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Epworth's Monthly CARE Story –September 2013

“I want to be dunked...”

Charles worked his way through every baptismal class offered and decided on the day of the baptism that he wasn't ready. Before Epworth, the 10 year old had no history of a church connection and didn't understand what was happening in worship or Bible studies. Uncertain of whether or not it was fear or doubt or something else, Rev. Megan Gray (previous Campus Pastor) didn't push him. Instead she gave him space to grow and ask questions.

That was nearly six years ago, and Charles, who is now 16 years old, is finally ready. His time at Epworth has been grounded in faith formation through camp experiences, worship, Sunday school, youth group and Bible studies. He approached Rev. Holler, President of Epworth, several weeks ago and said, “Rev. Holler I am ready to be baptized, but Methodists don't know how to baptize. I don't want to just have a little water sprinkled on my head. I want to go all the way under the water.” Charles is known around campus as a bit of a comedian, so it came as a surprise to Rev. Holler and others that he had put so much thought into the decision. Rev. Holler explained that United Methodists have the choice of sprinkling, pouring or immersion. Charles insisted that he wanted to be “dunked.” When Rev. Holler asked him why immersion, Charles responded, “Because baptism means when you go under the water you die to the things of this world and when you come up you are a new person. All the sin is left at the bottom of the pool.”

Rev. Holler and Rev. Susan Culler, Campus Pastor spent time processing the decision and making a plan with Charles. This Sunday, the entire campus will gather around the pool to celebrate the baptism of Charles into the body of Christ as a child of God.

Through Epworth's experience, it is clear that faith in God is foundational for breaking the cycle of abuse, neglect and shame. God's work is being done each and every day and in their own time, the children realize they are loved by the Creator and Father unconditionally.