



PREPARING FOR BAPTISM AT REDEEMER

Baptism is about developing relationships: between the parents or guardians and the parish community, and the infant or young child and the parish community. A worshipping assembly speaks these words each time newly baptized people enter their midst: *“We welcome you into the body of Christ and into the mission we share: join us in giving thanks and praise to God and bearing God’s creative and redeeming word to all the world”* (ELW, p. 231)

God promises new life and salvation to those who are baptized. The church expects that parents or other adults responsible for a child’s nurture in faith are already involved in this congregation; in the process of joining the parish; or otherwise connected to the community in some way. *At minimum:* (near) weekly participation in mass is expected for a period of 2 months prior to a baptism. In the baptismal service, parents promise that they will bring their child to worship regularly and that they will teach key aspects of the faith to their child, especially by example. At least one parent/guardian should be an active part of the worshipping community. Anything less would be a disservice to the child who is to be baptized. In cases involving extreme emergencies or other pastoral considerations these requirements may, at the discretion of the pastor, be revised. The Christian community voices its support of the newly baptized (and the parents or guardians) as they join the church’s mission in service to the world.

When older children or adults are baptized, a pastor asks the candidates themselves if they desire to be baptized. To answer such a question with awareness of its implications, the older candidate for baptism ordinarily engages in an extended period of instruction and formation in the faith prior to baptism.

For baptismal candidates of any age, growing into Christian identity and mission is a journey that unfolds over time rather than just a single event. We’re glad you’ve chosen Redeemer!

BAPTISM FOR AN INFANT OR YOUNG CHILD

Prior to birth or adoption

- Parents contact the pastor or the church office before birth or adoption.
- An individualized blessing for both parents and their unborn child is offered at every celebration of Holy Communion. It is expected that parents will be participating faithfully in weekly mass for a period of 2 months prior to the baptism of a child.

Following birth or adoption

- Parents notify the pastor or the church office soon after the birth or adoption of a child.
- The pastor or other leaders pray with the family afterward in the hospital or at home.
- The congregation includes a petition of thanksgiving for birth or adoption in its intercessory prayers.

Preparation for baptism

Parents or guardians should contact the pastor regarding the congregation’s process for scheduling baptisms and for the pastor’s availability. Baptisms are only scheduled for specific “baptismal festivals” based on the Church Year: Baptism of Our Lord (the first Sunday after Epiphany), Easter Vigil, Easter 2, Easter 4, Holy Trinity, Mary, Mother of Our Lord (Sunday

closest to August 15), and All Saints (the first Sunday in November). The Easter Vigil is the principal baptismal day.

Parents will be asked to provide basic information about the child to the church office, including the child's complete name, his or her date of birth, as well as the names of parents and sponsors or godparents. Sponsors and godparents must be faithful Christians. A recommendation from their parish indicating ongoing involvement in the life of a Christian community may be required of non-members of this parish. Because of the vows being made at baptism it is not possible to have non-Christian sponsors or godparents. Older siblings are most welcome to actively participate in the liturgy.

Baptism preparation sessions are required. These are offered to meet your schedule. The number of sessions is determined by the level of participation the parents already have in the parish. The pastor has the responsibility and the right to postpone a baptism for pastoral reasons should he/she deem it necessary.

Following baptism

- Parents or guardians regularly bring their children with them to services of worship and to participate in various children's ministries, such as Sunday school and VBS.
- Baptized children begin communing as soon as they and their parents express a desire to do so, and in accordance with the congregation's practice of welcoming.
- Parents teach their child the faith of the Christian community, especially by reading stories from the Bible and through a practice of praying in the home, particularly at meals and at bedtime. *Living the Promises of Baptism: 101 Ideas for Parents* (Augsburg Fortress, 2010) includes a variety of mealtime and bedtime prayers. A copy is provided to each household by the parish.
- Parents, guardians, and sponsors may celebrate baptismal anniversaries with a child each year, including lighting the candle given at baptism as well as giving thanks for the gift of baptism.
- Baptized children ordinarily participate in a process of baptismal affirmation (often known as confirmation) during their adolescent years. This is a ministry of the congregation that provides young people with fellowship and service activities, as well as formation in the scriptures, prayer, and the church's teachings.

BAPTISM FOR OLDER CHILDREN AND ADULTS

An adult or older child who is able to express a desire for baptism on her or his own may speak to a pastor about opportunities to prepare for baptism. Congregations such as ours offer a variety of ways to support adults and older children as they prepare for baptism that usually involve an extended period of reflection on the scriptures, as well as formation in prayer and forms of Christian service to others. Such preparation often involves various faith mentors, guides, and sponsors, in addition to the pastoral leadership of the parish.

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Baptism Information

Please print clearly

Full name

Date of birth and city/state

Parents/guardians full names

Mailing address & contact information (phone, email, cell phone) for the above

Are both parents/guardians baptized? ---- yes --- no

Where: _____

Sponsors (often referred to as "Godparents")

Church affiliation _____

Church affiliation _____

Thank you for taking the time to complete this form and return it. We are delighted that you have chosen Redeemer Lutheran Church!
