

The Sacrament of Baptism for Children and Youth

Baptism is the celebration of God's saving grace. In baptism Mount Sinai Congregational Church acknowledges and rejoices that God offers forgiveness and grace to all, that this opens fresh possibilities for living in the new age of God's realm, and that God calls us into the community and ministry of Church.

Baptism is one of two Sacraments (the other being Holy Communion) celebrated in Mount Sinai Congregational Church and in Protestant Churches in general. Jesus began his ministry by being baptized by his cousin, John, in the Jordan River. At that time, Mark tells us, "The Spirit descended like a dove and a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; with you I am well pleased.'" (Mark 1:9-11)

Since the baptism of Jesus, the Church has used a variety of forms of baptism: immersion (total dipping the believer in the water), affusion (pouring water over the believer's head), and sprinkling (placing a few drops of water on the believer's head). Baptisms at Mount Sinai Congregational Church use sprinkling. In our Congregational tradition, baptism is a communal act. As one is receiving the Sacrament, worshippers are invited to remember and reaffirm their own baptisms. Therefore, baptisms are conducted in the midst of the church community of faith during Sunday morning worship.

One can be baptized at any age; however, infant baptism is most common at Mount Sinai Congregational Church. Infant baptism stresses God's grace and invites the family of the child and the church congregation to pledge to support the parents as they raise their child in the Christian faith. Many families choose to have Godparents. If this is the case, the Godparents are also asked to support the parents as they raise their child. Children who have been baptized are invited to make a personal affirmation of their faith by attending Confirmation classes during their 8th grade school year and receive the rite of Confirmation and church membership following those classes.

Baptism gives a sense of identity in its affirmation that we are baptized "in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit." By remembering our baptism, we know who and Whose we are and who we are called to be. Christians live by faith and a trust in God, who makes life fresh and new. Martin Luther, in his moments of greatest doubt and despair, consoled himself by saying over and over again, "I have been baptized!" When we claim our baptized identity as Christian, we are given the gift of being able to remember just how pleased God is with us and how present God is to us.

This church is happy to have this opportunity to minister to your family through the Sacrament of Baptism. We stand ready to continue ministry with your family in every way. If you are new to Mount Sinai Congregational Church, we invite you to consider this church for your place of worship, your family's church home.