

# *Holy Baptism at Emmanuel*



*“Look! Water! What would keep me from being baptized?”*

*Acts 8:37*

## *Holy Baptism*

We are delighted you are seeking Baptism for yourself or a loved one!

Baptism is full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ's Body the Church. The bond and covenant which God establishes in Baptism can never be broken. So it is we strive to help those who are to be baptized (as well as parents and godparents) prepare for this important *beginning* of their journey into the love, mercy, and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Baptism has its origin in the purification rites of ancient Judaism in which people would ceremonially bathe or have water poured upon them by a priest or prophet to symbolize their renewal and cleansing from sin as. Jesus was baptized by John in the Jordan River and was there anointed by the Holy Spirit and proclaimed by God to be the Messiah, the Christ, and so began his ministry on earth.

The pages that follow offer some guidelines for scheduling, preparing, and celebrating your Baptism. We are pleased to discuss any questions you have and hope your faith will be strengthened, deepened and advanced by this process.

As you progress, please continue to be in *prayer* about the promises you are making (for yourself or someone else), the support you need, and the gifts you may be called by God to offer. We hope you will continue in worship in our community to help not only your preparation but also your ongoing journey into Christ.

Welcome to the journey!

# *Baptisms at Emmanuel Church*

## *Scheduling a Baptism*

- + Those desiring a celebration of Baptism should contact the parish office to schedule it a minimum of sixty days prior to the desired date.
- + Preferred times for such a celebration are:
  - Spring at the Great Vigil of Easter (especially appropriate).
  - Early Summer on the Day of Pentecost.
  - Fall at the Feast of All Saints (held the first Sunday of November).
  - Winter at the Feast of the Baptism of Our Lord (held the first Sunday after January 6).

*When there is no celebration of Baptism on these days, we celebrate the Renewal of Baptismal Vows.*

- + Baptisms may be scheduled for days other than Sunday with the approval of the rector/priest in charge. Such services are still considered public services of the church.
- + Please note that Baptisms may be scheduled in any liturgical season except Lent or Christmas.
- + “Emergency Baptism” may be conducted at any time in cases of illness and/or impending death.
- + There is no fee for a celebration of Holy Baptism. Friends and families are welcome to make a gift to the church in thanksgiving for the occasion.

## *Preparation*

- ✦ Parents of young children unable to answer for themselves must participate in a short catechism class taught by the officiating clergy or his/her designee. Persons able to speak for themselves must participate in the same class.
- ✦ When the candidate is unable to answer for his- or herself, it is particularly important for sponsors to consider their own faith journey, as they will be primary teachers and role models for the newly baptized person.
- ✦ The centerpiece of preparation is the Baptismal Covenant (BCP, 304), which the candidate (or sponsors) must affirm. The short Catechism (BCP, 845) may also be used.

### *The Baptismal Covenant*

Do you believe in God the Father?

*I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.*

Do you believe in Jesus Christ, the Son of God?

*I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.*

*He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit  
and born of the Virgin Mary.*

*He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.*

*He descended to the dead.*

*On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven,  
and is seated at the right hand of the Father.*

*He will come again to judge the living and the dead.*

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

*I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church,  
the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins,  
the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.*

Continues overleaf...

Will you continue in the apostles' teaching and fellowship,  
in the breaking of bread, and in the prayers?

*I will, with God's help.*

Will you persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever  
you fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord?

*I will, with God's help.*

Will you proclaim by word and example  
the Good News of God in Christ?

*I will, with God's help.*

Will you seek and serve Christ in all persons,  
loving your neighbor as yourself?

*I will, with God's help.*

Will you strive for justice and peace among all people,  
and respect the dignity of every human being?

*I will, with God's help.*

### *The Baptismal Service*

- ✦ Our order of service is *Holy Baptism* from the 1979 *Book of Common Prayer*. The officiating clergy will go over this service with you.
- ✦ This is a celebration! We will use white, gold, or otherwise festive vestments, hangings, and paraments on Sundays. At other times, the seasonal hangings will be used, but the clergy may use festive vestments.
- ✦ We have Holy Communion when celebrating a baptism except in emergency circumstances where it is unfeasible.
- ✦ For baptisms at church, we use the western font on major feast days and the southern font on other occasions
  - We invite children and others who desire to witness the Baptism to move to the gallery (or crossing) *after* the ministers and baptismal party are in place at the font.
- ✦ If the bishop is present, we will adjust the service to his or her customary (preferences).

## *After Baptism*

Holy Baptism is not an end in and of itself. Christianity is a faith of action and discovery, of love and service to God and neighbor, of prayer and worship, and of journey deeper into the love, mercy, and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Baptism is only the beginning.

- ✦ We encourage all baptized persons to receive Holy Communion in worship, even children once they are able. Special instruction about receiving Communion can take place either in baptismal preparation or at another time, if desired.
- ✦ We hope you will continue your journey by connecting with small groups in the church (Sunday School, youth group, choir, adult studies, parish life, etc...) as well as with our friends and neighbors outside the Church.
- ✦ We pray you will discover God's call to you through your gifts, interests, and that "still, small voice" that accompanies our journey. Please let us know how we can help you answer God's call to you.

## *Offer Your Gifts to the Glory of God*

Everything we have comes from God, and Holy Baptism invites us into of discovering our gifts and using them to the Glory of God and the welfare of God's people. Emmanuel Episcopal Church counts it an honor to be a part of your journey, and we look forward to being present to you in the chances and changes of your life and your journey.

The reason we are able to be present to you is because of your support. We thrive because of your gifts of time, talent, and treasure offered in our community. In short, we are here for you because you are here for us.

Thanks be to God!

### *A Prayer of Self-Dedication*

Almighty and eternal God, so draw our hearts to you, so guide our minds, so fill our imaginations, so inspire our wills, that we may be wholly yours, utterly dedicated unto you; and then use us, we pray, as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people; through our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. *Amen.*

– Adapted from *A prayer of self-dedication* (BCP, 832)

EMMANUEL   
*Episcopal Church*

203 S. Kensington Ave.  
La Grange, IL 60525  
708-352-1275  
eeclg.org

***“God with us, in each of us.”***