

Information About Baptisms at Zion Lutheran Church

Thank you for your interest in the Sacrament of Holy Baptism at Zion Lutheran Church! The following contains information about baptisms at Zion.

Introduction

At Zion, when someone is baptized, they are joyfully welcomed into a community of faith. We also believe that, in baptism, we are joined to Jesus Christ in his death and resurrection, so that his new life becomes our new life (see Romans 6).

Baptisms of Infants and Younger Children

- Our expectation before baptizing an infant or young child is that one or both parents/guardians will join in the mission and ministry of our congregation. As such, an important step is to worship with us to see if Zion seems like a place for you to grow in faith. Currently, we have Worship on Sundays at 9am and 11:30am, and on Wednesdays at 1pm and 6:30pm.
- Zion also has a variety of faith formation opportunities for all ages, including Bible studies and book studies. Exploring these is a great way to learn more about our faith community and get to know others!
- Once you've discerned that Zion is a faith community you wish to join, please reach out to the Church Office to sign up for the next New Member Class Series. These are held several times a year, and meet for several weeks (free childcare is available). You'll learn about Zion: our history, worship practices, and the many ministry opportunities we have. At the end of the series, you'll be welcomed into the membership of Zion.
- After one or both parents/guardians have become members, please reach out to the Church Office to schedule your child's baptism. (Please note: Baptism dates and times are **not** final until they are confirmed to you by the Church Office.)
- At Zion, we baptize infants and children joyfully, trusting that God's grace reaches them in this Sacrament.
- When children are too young to answer for themselves, their parents and sponsors (formerly called "godparents") answer on their behalf. Part of the baptismal covenant is: As you bring *your children* to receive the gift of baptism, you are entrusted with responsibilities:
 - to live with *them* among God's faithful people,
 - bring *them* to the word of God and the holy supper,
 - teach *them* the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments,
 - place in *their* hands the holy scriptures,
 - and nurture *them* in faith and prayer,
 - so that *your children* may learn to trust God, proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for others and the world God made, and work for justice and peace.
- When selecting sponsors, consider the above and choose people who will agree to nurture your child's faith in these ways. Sponsors can be family members and/or friends.

Baptism of Older Children and Adults

- At Zion, we also baptize older children and adults, again trusting that God's grace reaches them in this Sacrament.
- After baptism, your faith will be nurtured in these ways:
 - living among God's faithful people,
 - coming to hear the word of God and receive the holy supper,
 - learning the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments,
 - reading the holy scriptures,
 - growing in faith through prayer,
 - so that you may learn to trust God, proclaim Christ through word and deed, care for others and the world God made, and work for justice and peace.
- Older children and adults are also encouraged to have sponsors. When selecting sponsors, consider the above and choose people who will nurture faith in these ways. Sponsors can be family members and/or friends.
- Besides Worship, Zion also has a variety of faith formation opportunities for all ages, including Bible studies and book studies. Exploring these is a great way to learn more about our faith community and get to know others! We will also add you to the next New Member Class Series so that you can learn about Zion: our history, worship practices, and the many ministry opportunities we have.

The Service

- All baptisms take place during one of our regular worship services (on Sunday or Wednesday). This allows for the congregation to welcome the newly baptized, and sets the baptism properly within a worship service of Word and Sacrament (including Holy Communion). *(Exceptions are allowed only by the pastoral staff of Zion, and only due to extreme circumstances.)*
- All family members, friends, and sponsors are welcome to receive Holy Communion at Zion. If someone prefers, they may come forward with their arms crossed over their chest to receive a blessing.
- All guest clergy members who wish to participate in the baptismal rite must be approved by a current pastor of Zion.
- At Zion, we know that sometimes, infants and young children may need to leave the service for a few minutes. Changing tables are available in both nearby restrooms. If a quiet place for nursing is needed, we have a space set aside. Please ask an usher and they will assist you.

Other Items to Note

- At this time, our 11:30 service on Sundays is livestreamed on our YouTube channel ([YouTube.com/ZionSanAntonio](https://www.youtube.com/ZionSanAntonio)). This is a great way to include people who cannot attend in person. We are unable to livestream other services at this time.
- In order to reduce distractions for other worshipers, flash photography and videography are expressly forbidden. We will reserve one or two front pews for you and your guests, and photos may be taken from there only.

Receptions

Because of regularly-scheduled Sunday morning and Wednesday evening activities, we encourage you to find another location to celebrate with family and friends.

Fees

If the baptism takes place during a regular worship service, there are no fees. If extreme circumstances determine that a baptism will take place at another time, fees will be determined by the pastoral staff.

To allow for discussion of the above points (and any other questions), one of Zion's pastors will meet with you before the baptism.

Please contact the Church Office at 210-688-3090 or Zion@ZionSA.org with any questions.