

One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism

Baptism is an occasion of great joy, the beginning of a new life in Christ, and the incorporation of a new member into Christ's Body, the Church. Baptism is a corporate event, in which the congregation of St. John's acts for the whole Body to receive the one baptized into this new life and relationship.



The Baptismal Font dates back to Curles' Church, the antecedent to St. John's Church.

It is fitting that parents be included among the godparents of their own children. Parents and godparents are to be instructed in the meaning of Baptism, in their duties to help the new Christians grow in the knowledge and love of God, and in their responsibilities as members of his Church.

Baptismal Days

Baptism is celebrated at regular services on five special days, so that the candidate can truly be "received into the congregation of Christ's flock".

The first Sunday after the Epiphany
(the commemoration of Jesus' Baptism)

Easter Day
(participation in Christ's death and resurrection)

Pentecost *(the Gift of the Holy Spirit)*
All Saints' Day or All Saints' Sunday *(incorporation into the Communion of Saints)*

The Bishop's annual visitation
Other times as necessary or appropriate

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

Holy Baptism

There is one hope in God's call to us.

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH
804. 649-7938



Come, Lift Your Spirit!

Infant Baptism

Parents: Presenting an infant for Baptism implies active membership by the child's parents. Parents are encouraged to keep in close touch with the rector, to discuss the selection of godparents, and to schedule the conference and the Baptism itself.

Godparents: The selection of baptismal Sponsors or Godparents is important, particularly in the case of infants. Their selection should be based primarily on their Christian. The number of Godparents is best limited to three or four, with both sexes represented and at least one Episcopalian. Godparents must be people who take their faith seriously and are willing to accept the privilege of helping the parents mold the Christian development of the child. One of the great benefits of having Godparents is to bring others into direct relationship with the child. Members of the congregation are often a good choice, because they are able to have regular contact with the child. Persons from out of town need not be excluded, of course.



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Holy Baptism is full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's Body the Church. The bond which God establishes in Baptism is unbreakable.

Holy Baptism is appropriately administered within the Eucharist as the chief service on a Sunday or other feast.

The bishop, when present, is the celebrant; and is expected to preach the Word and preside at Baptism and the Eucharist. At Baptism, the bishop officiates at the Presentation and Examination of the Candidates; says the Thanksgiving over the Water; [consecrates the Chrism;] reads the prayer, "Heavenly Father, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit;" and officiates at what follows.

In the absence of a bishop, a priest is the celebrant and presides at the service. If a priest uses Chrism in signing the newly baptized, it must have been previously consecrated by the bishop.

Each candidate for Holy Baptism is to be sponsored by one or more baptized persons.

Sponsors of adults and older children present their candidates and thereby signify their endorsement of the candidates and their intention to support them by prayer and example in their Christian life. Sponsors of

infants, commonly called godparents, present their candidates, make promises in their own names, and also take vows on behalf of their candidates.

Preparation

The parents and godparents meet in conference with the Rector to discuss the meaning of Baptism, the respective roles of the parents, godparents and the Church in the experience of Baptism, and thoughts about Christian nurture in the home. This conference may take place as early as a month before the child is to be born, but at least one month before the scheduled Baptism.

Communion is the meal of the Baptized, so it is appropriate that the newly baptized begin at once to receive the nurture of Christ's Body and Blood in the Bread and Wine. A child's first communion will ordinarily be at his or her Baptism.

ST. JOHN'S CHURCH

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