

## Baptism Dates for 2009—2010

In most Anglican Churches, the dates for baptism coincide with five major festivals of the Christian Year: Holy Cross, All Saints, the Baptism of Jesus, Easter, and Pentecost; or with the visit of the Bishop. In 2009-2010, the following dates have been set aside:

- September 13, 2009
- November 1, 2009
- January 10, 2010
- April 3, 2010 (adults and older children only)
- April 11, 2010 (infants only)
- May 23, 2010
- July 18, 2010 (if needed)

### Program Costs

Beginning in the fall of 2009, we will be charging a \$25 materials fee to the parents of infants and small children being brought for baptism. This fee helps to defray our costs for “Splash,” a fabulous follow-up resource we provide to baptismal parents until their child reaches age 3.

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## Preparation Dates 2009—2010

For September 13, 2009

Sunday, August 16 — Deadline to apply  
Saturday, September 12 — Rehearsal

For November 1, 2009

Sunday, October 4 — Deadline to apply  
Saturday, October 31 — Rehearsal

For January 10, 2010

Sunday, December 6 — Deadline to apply  
Saturday, January 9 — Rehearsal

For April 3, 2010 (Adults & Older Children)

Dates tba — Adult Inquirers' Program  
Saturday, April 3 — Rehearsal

For April 11, 2010 (Infants)

Sunday, March 7 — Deadline to apply  
Saturday, April 10 — Rehearsal

For May 23, 2010

Sunday, April 25 — Deadline to apply  
Saturday, May 22 — Rehearsal

For July 18, 2010

Sunday, June 20 — Deadline to apply  
Saturday, July 17 — Rehearsal

### To Register

Please contact the Church Office, or one of the clergy, to inquire about Christian Initiation.

Parents may register for any series prior to the preferred date of baptism (with the exception of the rehearsal, which needs to take place the day before the service itself).

Adult candidates are strongly encouraged to participate in the annual Adult Inquirers Program which runs each year in Lent, leading to baptism at the Easter Vigil (in 2010, April 3).

## Christian Initiation at Christ Church



2009—2010

### Welcome to the Family

Whether you are thinking of baptism for yourself or for your child, Christ Church welcomes your inquiry. We believe that the Christian Way answers a deep spiritual hunger arising from our competitive, lonely, fast, techno-centric, and self-indulgent culture. We want to live our lives differently. And we welcome any who come seeking to join us in this endeavour.

# Baptism—Sacrament of Belonging

We want to be an intentional, vibrant, and faithful Christian Community, who gather to pray and to support each other Sunday by Sunday, and who scatter to be God's hands and heart in the world from Monday to Saturday. This is no easy task, and we need all the help we can get. If this sounds like it is for you, then welcome to the family!

## What Christian Initiation Is

Christian initiation is not just baptism. It is the entire process by which a person commits to Christ and the Christian Way of life. Obviously infants cannot make this commitment for themselves, but we extend baptism to our children on the basis of the faith and commitment of their parents, who speak for them, as if they themselves were the candidate for baptism.

For adult candidates, this whole process of initiation often begins with a time of seeking and questioning, and possibly some kind of "conversion experience."

This is followed by instruction or "catechesis," in which the inquirer learns more about the Christian faith and its practices. (There is similar preparation for the sponsors of infants, too.)

When the candidate is ready, he or she is presented to the assembled Church for admission to its company.

The leader of the community asks the candidate to renounce all destructive forces in his or her life, and to affirm allegiance to Christ. The candidate then enters into a "Covenant" with the Church by stating his or her faith, and by promising to join the rest of the Church in enacting that faith.



Only now is the candidate baptised with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. But this isn't all. Just as the newly baptised has "signed on" for life, we then "seal" him or her with the sign of the cross (made with a special oil called "chrism"), saying, "we mark you as Christ's own for ever."

Finally, as a new member of the Church, the new Christian participates for the first time in the family meal, the Eucharist. This is the crowning act which completes Christian Initiation.



## What does Christ Church expect of me?

That you will understand and mean what you promise in baptism; that you will join in worship as frequently as possible; that you will support the work of the parish by giving generously of your time, talent and treasure; and that you will do your best to live your life in accordance with the values, beliefs, and practices of the Church.

## What can I expect of Christ Church?

To be spiritually fed; to be accepted for who you are, and challenged to become everything God made you; friendship and support during crisis, transitions, and rites of passage; the ministry of a priest in times of illness, trouble, or spiritual need; a community to support you in your efforts to be faithful and to grow in your faith; a professionally staffed Sunday nursery for very small children; a Sunday School; and opportunities to help make the world a better place.



## Frequently Asked Questions

### Must I attend the instruction sessions?

Yes. The sessions are tailored to the specific needs of each group of candidates. They are meant to begin building the very sense of community that baptism is all about.

### What if I can't make it?

We do our best to choose preparation dates in consultation with those who apply for baptism. You should feel free to join any group which will be meeting prior to your chosen date for baptism. Expectant parents are welcome to attend.

### I'm an adult. What about me?

Adults are strongly encouraged to attend our annual adult inquirers' program in Lent (winter/spring) each year, leading up to baptism at the Great Vigil of Easter. This program is focused exclusively on adult questions and life experience. Of course, we will work with candidates who would prefer not to wait.

### Is it possible to have a private baptism?

Almost never. Baptism is about being grafted into a community, and the community of faith needs to be present for the grafting.

### Must sponsors be Anglican?

No. It is helpful if at least one sponsor knows his or her way around the Anglican Church and liturgy, but not essential. However, all sponsors must themselves be baptised members of a Christian Church.

### Is any special dress required?

Sunday "church dress" at Christ Church tends to be business-casual. Traditionally, the candidate is dressed in white, although this is not necessary. White is a symbol of purity, and signifies the fresh start, or cleansing from sin, that baptism confers.

### My spouse is not baptised. May he or she participate in the service?

Yes, of course, but only those who are baptised members of a Christian Church may actually "sponsor" or "present" a candidate.