

**Centre Congregational Church, UCC
The Rev Dr Scott Couper
Sunday, June 4, 2023
Holy Baptism and Communion and Trinity Sunday**

“A Promise for You and Your Children”

Scripture: Acts of the Apostles 2:36-41



Peter preached to the crowd, “For the promise is for you, and for your children, and for all who are far away...” (Acts 2:39). Today, we celebrated ‘the promise’ through the sacrament of baptism. ‘The promise’ was made to Drew and Christina; ‘the promise’ was made to the precious little girl, Dalia; ‘the promise’ was made to Dalia’s children (“those who are far away”); and ‘the promise’ was made to all of you gathered here. God made this promise to our ancestors in faith. God honors the promise to us. And God will fulfill the promise to our progeny.

In the act of baptism, we celebrate God’s gift of Dalia to us. We have all heard her squeal with delight. We have all seen her run around this sanctuary. We

have all seen her dance to the postlude. We have all seen her enjoying treats after worship in the parlor. We have all seen her parents chase after her, both father and mother (good co-parenting!). And who among us has not prayed to ourselves when she delights us in the service, “Thank God for this child who is a gift to our church?!” Why? Because she is a gift. In fact, all of our children are gifts. They are gifts for which our church has prayed and therefore she and every child here is an answer to our prayers. In this day and age, few families remain together; fewer families worship together. We live in a state that has the lowest percentage of adults attending any kind of religious service. So, this child and our other children gathered here are gifts for which we should not take for granted.¹

Another word for a ‘promise’ is ‘covenant’. God promises God’s blessing on Dalia. That covenant is forever. Why? Because God created Dalia; therefore, God considers her redeemed, now and forever. This morning, Drew and Christina promised God to raise their child to follow Jesus’ way. As godparents and sponsors, friends and family promised to support Drew and Christina. As a community of faith, we promised God to spiritually nurture Dalia. Now that we have promised one another and God to be mutually accountable to one another

¹ Vermont is 21% The next lowest is New Hampshire and Maine at 22%. Massachusetts is next at 23%. Pew Research Center, found at: <https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/religious-landscape-study/state/vermont/>, accessed June 3, 2023.

as in a covenant, let us celebrate the promises made at the table thus enjoying the first-fruits of God's redeeming.

This was the Word of God. And it was spoken to the people of God. And the people of God responded, "Amen".