

A photograph of a church interior. The foreground features a large, dark wooden baptismal font with a circular, multi-colored (blue, purple, green) patterned top. The church has a high, vaulted wooden ceiling with exposed beams and several hanging lanterns. In the background, there are wooden pews, a central altar area with a large cross, and several stained glass windows. The lighting is warm and focused on the altar area.

# Confirmation, Reception, and Reaffirmation

## Baptism and the Beginnings of Ministry

October 6, 2024



# Today's Agenda

## Baptism & Ministry

- Guidelines for Dialogue
- Introducing the Catechism
- What is a Sacrament?
- The Sacrament of Baptism
- Ministry in the Church



# Leaning towards Dialogue

How do we communicate with one another?

## Debate

- Succeed or Win
- Look for weakness
- Stress disagreement
- Judge other's viewpoints
- Listen to counter
- Disregard relationships

## Discussion

- Present ideas
- Seek answers & solutions
- Persuade others
- Achieve preset goals
- Listen for disagreement
- Retain relationships

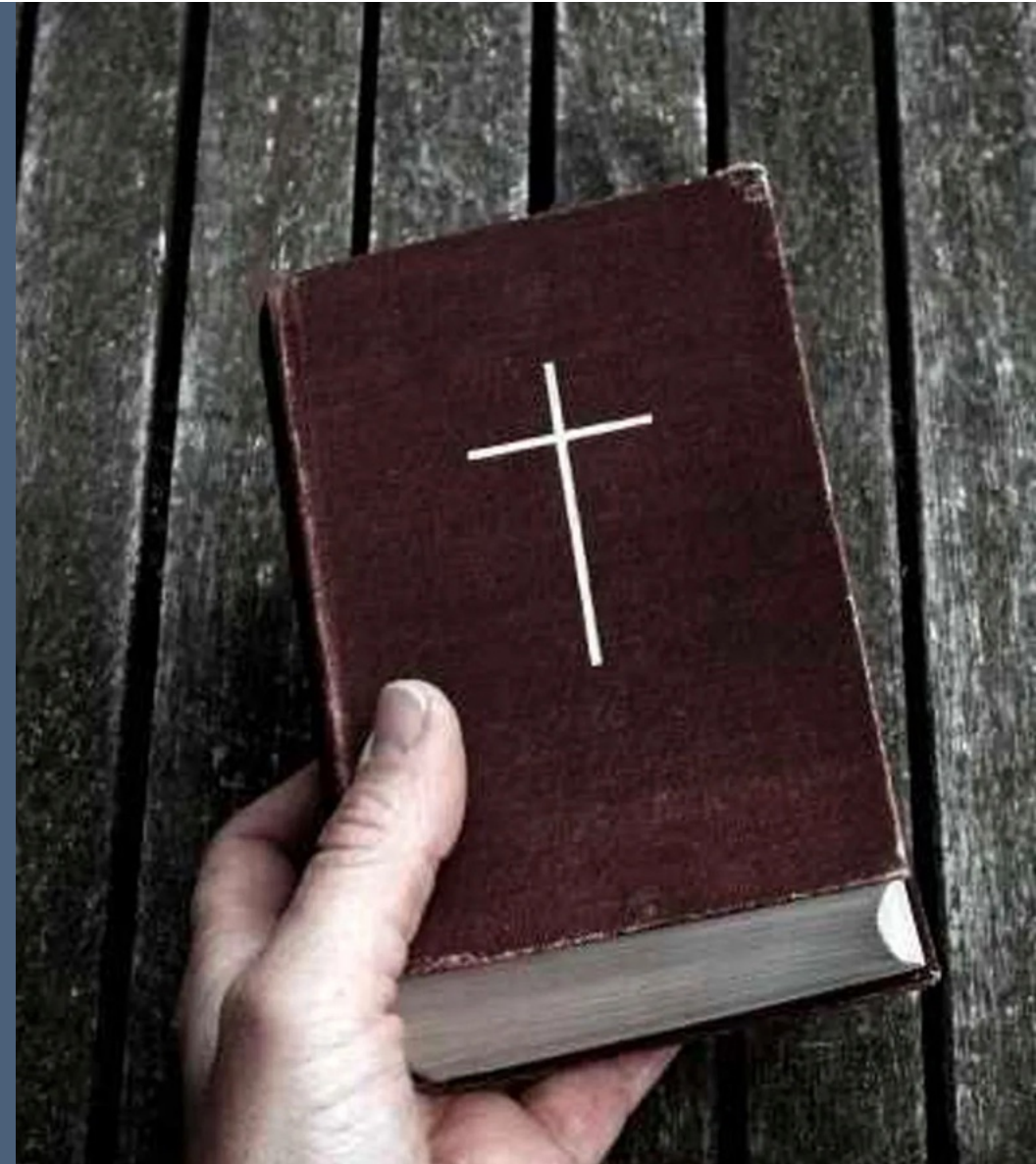
## Dialogue

- Broaden our perspective
- Look for shared meaning
- Find places of agreement
- Challenge preconceptions
- Listen to understand
- Build relationships

# Introducing the Catechism

An outline of faith (and our class!)

