

## Preparation Dates 2007—2008

## Baptism Dates for 2007—2008

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 2007-2008, the following dates have been set aside:

- September 16, 2007
- November 4, 2007
- January 13, 2008
- March 22, 2008 (adults and older children only)
- March 30, 2008 (infants only)
- May 11, 2008

*For November 4, 2007*

Monday, October 1 — Introductory gathering  
Sunday, October 14 — Session 1  
Sunday, October 21 — Session 2  
Saturday, November 3 — Rehearsal

*For January 13, 2008*

Monday, November 26 — Introductory gathering  
Sunday, December 2 — Session 1  
Sunday, December 9 — Session 2  
Saturday, January 12 — Rehearsal

*For March 22, 2007 (Adults & Older Children)*

Dates tba — Adult Inquirers' Program  
Saturday, March 22 — Rehearsal

*For March 30, 2007 (Infants)*

Monday, February 25 — Introductory gathering  
Sunday, March 2 — Session 1  
Sunday, March 9 — Session 2  
Saturday, March 29 — Rehearsal

*For May 11, 2007*

Monday, April 14 — Introductory gathering  
Sunday, April 20 — Session 1  
Sunday, April 27 — Session 2  
Saturday, May 10 — 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 2008, March 22).

Christ Church, Calgary  
3602 8 Street SW  
Calgary AB T2T Phone: 403.243.4680

## Christian Initiation at Christ Church



2007—2008

### *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.)



Increasingly, candidates for baptism are adult.

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 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, and 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 have provided the dates for all sessions in the 2007-2008 cycle. You should feel free to pick any set of sessions prior to the baptism which works for you. 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. If baptism is about being grafted into a community, then 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.