

## What is the Sacrament of Baptism?

*What does “sacrament” mean?*

A sacrament is a ritual action using something ordinary (like water or bread and wine), which, when connected to the promise-filled words of Jesus, becomes a means of grace—a means of conveying God’s favor or blessing to us.

*What is Baptism?*

The word comes from a Greek word (“*baptisma*”) that means “dipping in water” or “washing.” Baptism unites us with Christ and makes us children of God.

Baptism:

- Bestows God’s grace on us
- Names us a child of God
- Adopts us into a new family
- Calls us into newness of life
- Provides assurance that a saving relationship with God has begun through the work of the Holy Spirit
- Gives us the promise of eternal life in God’s kingdom

Jesus said, “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teach them to obey everything that I have commanded you.”  
(Matthew 28:19-20a).

## What is the Role of Parents?

Primary responsibilities of parents are to:

- Provide for your child’s baptism
- Teach your child to pray, and pray *with* your child
- Place the scriptures into your child’s hands, and read them with your child
- Teach and live out the Lord’s Prayer, the Apostles’ Creed, the Ten Commandments, and the teachings of Jesus in the Bible
- Nurture your child’s spiritual growth and encourage active participation in worship, faith education, and service in Jesus’ name

Martin Luther wrote: “Most certainly father and mother are apostles, bishops, and priests to their children, for it is they who make them acquainted with the gospel. In short, there is no greater or nobler authority on earth than that of parents over their children” (*Luther’s Works* 45:46).

### Recommended Resources:

- Erlander, Daniel. *Let the Children Come* (Erlander, 1996).  
Holmen, Mark. *Faith Begins at Home* (Regal, 2007).  
Morgenthaler, Shirley K. *Right from the Start* (Concordia, 2001).  
Wangerin, Walter, Jr. *Water Come Down* (Augsburg, 1999).

## What is the Role of the Baptism Sponsor (or Godparent)?

*What is a Sponsor (or Godparent)?*

A sponsor is a practicing Christian who serves in partnership with parents to nurture the child in Christian faith. A sponsor does *not* need to be a relative, nor need a sponsor be a certain age to promise to help nurture your child’s faith. (Note: a baptism sponsor is not necessarily a child’s *legal guardian*, as was the custom generations ago.)

*What does a sponsor do?*

A baptism sponsor strives:

- To pray for the child regularly
- To be a model of love, care, and Christ-centered faith for the child
- To encourage and assist the child in his/her relationship with Jesus
- To be a regular presence in the life of the child
- To be at the baptism (if possible)
- To remember the child on baptism anniversaries and other holidays

### Recommended Resources:

- Ramshaw, Elaine. *The Godparent Book* (Liturgy Training Pubs, 2007).  
Bimler, Richard and Hazel. *A Word to My Sponsor* (Concordia, 1998).

## How do I Schedule a Baptism?

You do not have to be a Calvary member to have your child baptized at Calvary. It starts by calling the church office (701-772-4897), preferably with a few weeks' advance notice. You will be asked for:

- your child's name and birth date
- parents' names, birth dates, addresses, and church membership
- sponsors' names and addresses

### When can we have a baptism at Calvary?

We baptize during worship services at Calvary because baptism is not a private event – it is an official welcome into the community of faith.

Baptisms take place at most Calvary worship services – both Sundays and Wednesday evenings. On Sunday mornings in the Sanctuary, we host baptisms at Traditional worship (9am) on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month, and in Blended worship (10:30am) on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays. The church office can tell you if your preferred service is unavailable.

### What about adults desiring baptism?

Baptism is not just for infants – it's for all of us! Please know that you are neither the first nor only adult(s) desiring baptism at Calvary! Much of the same information also applies to adult baptisms at Calvary (e.g., scheduling). Still, if you are an adult desiring baptism, please talk directly to a pastor (preferably before scheduling), who will likely meet with you individually to discuss the significance of baptism for you.

## Baptism Classes at Calvary Lutheran Church

We ask that *all* parents desiring to schedule a baptism at Calvary after Sept 9, 2012, plan to attend one of our baptism classes. *Parents are welcome to attend even before their baby is born.* The class will cover important topics (e.g., faith foundations, nurturing faith at home) and will give opportunity to prepare spiritually for the task and vocation of parenting.

Infants are welcome to attend along with parents. Childcare will be provided in the nursery for older siblings. Calvary's pastors and young adult/family ministry coordinator Kim Adams co-teach the baptism classes, which are held monthly.

### Winter/Spring classed 2014:

- Saturday, Feb. 8, 9:30-11:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, Mar. 12, 5:30-7:00 p.m.
- Saturday, Apr. 12, 9:30-11:00 a.m.
- Wednesday, May 14, 5:30-7:00 p.m.

For planning purposes, please inform the church office if you plan to attend a session (701-772-4897, [place4u@calvarygf.org](mailto:place4u@calvarygf.org)).

If it is impossible for you to attend a baptism class, please contact directly the pastor who will be baptizing your child. (The church office will tell you who will be doing the baptism.)

# Baptism for Infants and Children



at  
**Calvary Lutheran Church**

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701-772-4897

[www.calvarygf.org](http://www.calvarygf.org)