- Open your Book of Common Prayer (BCP) to page 845
- The Catechism (Cat-eh-kiz-em) is also called an “Outline of the Faith”
- It almost reads like a FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) for what Episcopalians believe.
- I think it is best to read it as a “point of departure.” It’s a really good summary—but we’ll try to provide time to go deeper with both our questions and our answers.

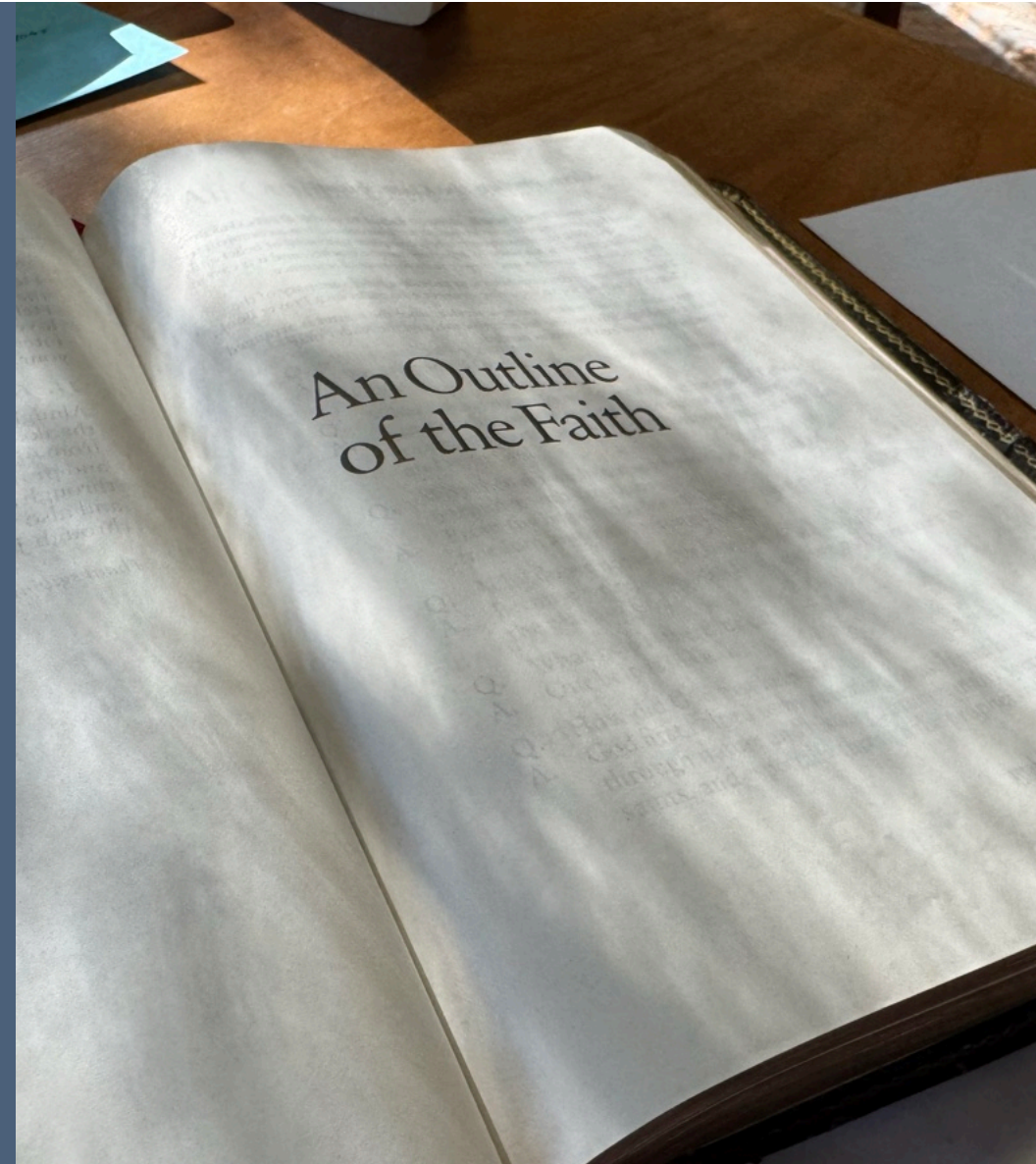




# Introducing the Catechism

An outline of faith (and our class!)

- Today we are going to be talking about the sacrament of Baptism.
- But before we talk about what Baptism means—we probably need to define “sacrament.”
- Let’s turn to page 857



# What is a Sacrament?

- The sacraments are an activity that Jesus commanded us to follow AND promise that we have received grace.
- So what is Grace?
  - Grace is a gift from God that is *unearned* and *undeserved*.
  - Grace might include God enlightening our minds, stirring our minds, strengthening our will, and forgiving our sins.
  - Grace isn't a Marble Jar party—it's a friend bringing over takeout unexpectedly.

