

## SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM AT ROSE CITY PARK PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH



We are heartened by your interest in child or adult baptism! We at Rose City Park Presbyterian Church desire to make this a memorable occasion for all involved. In the Presbyterian Church, baptism is a time of profound initiation, a process of cleansing from sin, of entering into the death and resurrection of Christ, and of being received into a new community or family of faith. Baptism is a life-changing and transforming event. Whether you are baptized as an adult or a child, the celebration of baptism is an event of great importance; it is the beginning of a process for which the whole congregation takes responsibility.

In the case of child baptism, we at RCPCC take seriously our role in your decision to have your child baptized. We believe that everyone—parents or guardians, the Session, and the whole congregation—must see that baptism is administered only to those who will be responsibly nurtured through participation in the worship and work of the church. To do less than this is to empty the sacrament of its meaning and to hide the graciousness of God from those who seek it.

Our Book of Order states the following about baptism:

For reasons of order, baptism shall be authorized by the Session, administered by a teaching elder or ruling elder commissioned to pastoral service when invited by the Session and authorized by the presbytery, and accompanied by the reading and proclaiming of the Word. Baptism is celebrated in a service of public worship. Extraordinary circumstances may call for the administration of baptism apart from the worship of the whole congregation. In such cases, care should be taken that:

- The congregation be represented by one or more members of the Session;
- A proper understanding of the meaning of the Sacrament be offered by the teaching elder;
- The Session be consulted when possible;
- The baptism be reported by the teaching elder and recorded by the Session.

(Book of Order; W-2.3011)

The Sessions' responsibilities for baptism are:

- Admitting to baptism children of believers, after appropriate instruction and discussion with the parent(s) or one(s) rightly exercising parental responsibility, acquainting them with the significance of what God is doing in this act, and with the special responsibilities on parents and congregations for nurturing the baptized person in the Christian life;
- Admitting to baptism, after appropriate instruction and examination, those youth and adults not yet baptized who come making public their personal profession of faith;
- Placing all baptized persons on the appropriate roll as members of the congregation;
- Making certain that those baptized are nurtured in understanding the meaning of baptism, of the Lord's Supper, and of their interrelation, and that they are surrounded by Christian encouragement and support.

Parental responsibilities for child baptism are:

- Ordinarily the parent(s) or one(s) exercising parental responsibility shall be an active member of the congregation.
- Those presenting children for baptism shall promise to provide nurture and guidance within the community of faith until the child is ready to make a personal profession of faith and assume their responsibility of active church membership (Book of Order; W-4.2002; W-4.2003)
- The Session may also consider a request for the baptism of a child from a Christian parent who is an active member of another congregation. If the Session approves such a request, it shall consult with the governing body of the other congregation and shall notify them when the sacrament has been administered.

Adult Baptism:

- For adults, baptism and membership occur simultaneously. Please refer to "Becoming a Member." ([embed hyperlink](#))

Steps to take toward baptism of yourself or your child:

- Talk with the pastor regarding your desire to have yourself or your child baptized.
- The pastor, with a member of the Session, will meet with you to discuss the meaning and implications of baptism.
- After a period of instruction, the request will be taken to the Session for action.
- The Session will act on the request.

- With the approval of the Session, the baptism will be scheduled and the pastor and you or the parent(s) or guardian(s) of the child to be baptized will discuss the worship service.

We look forward to joining you or your child in our faith community through the Sacrament of Baptism!

