

In that way, the two sacraments commanded by our Lord are seen as a whole. The water rite of Baptism is the sign of our participation in Christ's death and resurrection. Through it, we are enabled share in his gift of forgiveness and to be nourished at his Holy Table by his Body and Blood.



Infant baptism is the normal practice of the Episcopal Church and indeed of the majority of Christendom since the Early Church established itself. But, because baptism is not merely a christening or naming ceremony, the Church does not seek to baptize the children of those outside the community or those who do not intend to raise their children within the worshiping community.

In general, at least one parent of the infant should be a practicing communicant of the Church. Godparents or sponsors **must** be baptized Christians and are most appropriately chosen from the candidate's congregation. In our contemporary secular society, many people come to adulthood without having been baptized. We welcome them to our fellowship, but many parishes do not invite them to receive communion until they are baptized. It is recommended they be baptized.

The Occasions for Baptism

Holy Baptism is administered at the Easter Vigil, Pentecost, All Saints Day, the Feast of the Baptism of our Lord, during the Bishop's Visitation (BCP p. 312), or at the principal service of the day (BCP p. 298). Requests for exceptions must be made to the clergy and the parish Liturgy Committee.

Who is to be Baptized

Children of communicant members canonically resident at Trinity's should be presented for Holy Baptism at the earliest appropriate occasion after their birth.

Because Baptism is a sacrament of the Church, it is most appropriate that those to be baptized be communicants of Trinity. However, the clergy and Liturgy Committee recognize individual circumstances which fall outside this requirement. If this may be the case in your situation, please bring this to our attention. Adults who are not baptized and who worship regularly with the Trinity community are urged to present themselves for baptism.

Concerning Sponsors

Each candidate must have at least one sponsor. **All** sponsors must be baptized Christians. Sponsors signify by their presence their willingness to help the newly baptized grow as Christians.

Qualification for Godparents

Sponsors of infants and children are called "godparents". Parents and other family members may be godparents. They **must** be baptized Christians. Though the medieval custom of two godparents of the same sex and one of the opposite is a long-standing tradition in the Episcopal Church, any number of godparents may be chosen.

The Selection of Sponsors and Godparents

Adult candidates and parents of baptismal candidates are encouraged to select sponsors and godparents from among the parish community, so that these persons may be special support for the newly baptized as they grow in the life of the church. Sponsors and godparents should not simply be baptized "friends". They should be individuals who will take **very** seriously the responsibility of seeing that the candidate is brought up and nourished in the Christian faith. Sponsors and godparents ought understand the importance of making this commitment to the candidate and be a source of support and inspiration.

Baptismal Preparation

Parents, sponsors, godparents, and adult candidates for Holy Baptism are required to meet with the clergy prior to the baptism. Basic instruction in the meaning of the sacrament and the role of sponsors will be given. Other topics and number of sessions necessary are at the discretion of the clergy.

The Rite of Baptism

Holy Baptism is administered at the principal celebration of the Holy Eucharist. It is appropriate for other family members to gather with candidates, parents and sponsors at the font. The children of the parish will also be invited to gather at the font so that they may clearly see the act of baptism and as such fully participate.

The Holy Communion

All newly baptized, including infants, may make their first communion at the same service as their baptism. To withhold the sacrament from the newly baptized by reason of age or instruction is to deny a channel of God's grace. Questions about this should be discussed with the clergy. Instructions for communion for infants are available from the clergy or Licensed Eucharistic Ministers.

.CONFIRMATION

The sacrament of Confirmation is the public statement and affirmation before a Bishop of faith and commitment to one's baptismal vows.

Confirmation is the "laying on of hands" by the Bishop. Those baptized at the usual early age are confirmed by the laying on of hands when sufficiently mature and properly instructed (which is why the Bishop does not regularly baptize infants or small children during his regular visits to our parish). In general, those to be confirmed should be regular in attendance at worship and should have completed an inquirers' class/confirmation course.



Adults who have been baptized in other Christian communions should be active participants in the full life of the community. These persons are confirmed or received, depending on their previous church affiliation.

Confirmation Preparation

All persons interested in the possibility of being confirmed must attend a series of inquirers' classes offered by the clergy or others in association with the Education Committee. Content includes: salvation history, Jesus Christ, Holy Scripture, the sacraments, history and tradition of the Church (with special emphasis on Anglican history), and living out one's baptismal vows (with emphasis on the making of moral and ethical decisions).

Attendance at such classes does not obligate anyone to be confirmed. The decision about confirmation is made in consultation with clergy or appointed instructors at the conclusion of the classes.

The Occasions for Confirmation

Confirmation in the Episcopal Church is the "laying on of hands" by a Bishop. Candidates are confirmed during the principal service on the day of the Bishop's visitation or at arranged times of confirmation at other locations in the Diocese (for example at the Cathedral or specified location).

Concerning Photographs

Photographs should be taken **after** the service. It is requested that **NO FLASH** pictures be taken during the service. Non-flash photographs and videos may be taken if the photographer remains in place and does not leave his/her pew and walk around during the baptismal or confirmation service.

Holy Baptism and Confirmation are Sacraments of the Church. Our Lord Jesus Christ commanded that the disciples "go and baptize". The purpose of this brochure is to help answer and clarify questions about baptisms and confirmations at Trinity. If after having read this information, you decide to plan a baptism or confirmation, please call the church office for an appointment with our priest.



Holy Baptism is Jesus Christ's command and his gift to his Church. It is the rite by which we become members of his mystical Body. By God's grace, our baptism gives us the name by which God knows us, initiates us into the community of the church, forgives us and brings us to Christ's Holy Table, the Eucharist (Holy Communion). Baptism is once and for all. It is our baptism which formally constitutes our being Christian.



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Holy Baptism is not simply a symbolic act, but a reality. In our baptism, we are truly born anew by water and the Spirit. Because that newness must be nurtured and brought to fruition, Holy Baptism is a corporate act. It is an action of the People of God, the Church. Parents, godparents, sponsors, and the entire congregation participate by the reaffirmation of their own baptismal vows and promise to support the newly baptized. It is essential, therefore, that baptism be administered (except in an emergency) within the context of the worshiping community, during a regularly scheduled Holy Eucharist.