



GETHSEMANE LUTHERAN CHURCH BAPTISMAL POLICY

1. Baptism is the Sacrament of initiation into the Body of Christ that is given to the visible church to administer and results in membership in a particular congregation.
2. The Baptism of adults is preceded by instruction in the Christian faith.
3. The Baptism of children should be arranged with the pastor well in advance. It is appropriate to arrange a Baptism while the mother is still pregnant.
4. Because a Baptized person becomes a member of the Church and of this or another congregation, certain requirements are expected to be met:
 - A. The pastor will instruct parents and sponsors in the meaning of Baptism before the Service of Baptism.
 - B. The Rite of Baptism will ordinarily be at a regularly scheduled service of worship.
 - C. Baptism at a time other than at a regularly scheduled is discouraged and will be done only in exceptional cases. Such services are to be considered public services and be announced to the congregation in advance with an invitation to attend.
 - D. Baptisms away from the church will only be administered in case of illness. If such a Baptism is administered and the person recovers, the expectation is that there will be a public recognition of the Baptism in a worship service of the congregation.
 - E. It is customary, but not essential, that from one to four sponsors be chosen as Godparents of a child. These should be carefully selected for their interest in the spiritual growth of the child and their ability to follow the child's progress in the church, particularly at the times of the child's First communion and Confirmation. Sponsors should be Baptized Christians who understand the sacramental character of Baptism. If suitable sponsors cannot be found, it is appropriate for parents to act as sponsors. If the person baptized lives out of the area, a transfer to an appropriate local Christian church will be completed as soon as possible following the baptism.
 - F. It is helpful for adults to have baptismal sponsors as well to care for their spiritual life.
5. There are no fees or charges associated with the Sacrament of Baptism.
6. Baptism in non-Lutheran churches, or by non-ordained persons in an emergency, are valid Baptisms if done with water and in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.