

Holy Baptism Guidance

HOLY BAPTISM FESTIVAL DAYS

Baptisms are celebrated on scheduled Baptism Festival Days in the congregation's worship life.

Pastors will meet with baptism candidates and their families. Typically this meeting happens on Sunday morning the week before a baptism festival.

Baptisms are not celebrated during the 40 days of Lent before Easter (in the spring) or during Advent (the four weeks before Christmas).

Baptisms may also be scheduled on most Saturday evenings during our 5:30 pm service.

HOLY BAPTISM IS A RITE OF PASSAGE

It's a strange thing – to present your child to be drowned. In public. To give your child away. In public. To say the future you can give them just won't do. In public. To say the family name they got from you is not enough. In public. To have your child bathed. In public. And dressed in new clothes. To have an infant turn its back on evil and turn instead toward the light. An infant?

And who do we think we are – anointing them with oil – like a king or queen, like a prophet, like the messiah himself?

It's an even stranger thing – when youth or adults present themselves for this ordeal.

HOLY BAPTISM IS A RITE OF THE CHURCH

Though deeply personal, baptism is never private. It is initiation into the Christian community, the Body of Christ, the body of believers. It is an event, a celebration of the people of God. The individual candidate, the community of faith, and the Lord's mission are forever affected by this radical action of God and the assembly's celebration of this sign of God's grace.

On our baptism festival days we celebrate God's saving activity in Holy Baptism. On baptism festival days we obey our Lord's command recorded by Matthew: Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age. (Mt. 28:19-20)

HOLY BAPTISM IS CENTRAL TO OUR MISSION

Our baptism festival days allow us to celebrate baptism in such a way that its centrality in our lives becomes clear to all. We seek to live out Christ's command that we be a baptizing community. We seek to celebrate baptism in such a way that the celebration is a true and complete sign of the things which baptism signifies, with abundant water, generous actions, baptismal hymns. We seek to celebrate well and fully the saving activity of God.

And so as candidates come to the water and the word, as a congregation we seek to gather with them around the life-giving waters of Holy Baptism. Individuals or families with candidates of any age for baptism are invited to contact the Church Office to be included.

CENTRAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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to celebrate, discover and share the love of Christ*

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