today we're thinking about baptism. For once, not about our own, although that's very important.. Rather we're thinking about the ones for whom we have been sponsors, or members of the congregation when a child was baptized. We made promises to help guide the child in their spiritual life, to teach, to guide, to pray for them and all the rest. If you've forgotten, look up the baptismal service and remind yourself, then think back about all those children and adults you promised to help and guide. Now, start praying for them. That's an important beginning. To think of them and to pray. Remember, we promised!

I had the privilege of baptizing my grand son some years ago – he is now 25 years old. His pastor said I could do that if I would also preach. Nice guy.

Anyway, it was a good thing to do. After the baptism I walked young Michael up and down the aisle and spoke to the congregation something like this:

“It has been very kind of you to let Mike’s family join him in his family of God today. My husband and I have come a long way to be here and we appreciate the opportunity you have given us. However, we are going home. At least grandma and grandpa are going home, and Mike and his family are staying here. So, we leave him in your hands, to pray for him, teach him and give him guidance in his life. You have made promises to that effect. Please follow through.”

Actually that little speech should be made at just about every baptism that happens anywhere. Too often we just “follow the book” and say what we’re supposed to say without much thought. But baptism is the time of promise – ours – and with it is the water of promise. God’s promise is that his spirit will be with each of us and will never leave us. Just as a good parent never gives up on a child – we may weep over them, become angry at them, have good times with them and then shout at them – but we never forget them and we never give up on them. So it is with God, only even better. He stays with us through the thick and thin, shakes his head when we goof up, but continues to love us. Ah, that marvelous, wet water of promise!

*TMK*

*-- Week of March 1, 2009*