

POLICY FOR CELEBRATION OF BAPTISM

General Intent

Christ First celebrates the Sacrament of Baptism as a life-giving expression of our Christian faith. Baptism is a sacred celebration; a visible sign of God's unconditional grace and welcome, and the new life God gives us through Jesus. Baptism proclaims that we are precious members of God's family. (Mark 10: 13-16). Baptism is offered for infants and children, at the request of their parents or guardians, who answer questions of faith on the child's behalf; and for youth and adults, as a personal profession of faith.

Our congregation is an inclusive faith community, and welcomes families and individuals of all gender expressions, identities, and sexual orientations. Christ First strives to ensure that all are treated equitably.

Specific Policies

1. The Minister is expected to conduct all Baptisms.
2. At the discretion of the Minister, we welcome clergy of other congregations or traditions to participate in the Baptism.
3. Initial inquiries are usually handled by a member of the Office Administration team, who provides the *FAQ on Baptism* and then forwards contact information to the Minister for direct follow up with the requesting individual or family. The Minister will meet with the individual or family for conversation on the practice and policy of Baptism, and provide the *Request for Baptism* form.
4. When the *Request for Baptism* form is received by the Minister and the Office Administration team, the Minister proposes a date through the Worship Committee Chair, who then processes the request through the Worship Committee and then Christ First Council. When the date of Baptism is confirmed, the Minister will continue to meet with the individual or family in a *Preparing for Baptism* program.
5. The Office Administration team will coordinate and complete all resources and gifts for the one being Baptized, including the Baptism Register, Certificate, Candle, Shawl, and Bible or book.
6. There are no fees of any kind for Baptism. Families wishing to have on site gatherings following a Sunday service will work with the Office Administration team for appropriate rooms and booking fees.

Responsibility

The Worship Committee is responsible for keeping this policy up to date and for recommending changes for the approval of the Church Council.

References

1. FAQ on Baptism
2. Request for Baptism form