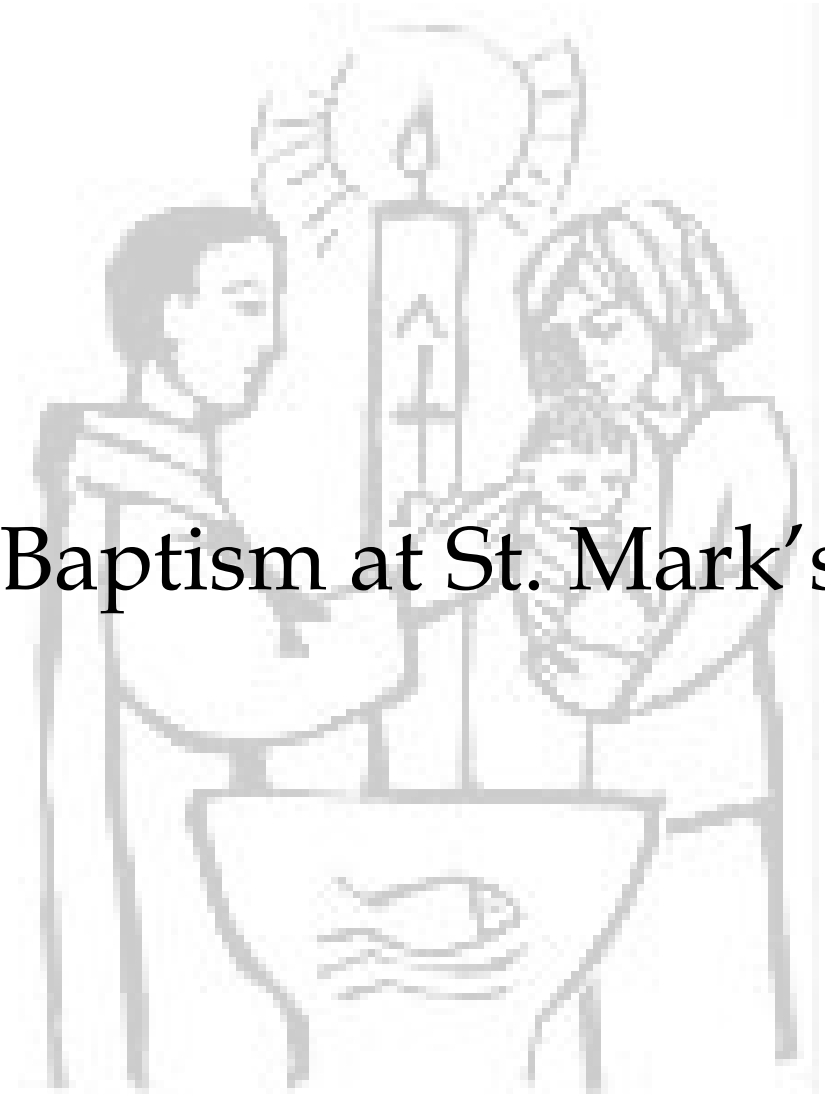


SAINT MARK'S ON THE HILL
PIKESVILLE, MARYLAND

Baptism at St. Mark's



1620 Reisterstown Road
Pikesville, Maryland 21208
410 486-3016 www.saintmarks.ang-md.org

“Holy Baptism is full initiation by water and the Holy Spirit into Christ’s body, the Church. The bond which God establishes at Baptism is indissoluble.”

Book of Common Prayer, page 298

Baptism is the doorway into the church. When we pass through the waters of baptism, we cross a threshold and enter into the Christian faith. You are either interested in baptism for yourself, or the baptism of your child. We are excited to welcome you and your family into the household of God.

For some people, baptism happens when they are a baby. For others, baptism is an experience that they can remember. In the Episcopal Church we baptize people at every age: from infancy to adulthood. We believe that the grace of baptism is a gift, given by God, and therefore does not require that the baptized be mature enough to understand in order to receive the gift. The church community, the God-parents, and the parents that nurture the newly baptized are responsible for teaching the child by word and example how to grow into a mature Christian. For this reason, the baptismal promises are a serious responsibility.

Baptism is full membership in the church. As soon as a child is baptized, he/she is welcome to receive the sacrament of communion. We believe that the Eucharistic feast nourishes the entire church community and we hope that children will never know a time when they were excluded from the table.

Baptisms are celebrated on four feast days in the midst of the entire worshiping church community. We reaffirm our baptismal covenant at every baptism we witness. This experience helps us to realize that even though our baptism may have happened long ago on a day we cannot remember, we are challenged to live as baptized Christians every day for the rest of our lives.

Dates for Baptism in 2008

January 13	Baptism of our Lord
March 23	Easter
May 11	Pentecost
Nov 2	All Saints’ Day

For pastoral reasons, you may request baptism on a Sunday that is not listed above. However, if at all possible, these are the most appropriate dates to celebrate baptism in the calendar of the church year.

Preparation for Baptism

The primary preparation for Baptism is to be a part of the community of faith at St. Mark’s on the Hill. Attend worship. Engage in ministry. Let your faith be deepened through the scriptures and traditions of our Christian faith.

Adults seeking baptism should contact the rector in order to plan a course of adult study, reflection, and conversation about their life of faith. The baptismal covenant will be the outline for this preparation. The adult candidate will choose sponsors to engage with him/her in this time of preparation.

The families of infants and children who desire to have their child baptized should contact the rector. Mother Dawson will set up a time to visit the family and reflect with them about their faith and the ways they share that faith with their children. If the candidate for baptism has older siblings, this is a great time to get them involved as role models for their younger sister/brother.

On the Saturday before the baptism, the candidates, parents, and sponsors will gather at the church for a rehearsal. It is important that everyone attend this rehearsal so that the entire group is relaxed and spiritually present for the baptisms on Sunday.