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B A P T I S M

LOVE  
GOD  
GROW  
TOGETHER  
SERVE  
OUR WORLD



**LITTLE TRINITY**

SINCE 1842

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# **Baptism at Little Trinity Church**

## **What is baptism?**

Baptism is a sacrament, a “visible sign of an invisible reality.” Baptism is the way we respond to God’s grace already working in us. At baptism a person is called out of the greater population and becomes a faithful member of the Church, the community of all God’s people. At baptism, Christ’s story of a sinless life, death and resurrection are made real in you, and His story becomes your story.

## **Who can be baptized?**

Any person who professes that Christ is the Lord of the world, was crucified for the fallen world, was raised to new life by God, and who trusts Him for their salvation may be baptized.

We do not believe that people need to reach a certain cognitive standard before they can begin a relationship with God. Baptism is first and foremost an extension of God’s grace to humanity. This grace is freely given and undeserved. It is offered not on the basis of a person’s good works, abilities, or the amount of knowledge or understanding a person has. Because of this, the sacrament of baptism is also available to infants and children. During the baptism of those who cannot answer for themselves, the parents make the decision on behalf of the child that he or she will grow up as a follower of Jesus. Parents, sponsors (also called godparents) and the congregation also make vows to raise and support the child in the Christian life. At baptism, a decision is made for the child. This is an important distinction. Baptism is not a way of thanking God for the child (there is a separate service for this called dedication) and it is not done because of family or cultural traditions. It is parents, caregivers and sponsors along with their faith community making serious commitments before God to support the formation of the candidate’s faith.

Some people prefer to let the child make this decision for themselves as they mature. A service of thanksgiving for the child or a service to dedicate the child to Christ can be arranged if the parents desire.

## **I am (or my child is) already baptized but would like to publicly declare my (their) faith in church. What can I do?**

There are two ways to publicly affirm the Christian faith: by the reaffirmation of vows or by confirmation. Reaffirming Christian vows is to take up the same vows as baptism again in public manner, which can be done during a baptism service without going through the act of baptism. Confirmation is "confirming" your vows of baptism in a separate service of confirmation before an Anglican bishop who will symbolically lay their hands on your head to signify the indwelling of the Holy Spirit upon you, which then also welcomes you into the global Anglican communion. The service of confirmation occurs every two to three years during a visitation by a bishop. If you would like to go through the rite of confirmation for yourself or your child(ren), please be in touch with one of the pastors in order to be placed on a waiting list and be duly prepared for confirmation.

## **Should I get rebaptized?**

The Anglican Church believes in one baptism and one alone. Baptism is not a mere symbol, but a Sacrament which still carries weight even if one thinks it was done improperly. Whether you feel it or not, God was working in you at the time of baptism.

There are other ways of reaffirming your faith in Christ. Again, confirmation is a rite where people publicly affirm their baptism and faith in a separate service before an Anglican bishop who will symbolically lay their hands on your head to signify the indwelling of the Holy Spirit upon you, which then also welcomes you into the global Anglican communion. The service of confirmation occurs every two to three years during a visitation by a bishop. If you would like to go through the rite of confirmation for yourself or your child(ren), again please be in touch with one of the pastors in order to be placed on a waiting list and to be duly prepared for confirmation.

Baptism is generally done very early on in a person's relationship with Christ. It does not signify an end, but a beginning. Being baptized

doesn't mean you understand everything or have everything together in your life. It is God covering you with grace as you begin your journey with Him.

## **If I get baptized, do I have to go to church?**

Baptism is not simply an interaction between you and God. Baptism draws you into the body of all believers, which is also called the Church. When you are baptized, you are brought into this new family. Promising to participate in this body is part of the baptismal covenant. Anything less short-changes a believer. One cannot be a Christian in isolation.

## **How can I prepare for baptism?**

During the baptism service, parents and sponsors are asked to make important statements about their faith and their intentions to raise children in that same faith. Therefore, we want to be clear about that faith, the promises to be made, and how we can support one another in our journey. Preparation will generally consist of at least 2 sessions with a pastor about baptism and liturgy. Adult candidates should speak with one of the pastors and children and youth will be prepared by the appropriate youth or children's minister.

## **Can I have a private baptism?**

Baptism is always a public event because you (or your child) are being made a member of the visible family of the Church of Jesus Christ.

## **How is baptism done?**

At Little Trinity, a service of baptism is held twice per year, once in the fall and once in the spring. Candidates make vows and profess their faith during the service and are baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit with water poured over their head three times. There is no financial charge for baptism.

## **What is a Godparent (or Sponsor)?**

Godparents are chosen by the parents to support the child in their life in Christ. For adults, a sponsor fills the same role. The godparents or sponsors make vows to support the person in participating in the Christian community, as well as to witness, to mentor and to pray for the candidate. It should be stressed that a godparent or sponsor is not chosen simply because they are a close friend or relative. The godparent is also not the legal guardian of the child. It is a specific and important role to be filled by mature believers who can commit to supporting the child as they grow in Christ. For adult candidates, the sponsor should know the person to be baptized and be able to affirm that person's faith to the best of their ability.

## **I'm a believer, but my spouse is not. Is it alright to have our child baptized?**

It is acceptable to baptize a baby when one parent is a believer and desires it. The non-believing parent may stand with the family at the baptism but should not take the vows. We would never want to encourage someone to promise things that are not congruent to their own beliefs.

## **I want to be baptized (or have my infant/child baptized). What should I do?**

Please contact the Church Office at [admin@littletrinity.org](mailto:admin@littletrinity.org) to inquire.





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## GET IN TOUCH



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