

Frequently Asked Questions

About

Baptism at Gloria Dei (Old Swedes') Church

1. Who can be baptized at Gloria Dei?

Anyone is welcome to be baptized at Gloria Dei! You don't have to be Episcopalian, and we baptize both children and adults. We are convinced that God's love and welcome are not limited by age, denomination, race, gender, orientation, or anything else.

2. What is baptism, and why do we do it?

Baptism is a rite of initiation, by which people are welcomed into the community of the Christian church (broadly) and into the life of the Gloria Dei community (in particular). The water and oil used in baptism are signs of God's unconditional love for every person, and of our call to be part of God's work of healing this world.

3. If a person dies unbaptized, are they in danger of hell?

No! We believe in God's love and mercy, which can reach a person regardless of the circumstances of their life or death. While each person can freely choose when or whether to accept God's love, our hope is that this love will ultimately outlast all human stubbornness and pride.

4. What is the baptism service like at Gloria Dei?

Baptism is part of our regular Sunday worship service (at 10am every week!), which is why we ask people to attend at least a few services before the baptism day. During the baptism itself, the candidate is presented by parents / godparents / sponsors, and everyone commits (or recommits) to living in a way that reflects the love, mercy, and justice of God – as revealed to us in the life and death and resurrection of Jesus.

5. When are baptisms held?

As noted above, baptisms are part of our regular Sunday services (we generally don't hold private baptism services). Typically, baptisms are scheduled on four significant dates each year: the Easter Vigil (the Saturday evening just before Easter Sunday), the Day of Pentecost (50 days after Easter, typically in May or June), the Sunday after All Saint's Day (the first Sunday in November), and the Feast of the Baptism of Jesus (in early January). The church office can provide exact dates for any particular year.

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6. What are the requirements for baptism?

- a.** Meet with Rev. Chris (if a child is being baptized, the parents and godparents should be at this meeting). We will talk about your interest in baptism and about the commitments that are made during the baptism service. You can reach out to Rev. Chris at rector@old-swedes.org (or by phone at 440-865-1490) to schedule a meeting at least a month in advance of the service.
- b.** Attend at least two Sunday services at Gloria Dei prior to the day of baptism (more broadly, as baptism is a rite of initiation, we hope that you will be regularly involved in the life of some Christian community).
- c.** Fill out the baptismal information form and return it to the church office

7. Is there any cost?

There is no cost for baptism, nor is there any expectation on guests to give money to attend services at Gloria Dei. That said, we regularly collect an offering during our services as an invitation to recognize the ways that God has blessed us with time and treasure. Anyone who desires is more than welcome to support the life of this community by volunteering with us and/or making a financial gift.