

Baptism at St. Paul's Episcopal Church

- **What is Holy Baptism?**
 - The Book of Common Prayer (p. 858) tells us, "Holy Baptism is the sacrament by which God adopts us as his children and makes us members of Christ's Body, the Church, and inheritors of the kingdom of God."
- **Where can I learn more about baptism?**
 - Watch our video found here: <https://vimeo.com/channels/1644674/521184789>
 - Take a look at the service of Holy Baptism beginning on p. 298 in the Book of Common Prayer.
 - Reach out if you would like to meet with a priest to talk over any questions about baptism for infants, children, or adults.
- **Can we have a private baptism?**
 - Because baptism is birth into Christ's Body the Church, it is a communal rather than a private act. Baptisms take place in public services of worship and all those present promise to support the baptized person in their life in Christ. It is also an opportunity for all those present to renew their Baptismal Covenant and strengthen our commitment to being the Body of Christ together. Thus, private baptisms are not a part of our tradition, and we ask that parents or grandparents of children to be baptized are members of St. Paul's.
- **What are my options for dates?**
 - Baptism is appropriately administered in the context of the Eucharist during the principal service on a Sunday or other feast. Holy Baptism is especially appropriate at the Easter Vigil, on the Day of Pentecost, on All Saints' Day or the Sunday following, and on the Feast of the Baptism of our Lord (the First Sunday after the Epiphany). One of our clergy can help you determine the best available date for you and your family; these feast days typically fall in April, late May/early June, November, and early January. Additionally, because of the long period of time in between Pentecost and All Saints' Day, St. Paul's will set aside a Sunday in August as an additional day for Holy Baptism.
- **What are the next steps?**
 - Email Betsy Reiners, Executive Assistant to the Rector and Membership Coordinator, at breiners@stpauls-ws.org to get started.
 - Prayerfully consider who will sponsor the infant, child, or adult to be baptized. Each candidate for Holy Baptism is to be sponsored by one or more baptized persons. It is fitting that parents be included among the godparents of their own children. Sponsors of adults and older children present their candidates and commit to supporting them by prayer and example in their Christian life. Sponsors of infants, often called godparents, present their candidates, make promises in their own names, and take vows on behalf of their candidates.
 - Save the date: we invite parents, sponsors/godparents, and baptismal candidates to be present for a brief baptism prep before the service (typically the Saturday before) in order to go over the service and talk through any remaining questions.