

BAPTISM AT MEMORIAL CHURCH

Holy Baptism is full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's Body the Church. For the earliest period of Christian history, baptism has been the gateway into membership in the Christian church. Along with Holy Eucharist, Baptism is one of the two great sacraments of the church. The Baptismal liturgy is the outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual grace of becoming a member of the Body of Christ.

How do I go about being baptized in the church?

The best way to begin the process towards baptism for yourself or a family member is to speak to the clergy. Call the office and make an appointment to speak with one of our clergy. The appointment will take place in the clergy person's office. Spiritual as well as administrative questions can be answered at that time and a date chosen.

When does baptism take place at the church?

The service of Holy Baptism takes place in the context of the Holy Eucharist on Sunday morning or a Major Feast Day (such as Christmas). Holy Baptism is especially appropriate at the Easter Vigil, on the Day of Pentecost, on All Saints' Day or the Sunday after All Saints' Day, and on the Feast of the Baptism of our Lord (the First Sunday after Epiphany).

Are there private baptisms at Memorial?

No, unless there is an emergency or serious pastoral reason for a private baptism. The expectation is that baptism will take place in the midst of the gathered, worshiping community on Sunday morning or the day of a major Feast.

How many godparents do I need?

The traditional rule in earlier generations of Episcopalians was one godfather and two godmothers for a girl and two godfathers and one godmother for a boy. This requirement has fallen away in recent years. Parents chose who they believe will best live up to the duties of godparent. The requirement of a godparent is to help the new Christian grow in the knowledge and love of God and learn to become responsible members of the Church.

May I ask a family member to be a godparent?

Yes, siblings and other family members are excellent choices for godparents.

May I ask someone who is not an Episcopalian or not a Christian to be a godparent?

Yes, although at least one godparent must be baptized in a Christian church. If the godparent is not Christian, he or she should be a practicing member of a faith community.

If I am baptized as an adult, do I have godparents?

Older children and adults have sponsors who present them before the congregation for baptism, signifying the sponsors' endorsement of the candidate and the sponsors' intention to support them by prayer and example in their Christian life.

Is there a cost for baptism?

There is no church fee for baptism or any sacrament of the church. Baptism is a fitting time to make a contribution to Memorial Church in thanksgiving for the candidate.

What about a reception following the Baptism?

Coffee hour generally follows Sunday worship and is a ready-made reception. Some baptismal families choose to provide a cake or special refreshments on that Sunday. Baptismal families also often provide the flowers for the altar or baptismal font on the Sunday of the baptism.

Must the candidate wear white?

In the early church, baptismal candidates wore white robes. Many families have infant baptismal gowns passed down from generation to generation which are lovely. Candidates need not wear white but should dress festively for such a festive day!

There is a rehearsal for the baptismal party before the baptism—usually the Saturday before or on Sunday before the service.

HOLY BAPTISM INFORMATION FORM

CANDIDATE'S FULL NAME _____

GENDER _____

FATHER'S FULL NAME _____

MOTHER'S FULL NAME _____

PARENT'S RESIDENCE _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____

PLACE OF BIRTH _____

DATE OF BAPTISM _____

GODPARENT'S NAME _____

GODPARENT'S NAME _____

GODPARENT'S NAME _____

GODPARENT'S NAME _____

REMARKS:

BAPTISM

AT

MEMORIAL EPISCOPAL CHURCH