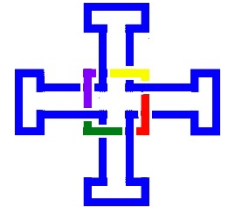


# St. Timothy's Episcopal Church

## Danville, CA



## Baptism

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"Holy Baptism is full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's Body, the Church. The bond which God establishes in Baptism is indissoluble." (The Book of Common Prayer 298.) Baptism is the sacramental act that empowers us to participate in the life of Christ and welcomes us into a faith community. Here you will find:

### **Who, What, Where, When, How, and Why of Baptism**

**Who:** *Anyone* seeking a deeper relationship with God in Christ. We baptize babies, octogenarians and everywhere in between.

**What:** With prayers, water, oil and candles, we celebrate the good work that God has done in the person.

**Where:** The preferred place is in Church, in the midst of the people on Sunday Morning.

**When:** At appointed times in the Church we celebrate Baptism: All Saint's Day in November, The Presentation in February, The Sunday after Easter in March, Pentecost in May, St. Mary's day in August and when a Bishop visits. We even will do Christmas Morning and Easter Sunday morning!

**How:** There is a Baptismal rehearsal for the candidate, parents, and godparents before the Baptism. Baptisms may be celebrated at any of our Sunday services.

**Why:** Baptism is a special way to say "yes" to Jesus as Lord and Savior of your/their life.

### **Why do we baptize?**

Baptism symbolizes our union with Christ in his death and resurrection (Romans 6:3). Baptism symbolizes our being washed clean of all sin and being reborn to new life in the Holy Spirit (2 Corinthians 5:17-21).

### **Who may be baptized?**

Anyone who desires baptism. If you come from another Church where you were baptized, you do not need to be re-baptized in the Episcopal Church. Each candidate for Holy Baptism is to be supported by one or more baptized (preferred) people (Godparents for little ones & Sponsors for adults). For the little ones, parents and godparents work to insure that the child will be brought up in the "knowledge and love of the Lord." Holy Baptism is full incorporation into the church. All baptized persons are welcome at communion.

### **What are the responsibilities of those baptized?**

People baptized into Christ's one holy catholic and apostolic church are expected to grow in the faith and strive to know God more day-by-day. This means that they will resist and renounce evil, follow Christ as their Lord and Savior, and put their whole trust in God.

### **How is someone prepared for Baptism?**

Adults entering the church through Baptism are expected to experience a program of instruction from the clergy. For children, we ask that both parents and godparents come to a "baptism rehearsal". This rehearsal includes the logistics of the service as well as a period of teaching about baptism.

Adult candidate can take classes for membership at St. Timothy's or talk to the clergy and they will customize the formation process. When you become an Episcopalian you become part of the spiritual lineage known as the Episcopal Church of the USA and join millions of others in World Wide Anglican Communion. When God calls you to baptism as an adult, it is personal as well as communal. St. Timothy's – its parishioners, clergy, and staff commit to helping you journey toward the heart of God.

### **What are the roles of sponsors, parents, and godparents in the life of the Baptized?**

**Adults:** Adults will normally have a sponsor who is a mature adult Christian willing to act as companion and mentor to the candidate. A sponsor provides encouragement and instruction and acts as a prayer-partner with and for the person to be baptized. In other words, a baptismal sponsor/godparent is a fellow pilgrim in Christ with the candidate, and promises to continue the journey of faith with the newly baptized.

**Children:** The role of parents and godparents in infant baptism is profound. These persons make the vows of the baptismal covenant in the name of and for the sake of a candidate who is not mature enough to speak for himself or herself. It is a great responsibility, as well as a great joy, to nurture a child in the Christian faith. Godparents do not need to be Episcopalian but will do everything they can to help the child grow in the knowledge and love of the Lord.

### **When is an appropriate time for Baptism?**

We set aside special Sundays for Baptism: The Day of Pentecost, All Saints' Day, the Presentation in February and on Transfiguration Sunday. Any time that the Bishop visits is a good time for baptism. Like we said before, Christmas Day and Easter Sunday are great times too.

### **Private Baptisms**

Family or private baptisms are not our first choice at St. Timothy's; however, we realize that families traveling for the baptism may not be able to make it on a Sunday morning. Please contact Pastor Susan to inquire about scheduling a date on Sunday or other days. If you give a gift/honorarium it is payable directly to the priest in the case of a private baptism.

### **The Day of Baptism**

When presenting the candidate for Baptism, remember to speak loudly and in unison. Presenting is the one thing sponsor/godparents goof up most often. We don't care if you goof, but we want you to have a wonderful, seamless experience.

When the priest says, "The candidates for holy baptism will now be presented", please remember to stand, speak in unison and speak loudly. "I present (name) to receive the sacrament of Baptism." When speaking, please use "I" rather than "we" – that's kind of awkward unless you practice it.

### **Additional notes on the logistics of Baptism.**

The clergy will meet with all baptismal candidates in a rehearsal session prior to the time of the service. This allows all persons involved to be familiar and comfortable with the service. It is also expected that all sponsors, parents, and godparents will be present for this rehearsal.

The clergy will officiate at baptisms in the parish except when a Bishop is present. When a Bishop is present, he or she is the officiant and can perform the Baptism. At such times, the Bishop may delegate the baptism to the clergy.

### **Cameras**

The taking of flash photographs is not allowed during a worship service. You may take photos, but please don't disrupt the service. We can take a mind-numbing amount of photos after the service!

### **Children in the Service**

It is appropriate that all present at the baptism be able to see and hear what is happening. We invite you and your children to move to a better location if your vision or hearing is obstructed. Children are especially invited to come forward so they can see and hear. Stay for social time after the service. The congregation looks forward to welcoming new sisters and brothers into the community of the faithful.

### **Clergy who are not part of St. Timothy's**

If you wish another Episcopal priest or another Christian pastor from outside of the parish or denomination to participate in the baptism, please let us know. If the Rector approves, Pastor Susan will coordinate logistics with the guest clergy well ahead of time. Also, it is expected that any visiting and assisting clergy be present for the rehearsal session.

### **Application**

Please print out the application for baptism from the baptism webpage. You can email the completed form via through scanning, taking a photo from your phone, or bringing a paper copy to the office.

### **Contact info**

Please contact Pastor Susan for more details

The Rev. Susan Geissler-O'Neil [sgeissleroneil@sainttimothysdanville.org](mailto:sgeissleroneil@sainttimothysdanville.org)