

Preparing for a Baptism at St. Simon's

We want this experience to be special, because it is. Your family, friends and the parishioners should remember the blessings of this sacrament as one filled with the spirit. It should also be well-prepared for, which is why we request the following:

1. A counseling session is required before the blessing takes place. Please arrange to be counseled by clergy at least 2-3 weeks before the baptism. It is especially gratifying to have the godparents present for the counseling.
2. Please arrive at the church in a timely fashion. This is an exciting day so plan ahead. Arrive at the church at least fifteen minutes before the service.
3. Ask your guests to be on time also. Service should not be interrupted by late arrivals.
4. Sit in the area designated by our baptism coordinator; he/she will escort you and your guests to the section for family and friends.
5. Please sign our guest book. We would like to keep in contact with you. We sincerely hope that you will continue to attend services and please know that your family and friends are always welcome.
6. If you intend on having a celebration for the baptism after church, please tell the baptism coordinator so that our undercroft can be prepared.
7. A week before the baptism, the parents and god-parents must attend a rehearsal. Please call the baptism coordinator to schedule an appointment.
8. Each godparent and the baptismal candidate will receive a certificate of baptism. In the case of a minor the parents are given the certificate .

Baptism Coordinator is Mrs.Glendine Kirton-Ellis-347-734-3343

***A donation to St. Simon is not required but is very much appreciated.**

Introduction:

It is important that you or your child begin this journey anchored by a consistent church life. A consistent church life offers so much more than just church attendance. It offers a safe environment where you or your child can have a rewarding spiritual journey while learning the word of God. It can also help with difficult life decisions such as helping your child choose the right friends.

Christian Education:

Our Christian Education classes begin at 9:15am sharp on Sundays. It is expected that our students are on time so we have adequate time to present our lessons. We have the finest and most dedicated Sunday School staff and teachers and you will be in good hands.

Sponsors and Godparents:

At this time you probably have some idea of who will be the god parents or sponsor. Choose wisely. Being a godparent or sponsor is responsibility that should not be taken lightly. It is not just an “honorary” title given to a friend. It is an actual formal role. Godparents give support to the parents and will be a major influence if the parents are absent. They are also involved in the guidance of faith and instruction.

Each adult candidate for Baptism must have at least one sponsor who is an active member of the congregation in which the candidate is to be baptized. In the case of infants or younger children, at least one sponsor, called a godparent, will make the baptismal vows on behalf of the child. Such a godparent must, therefore, be a member of the Episcopal Church and of the congregation that the candidate will be joining. In either case, other persons whose presence the family or candidate desires can be witnesses to the baptism, even if they are not members of the Episcopal Church.

BAPTISM

Baptism

"Holy Baptism is full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's body, the Church. The bond which God establishes at Baptism is indissoluble." (Book of Common Prayer, page 298). In these words, the Book of Common Prayer clearly states the position of this Church: Baptism by water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is the only requirement for full initiation in this Church. Baptism is the root from which all other sacraments and rites of the church proceed.

Baptism is a Public act

Baptism initiates the candidate into the communal life of the congregation. In the Episcopal Church, therefore, Baptisms are normally administered publicly during the Eucharist as the chief service on a Sunday or other feast. Easter, Pentecost, All Saints' Day and the Baptism of Our Lord Jesus Christ are especially appropriate days, as is the day of the bishop's visitation.

Baptism and the Community

Baptism involves the individual as well as the community. Both the individual and the community bear significant responsibility toward each other. The individual promises to renounce Satan; turn to Christ; and be faithful to the apostolic fellowship, teaching, breaking of bread and prayers. The community promises to do all in its power to support the individual in the new life in Christ. Parishes who desire to celebrate this sacrament with integrity and conviction must show a strong commitment to nurturing individuals and families through the initiation process into full membership and growth in Christ.

