

BAPTISM: INVITATION TO NEW LIFE

In Baptism, we are made one with Christ in his death and resurrection (Romans 6:4) and with the Body of Christ, the Church (1 Corinthians 12:13). The Book of Common Prayer says, “Holy Baptism is the sacrament by which God adopts us as his children and makes us members of Christ’s Body, the Church, and inheritors of the kingdom of God (Catechism, 701).” Baptism, therefore, is the beginning of new life in God through Christ and the journey of faith and love in communion with the people of God.

At Church of Our Saviour, we invite all persons interested in receiving baptism to take the time to prepare for the profound commitment they will be making in this sacrament. Baptism is not simply a ceremony but a new birth and the start of a process of deep spiritual transformation in Christ. It is also the beginning of our ministry in Christ. With baptism comes the responsibility to grow in faith, commit to the church, and live out our God-given vocation. To help with the preparation process, we ask that you contact the church to set up an initial appointment with the clergy to discuss in greater detail the meaning of baptism, the church’s baptism policy, and the requirements for candidates and sponsors.

We are honored that you are interested in our church and in receiving the sacrament of baptism. May God bless you as you embark on this pilgrimage of spirit.

**CHURCH OF OUR SAVIOUR
POLICY ON THE
SACRAMENT OF HOLY BAPTISM
JANUARY 2, 2009**

Holy Baptism is administered within the Service of the Eucharist on the following days:

- ◆ Easter Vigil
- ◆ Day of Pentecost
- ◆ All Saints' Day *or* Sunday after All Saints' Day
- ◆ Feast of the Baptism of our Lord (First Sunday after Epiphany)

As the Easter Vigil and All Saints' Day are longer services, we encourage parents who wish to have their child baptized to do so on Pentecost (May) or the Feast of the Baptism of our Lord (January).

In accordance with the theology of Baptism articulated in the Scriptures and the teachings of the Episcopal Church, Church of Our Saviour *does not permit private baptisms* for any reason except for genuine emergencies.

Requirements for Candidates:

- ◆ Persons interested in receiving the sacrament of baptism should contact the church office to set up an initial meeting with clergy. The clergy will discuss the church's policy on baptism and requirements for candidates and their sponsors.
- ◆ Candidates and families (for infants) are required to attend regularly Church of Our Saviour for a minimum of 3 months prior to the baptism.

- ◆ Candidates and their sponsors must attend a pre-baptism conference to be scheduled in consultation with the clergy (usually from 9 am – 12 pm on the Saturday a week prior to the baptism). The purpose of the conference is to study the meaning of baptism and to set aside time for intentional reflection and prayers in preparation for baptism.

Sponsors:

- ◆ Each candidate for Holy Baptism is to be sponsored by one or more baptized persons. The sponsors (commonly called Godparents) make a commitment to help the candidate “to grow into the full stature of Christ” by their prayers and example (Book of Common Prayer 302).
- ◆ Sponsors must have an active practice of faith and demonstrate that they belong to a church community by providing references to their ministers.
- ◆ Sponsors are encouraged to read the appointed Hebrew Scripture and Christian Scripture lessons for the day and to lead the congregation in the petitions (Book of Common Prayer 206). Sponsors may also bring up the offerings of bread and wine for the Eucharist. Please inform the clergy if you are interested.

Passages for Prayer and Preparation:

Mark 1:9-11

Romans 6:3-11

Ezekiel 36:24-26

Exodus 14

Suggested Books:

Christopher Webber's *User's Guide to Baptism and Confirmation*

John Westerhoff's *Holy Baptism: A Guide for Parents and Godparents*