# What is a Sacrament?

- Sacraments are events or ceremonies in church where we know that Grace is being shared with individuals in the church.
- Part of the sacrament is sensory—there are an outward and visible signs.
- Part of the sacrament is interior—something happens in our selves and is spiritual.
- In the Episcopal Church, we recognize two Sacraments: Baptism and the Eucharist

# What is Baptism?

- Baptism is the first sacrament.
- In Baptism, we believe that we are adopted by God and made a member of the Body of Christ (the Church).
- As adopted children of God, we are inheritors of the Kingdom of God.





# What happens in Baptism?

- Functionally
  - A person is brought into the life of the church—the Body of Christ & God’s family
- Spiritually
  - We are cleansed from sin and brought into union with Christ’s death and resurrection.
- Outward and Visible
  - Water is poured over a person in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.
- Inward and Spiritual
  - Made a member of the church and invited to live in and preach Christ’s resurrection.
- Requirements
  - Water. Renounce Satan, repent our sins, and accept Jesus as savior.
- Who can perform?
  - Any baptized Christian can baptize another. No clergy needed!

# What's happening in the Sacrament?

Sacrament	Grace	Outward & Visible	Inward & Spiritual	Requirements
<b>Baptism</b>	Forgiveness, Membership in church	Water poured in name of Father, Son, & Holy Spirit	Forgiveness of sins, union with Christ, new life in Holy Spirit	Water, Repentance, Rejection of Satan, acceptance of Jesus as Savior

# Walking through the service of Baptism

- In this class, we'll do our best to walk through the each service in the Book of Common Prayer (BCP)
- The Baptism service is split into several sections. We'll take a look at them one-by-one, but for now, split into six groups. Each group will take a single part of the service and report back what they notice/learn
  - Concerning the Service
  - Presentation
  - Covenant
  - Prayers for the Candidate
  - Thanksgiving for Water
  - Baptism and Chrismation



# Concerning Baptism / Additional Directions

- What do we learn about Baptism in the Rubrics?
  - Baptism takes place in a Eucharistic Service—there is a link between these two sacraments.
  - You need a sponsor or a Godparent to be baptized. Membership in the church is relational, not individual.
    - Saying the Baptizmal Covenant should be a regular part of the church year.
    - We do not repeat The Nicene Creed at this service.
    - Lay people can baptize in an emergency.

# Presentation

- Baptism is relational—you are presented by another Christian who will help be responsible for your faith formation.
- Three-Fold Renunciation of Evil
  - Think Jesus' temptation in the Desert (in Matthew)
- Three-Fold Affirmation of Christ as Savior
  - Think of Peter's three-fold affirmation Post-Easter (Gospel of John)

# Covenant

- Covenant is an agreement—like a spiritual contract between God and God’s people.
- There are two pivotal covenants in the Old Testament/Hebrew Scripture
  - First is between God and Abraham.
  - Second is between God and Israel through Moses
- The Baptismal Covenant is based on the Apostle’s Creed



# Prayers for the Candidate

- Function like the Prayers of the People
- Filled with action words.
- Baptism into the death of Christ.

# Thanksgiving over water

- Recalls Salvation History.
  - Creation
  - Exodus
  - Baptism

# The Baptism

- In the name of the Trinity.
- Grants forgiveness of sins, and a new life in Grace.
- Marking the Baptizee with holy oil (Chrism) seals in the Grace (It's spiritual Tupperware!)



# Baptism & Ministry

- Baptism marks THE entry into the Church
- It authorizes you for all kinds of ministry.
  - What is ministry? Who is a minister?

# Baptism & Ministry

- There are a LOT of names for clergy—Priest, Presbyter, Rector, Clergy.
- My least favorite is minister.
  - Because we are all ministers!
  - By virtue of our baptism, we are enabled for ministry within the church.
  - “The ministry of lay persons is to represent Christ and his Church; to bear witness to him wherever they may be; and, according to the gifts given them, to carry on Christ's work of reconciliation in the world; and to take their place in the life, worship, and governance of the Church.

# Baptism & Ministry

- What does it mean to represent Christ and the Church?
- What is the “work of reconciliation”?
- What are ways that St. Stephen’s participates in the “life, worship, and governance of the Church?”

# Ministry

- The most important part of ministry is asking the question—What are my gifts?
- The world has needs. You have gifts.
- The church believes that the best place for ministry is where those two meet.
- Think, Pair, Share:
  - Take 5 minutes and write down the skills/gifts/attributes that you believe are a strength.
  - Find a partner, listen to your partner's skills. Brainstorm 2-3 ways in which the church might need those gifts (Remember-sometimes the church needs aren't in the building!)
  - We'll regather to share. What are your gifts? How did your partner think that might serve the church? Do you agree? Do you have a different idea of how your gifts might serve the church?

# Closing

- Any questions?