Baptism is best understood when we examine the way in which an adult is prepared for the sacrament. Baptism of infants and young children is but an interpretation and adaptation of that fuller rite used for adults. The Book of Occasional Services: 1991, pages 112-125, outlines the steps in preparing an adult for Baptism, and we commend its careful study. Baptism involves inquiry, self-examination, preparation and prayer, all supported by the whole community, leading up to the administration of the sacrament. Baptism is followed by participation in the Eucharist, further support, instruction, spiritual growth, and renewal--all in the context of a continued commitment to and participation in a congregational community.

Preparation for Baptism

Every Baptism should be preceded by a period of formation and spiritual preparation, for adults or for sponsors and parents of infants or young children. In the case of adults preparing for Baptism, this preparation might consist of the ****catechumenate** as outlined in *The Book of Occasional Services: 1991*, pages 112-125

The Book of Occasional Services: 1991 contains suggestions about how to adapt the catechumenate to various situations and to the key seasons of the Church Year. Clergy are encouraged to adapt the catechumenate to the needs of their congregations. In planning its content, however, clergy should ensure that these areas of study and reflection are emphasized:

****Catechumenate: A religious pupil: Somebody who receives instruction in preparation for Christian baptism or confirmation.**

1. Christian belief about God, human nature, and human life.
2. Scripture as it reveals salvation history.
3. Ethical implications of the Christian life in personal, family, environmental, economic, and political dimensions.
4. Prayer, corporate and private.
5. Discernment of God's call to live out the baptismal covenant and support in framing a response to that call.
6. The practice and theology of worship.
7. Discernment of gifts for lay ministry in the Church and in the world.

Infant Baptism of those who are not Church members:

Readers who are not fully communicant members of the Episcopal Church should understand that it is the view of the Episcopal Church that infant and child Baptism is only appropriate when at least one parent is an active member of a congregation and thus willing and able to raise the baptized child as a Christian within the Church and congregation. Historical and cultural affinity or having been baptized as an Episcopalian oneself are not, without an ongoing commitment to a Christian life within the Church, a sufficient justifications for Baptism of a child at an age when that child is incapable of making commitments for him or herself.

Baptism confers full membership:

In the Episcopal Church, Baptism is the initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into full membership of the Church. Water is its essential visible sign, and the candidate is either immersed in it or has a liberal quantity poured over them. There is no other requirement than Baptism in order to participate in the Holy Eucharist; and equally no person who is not baptized may do so.

The church in which it took place is not material:

Our church recognizes all baptisms performed with water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit: this means that anyone baptized in a Christian church of any denomination may take communion in an Episcopal Church.

Confirmation, Reception, Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows:

Confirmation is the renewal of baptismal vows for those baptized at an early age who desire to make their first adult affirmation of faith. It is a sacrament of mature adulthood.

Baptism, not Confirmation, admits a person to Holy Communion:

With the bishop's permission, congregations are encouraged to develop their own rites for adolescents should such rites seem pastorally required.

Reception is a renewal of baptismal vows:

For those who have made a mature affirmation of faith in any other Christian church and who now wish to join the Episcopal Church.

Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows is a renewal of baptismal vows:

For those who were baptized as adults without laying on of hands by a bishop, for those who have made a mature affirmation of faith but have returned from a lapse of Christian practice, for those concluding a period of personal or pastoral crisis, and for those who are experiencing a new call from God to grow in faith or to begin a new ministry.

Confirmation, Reception and Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows are all performed with laying on of hands.

Information Blank



HOLY BAPTISM



Date of Application _____

Full Name _____ Sex _____

Address _____ Age _____

Date of Birth _____

Place of Birth _____

Father's Full Name _____
(as it would appear on Baptismal Certificate)

Mother's Full Name _____
(as it would appear on Baptismal Certificate)

Parents' Residence (if different) _____

Telephone (H) _____ (W) _____

E-Mail _____

Religious Affiliation of Parents _____

WITNESSES OR GODPARENTS

1. _____
Name

_____ *Address*

2. _____
Name

_____ *Address*

3. _____
Name

_____ *Address*

Date of Baptism _____ Hour _____

Place of Baptism _____

Officiant _____