

## BAPTISM POLICY

Baptisms are celebrated as part of our regular Sunday worship services. It is important that the congregation, which is both the baptizing Church and the receiving community, be present.

As the called and ordained minister of the congregation, the pastor presides at Baptism. The pastor's function is that of acting on behalf of the assembled Church.\*

Sponsors are Christian people who take responsibility for those to be baptized. Their presence emphasizes that the sacrament is closely tied to the community which we call the Church, and that the congregation undertakes a serious responsibility in obedience to its Lord. Sponsors are important, even for adults being baptized.\* Sponsors should be active members of a Christian congregation.

Baptism is not only a beginning; it also suggests the shape of the Christian life to follow. Those who bring infants or young children for Baptism must be prepared to become accountable for their Christian nurture. Though parents and sponsors assume that responsibility directly, the entire congregation shares it. A congregation's program of education is rooted in its practice of Baptism.\*

Pastoral counseling with the parents of the child to be baptized is required prior to the baptism (usually one or two weeks prior). Covered in the counseling: meaning and purpose of baptism, the importance of baptism in the Lutheran church, and the responsibilities of parents and sponsors.

Parents who are non-members and are requesting baptism for their child(ren) are encouraged to first become members or begin preparations for membership. They should be fully aware that as part of the liturgy, they will make promises to God, with the congregation's witness and support, to bring their child(ren) to the services of God's house.

Photos during a baptism are limited to video recording from the narthex. Otherwise, photography is to occur after the service. Please reference "Photography Policy".

Honorariums or gifts are acceptable.

\* "By Water and the Spirit, Preparing for Holy Baptism"  
According to the Rite of the Lutheran Book of Worship

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