

**HOLY BAPTISM**  
at  
**EMMANUEL EPISCOPAL CHURCH**



**Emmanuel Episcopal Church**  
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## Welcome to Emmanuel!

Baptism is both a holy and joyful occasion. We are very happy that you have chosen Emmanuel Episcopal Church as the place to celebrate the sacrament for your child – or for yourself. In the Episcopal Church, baptism can take place at any age. This booklet will walk you through the process. It includes an introduction to the meaning of the sacrament, forms for baptismal certificates and godparents, and liturgical helpful hints for the day of the service.

Godparents for children are traditional but not required. If you choose to designate godparents, there is no required number. The only requirement is that at least one of them is a baptized Christian. The child's parents are also, of course, de facto godparents.

Adults seeking baptism may also (but are not required) to choose a sponsor(s). The celebrant of the baptismal service, the clergy, also serves as a de facto sponsor.

As Holy Baptism is full initiation into the Body of Christ and the Household of God, it is traditionally celebrated on Sunday mornings in the context of the Holy Eucharist and public worship. Emmanuel has both an 8:00 a.m. service in the Chapel and a 10:00 a.m. service in the Nave. Exceptions may be made for significant pastoral reasons at the discretion of the clergy.

If you would like to schedule a baptism for your child or yourself, please contact either the Rector, The Rev. Charles C. McCoart, Jr. (Chuck) at [charlescmcoartjr@gmail.com](mailto:charlescmcoartjr@gmail.com) or the Associate, Rev. Joan L. Peacock at [celticlp@gmail.com](mailto:celticlp@gmail.com). If you have any questions, you can also contact the church office at (703) 683-0798.

## The Sacrament of Holy Baptism

*“The truth that Holy Baptism reveals has to do with God. God’s love for us and our relationship with God. Baptism makes us aware that God loves each and every one of us with a love that is unmerited, unconditional and never ending. Baptism is not necessary for a child or adult to be the subject of God’s love. But it is the means by which we accept this gift as children of God.”*  
(John Westerhoff)

In Baptism, gratefully we celebrate the grace and love that God has made known to us in creation. Baptism is an affirmation that our children, and that we ourselves, are in God’s hands.

At Baptism, the candidate, or parents on behalf of the candidate, makes a promise to walk hence forth as a Christian in both word and deed.

Whenever the sacrament is celebrated, those already baptized, renew this Baptismal Covenant, so that with God’s help, all may embody the Christian life and faith.

Baptism, whether for a child or an adult, represents full reception into the household of faith. Once baptized, regardless of age, you are welcome to receive Holy Communion at the Lord’s table. (For children, this is left to the parents’ discretion.)

The “outward and visible sign” of the sacrament is water. In the beginning, God breathed over the waters of creation. Moses struck a rock in the desert and out poured the waters of life. Jesus was baptized in the waters of the River Jordan. By these waters we are cleansed from sin and rise to a new life in Christ.

After the pouring of the water, the sign of the cross is smeared in *chrism* (holy oil) on the forehead: *“You are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ’s own forever.”*

While we remain sinners, in the Episcopal Church Baptism is a once in a lifetime event. Though we stumble, Christ walks with us through all of the ups and downs of this life.

Baptism is both a vertical and horizontal sacrament, connecting us to God and to the Christian community. Baptism, for this reason, is normally celebrated as part of Sunday morning worship. The congregation promises in their prayers to support the newly baptized in the resurrected life of Christ.

*“We receive you into the household of God. Confess the faith of Christ crucified, proclaim his resurrection, and share with us in his eternal priesthood.”*

The full liturgy of Holy Baptism can be found in the 1979 Book of Common Prayer (and will be printed in the Sunday bulletin).

*Heavenly Father, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit you have bestowed upon these your servants the forgiveness of sin and have raised them to the new life of grace. Sustain them, O Lord, in your Holy Spirit. Give them an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and persevere, a spirit to know and love you, and the gift of joy and wonder in all your works. Amen.*

*Book of Common Prayer, p. 308*

## Day of Baptism Helpful Hints

- Please arrive 15 minutes early. Find a pew (or pews!) up front for you and your family, as many as you need.
- You are invited to join in the procession. This includes whomever and however many you would like: parents, godparents, grandparents, siblings and the candidate for baptism, of course!
- Please, gather at the back of the church by the doors while the prelude is being played on the organ (prior to the service.) The clergy will assist you in finding your place in the procession. You will follow the choir during the opening hymn.
- Find your pew(s) and then follow the order of service in the bulletin.
- Following the sermon, the celebrant will invite the baptismal party (whomever you choose) to the top step of the sanctuary (*“The candidate for Holy Baptism will now be presented.”*)
- Follow the prompts in the bulletin for parents and godparents. The congregation will also join in the responses printed in **bold**.
- The priest will pour the water three times over the candidate’s forehead followed by anointing with chrism (holy oil) and invite the congregation to welcome the newly baptized with hardy applause.

- During the applause, please return to your pew.
- Baptism completed, you can now relax and enjoy the rest of the service.
- On occasion following The Peace, there is a baptismal hymn and the congregation is sprinkled with holy water.
- Following the Eucharistic Prayer, optionally, the newly baptized may come to the rail to receive Holy Communion or instead may choose to receive a blessing.
- If the baptism is at our 10:00 a.m. Sunday service and if you are able, please join us in the Parish Hall to celebrate. We know you may be rushing off to a family gathering, but we would love the opportunity to welcome you and your guests to our parish home.
- If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact either Chuck at [charlescmccoartjr@gmail.com](mailto:charlescmccoartjr@gmail.com) or Joani at [celticjlp@gmail.com](mailto:celticjlp@gmail.com).

## **Baptismal Certificate and Registration Form**

Please fill out the enclosed form with information for the baptismal candidate family and godparents/sponsors, so the office can prepare certificates and register the candidate in the official church registry.

Date and Time of Baptism: \_\_\_\_\_

Full name of person being baptized:

\_\_\_\_\_

Residence of person being baptized:

\_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate of person being baptized:

\_\_\_\_\_

City of birth of person being baptized:

\_\_\_\_\_

Full name of Parent 1:

\_\_\_\_\_

Religious affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Full name of Parent 2:

\_\_\_\_\_

Religious affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Godparents / Witnesses / Sponsors:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

Residence: \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Residence: \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

Residence: \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

Residence: \_\_\_\_\_

Officiant: \_\_\_\_\_