



Christian Baptism  
at  
Davidson College  
Presbyterian Church

How do I prepare for Baptism?

Parents will be required to attend a baptismal preparation class that will be taught by the ministers of the church and members of the Worship Committee. These classes will be offered on certain Sunday mornings during the Sunday School hour (9:45 am) and occasionally on Wednesday evenings. They will include an exploration of the history and meaning of Baptism, personal reflection and sharing of faith journeys and practical information for the Baptism.

Where is the sacrament of Baptism administered?

Baptism is not a private ceremony, it is a sacrament of the entire Church, involving God, the congregation, the pastor(s), parents and children. Therefore, *Baptism is celebrated in a service of public worship, and is accompanied by the reading and proclaiming of the Word.*

Do Presbyterians require Godparents?

No. The congregation as a whole, on behalf of the Church universal, assumes responsibility for nurturing the baptized person in the Christian life. For any person who is being baptized, sponsor(s) may be appointed by the session in consultation with those desiring Baptism.

Is there a fee for Baptism?

No. Baptism is a celebration of the free grace of God in our lives.

# Baptism—Questions and Answers

(Words in italics are questions from the Directory of Worship of the Presbyterian Church (USA)).

## Why Baptize?

*Baptism is the sign and seal of incorporation into Christ. Baptism points us back to the grace of God expressed in Jesus Christ, who died for us and was raised for us. As one of two sacraments of the Presbyterian Church (USA), Baptism is the sign and symbol of inclusion in God's grace and covenant with the church. Both believers and their children are included in God's covenant love. Children of believers are to be baptized without undue delay, but without undue haste.*

## What is the goal of Baptism?

*Baptism signifies the beginning of life in Christ, not its completion. Baptism calls to repentance, to faithfulness, and to discipleship. Baptism calls for decision at every subsequent stage of life's way. Baptism commissions the church for ministry to the world.*

## How do I arrange for Baptism at the church?

Call the church office to speak to one of our pastors, or to secretary, Patti Loner. Together, you may select an available date and arrange for your preparation class. Baptisms are celebrated each month at both the 8:30 am worship service, typically the second Sunday and the 11:00 am worship service, usually the third Sunday. Dates are selected by our worship planners months in advance and are posted in the church office.

Do parents have to belong to Davidson College Presbyterian Church in order to have a child baptized?

*When a child is being presented for Baptism, ordinarily the parent or parents or one(s) rightly exercising parental responsibility shall be an active member of the congregation. The session may consider a request for the Baptism of a child from a Christian parent who is an active member of another congregation.*

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Elizabeth McGregor Simmons, Pastor

Robert Alexander, Associate Pastor for  
Discipleship and Mission

Mary Margaret Porter, Associate Pastor for  
Senior Adult Ministry

Jane Cain, Music Director

David Brinson, Associate Music Director

What will I be asked?

Parents will be asked to reaffirm their faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, to declare their intention to participate actively and responsibly in the worship and mission of the church, and to promise to provide for the Christian nurture of their child. Those presenting children for Baptism shall promise to provide nurture and guidance within the community of faith until the child is ready to make a personal profession of faith and assume the responsibility of active church membership.

What will the congregation be asked?

The congregation will profess its faith, using the Apostles' Creed, voice its support of those baptized, and express its willingness to take responsibility for the nurture of those baptized.

May we take pictures?

Baptism is a sacrament, celebrated in worship. Taking pictures during the worship service is strongly discouraged. However, the pastor(s) will be glad to share in a time for pictures after the worship service.

What happens if the baby cries or is fussy during the Baptism?

God's grace is stronger than any child's crying. Relax and enjoy the moment, which may be all the more memorable for a bit of vocal complaint!