

# COME TO THE WATER

## LEADER SOURCEBOOK:

Holy Baptism  
Resources for the  
Whole Congregation



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Review this Sourcebook chart and choose a type of content, audience, and format that interests you.

Begins on Page	Content Type	Who Is This For?	Purpose of the Content
11	Theological Backgrounds	Pastors and other leaders	Helps leaders already familiar with Daniel Erlander's baptism manuals dive more deeply into Bible texts and underlying theology
19	Early Childhood Sessions	Infants, toddlers, and preschoolers and their caregivers	Prepares parents, sponsors, and other caregivers for their infant's baptism Helps toddlers, preschoolers, and their caregivers learn about baptism
43	Elementary Sessions	Elementary-age kids and their caregivers	Prepares children in kindergarten through the upper elementary grades for baptism Helps already-baptized kids to learn more about baptism in engaging, age-appropriate ways
83	Youth/Adult Sessions	Youth and/or adults	Prepares youth and adults for baptism Provides content for leaders to guide youth and adults into a deeper understanding of baptism
101	Self-Study Resource	Youth and/or adults	Guides an individual learner through looking more closely at Holy Baptism with easy-to-use questions and prompts
105	7 Mini Bible Studies	Youth and/or adults	Encourages further study of the Bible texts included in <i>Water Washed and Spirit Born</i>
119	Intergenerational Event	All ages in the church community	Gathers the congregation to eat together and share an intergenerational learning experiences about baptism
154	Glossary	All ages	Supports further learning about baptism with definitions of key people, places, and things
157	Children's Bulletins	Elementary-age kids who can read	Invites kids to explore baptism-related ideas and images in playful ways during worship

Format	Additional Resources	Suggested Uses
Three theological backgrounds with Questions to Consider	<i>Let the Children Come: A Baptism Manual for Parents and Sponsors</i>  <i>Water Washed and Spirit Born: A Baptism Manual for Youth and Adults</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* For deeper study of Holy Baptism</li> <li>* Before leading any sessions with children, youth, and adults</li> </ul>
One 60-minute session for infants and their caregivers and sponsors  One 60-minute session for toddlers, preschoolers, and their caregivers	<i>Come to the Water, Little One: My Holy Baptism Board Book</i>  <i>Let the Children Come: A Baptism Manual for Parents and Sponsors</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* For families whose young child will be baptized</li> <li>* For sponsors of a young child who will be baptized</li> <li>* For an early childhood ministry class to review baptism with toddlers, preschoolers, and their caregivers</li> </ul>
One 60-minute individual or group session for baptismal preparation  One 60-minute baptism review session	<i>Come to the Water: An Interactive Baptism Manual for Kids</i>  <i>Come to the Water Animated Video</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* For elementary kids who will be baptized and their families and/or sponsors</li> <li>* For elementary-age kids who meet for a specific session on baptism such as Baptism of Our Lord each January</li> <li>* For a regularly scheduled Sunday school class</li> </ul>
One 60-minute baptismal preparation session  One 60-minute baptismal review session	<i>Water Washed and Spirit Born: A Baptism Manual for Youth and Adults</i>  <i>Come to the Water Animated Video</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* For individuals or groups of youth and/or adults who are preparing for baptism</li> <li>* As part of a catechumenate program</li> <li>* As main content during adult education time on Sunday morning</li> <li>* As an alternative to regularly scheduled Bible study</li> <li>* As a session during youth group or confirmation classes</li> </ul>
Four pages of take-home content	<i>Water Washed and Spirit Born: A Baptism Manual for Youth and Adults</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* For inclusion in new-member packets</li> <li>* For newly baptized youth and/or adults</li> </ul>
Seven double-sided take-home pages	<i>Water Washed and Spirit Born: A Baptism Manual for Youth and Adults</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* For use as bulletin inserts</li> <li>* For inclusion in new-member packets</li> <li>* For newly baptized youth and/or adults</li> </ul>
One 75-minute event including time to eat together and activities, with options to extend time	<i>Come to the Water Animated Video</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* For the entire congregation</li> <li>* For families of people being baptized</li> </ul>
Three pages of take-home content	None needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* As an additional handout during sessions for kids, youth, and adults</li> <li>* As a bulletin insert</li> <li>* As the basis for activities</li> </ul>
Seven double-sided reproducible bulletin inserts	None needed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>* For Baptism of Our Lord Sunday in January</li> <li>* For the weeks of Lent leading up to Easter Vigil</li> <li>* For follow-up after the elementary sessions</li> </ul>

# Invitation to Baptism

Your precious child is about to be baptized! This child you waited for, prepared for, are continually surprised by, take care of, worry over, and wonder about will—in the company of our faith community—become part of a bigger family: God’s family!

You may come to this time of preparation feeling tired (even exhausted), overwhelmed, and full of questions. You may know a lot about baptism or know nothing at all except what the internet or a family member tells you. You may be at a steady place in your own faith journey or in a shaky spot. You may be here because you want to make your parents/spouse/in-laws/grandparents happy. You may be here because you think you and your child should take part in this traditional rite of passage.

Whatever your reasons are to be here right now, know that none of them are wrong. But the overriding reason that our church community offers to you at this time is for your child to become part of God’s family and to be named by God as one of God’s beloved children. Baptism begins a process of becoming an active participant in the work of God on our earth. Baptism, performed by way of the hands and hearts of others, is an act of God. God reaches out to your child in the gift of love.

Welcome to baptism in the name of our Three-in-One God.  
Welcome to what you already know and what you want to learn.  
Welcome to the waters of Holy Baptism with your child.



## Holy Baptism Connections

Holy Baptism is all about welcome. Through the baptismal waters . . .

- We are welcomed into the story of God's love and liberation for all people.
- We are welcomed into the family of God, the church.
- We are welcomed into the kingdom of God and given callings as God's children.

In baptism, God welcomes us into something new. Take a look at the baptismal rite that begins on page 227 in *ELW*. Which parts of the rite feel the most welcoming to you?

## Faith in Action

Ask a few longtime church members to share about the history of baptism in your congregation. Here are some questions to ask:

- \* What is the same now as the earliest baptisms they remember?
- \* What has changed?
- \* What do they know about their own baptism?

Pray together, asking God's blessing upon one another and the next people who will be baptized at your church.



- \* WANT TO EXPLORE MORE? Ask for Mini Bible Study 2 about the Great Commission and Jesus' command to baptize.

## Mini Bible Study 1: The Baptism of Jesus

Jesus' baptism by his cousin John was the beginning of his public ministry.

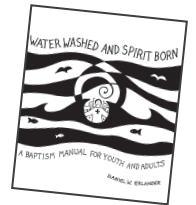
This Bible study focuses on these readings about Jesus' baptism:

Luke 3:1-22

Mark 1:1-11

### What You'll Need

- \* *Water Washed and Spirit Born: A Baptism Manual for Youth and Adults* by Daniel Erlander (pages 1-5)
- \* Your Bible
- \* *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, page 227
- \* Colored pencils
- \* Scissors



### Welcome!

In this Mini Study, you'll explore the story of Jesus' baptism and learn more about John, the one who baptized him.

To get started, look at the pictures on page 4 of *Water Washed and Spirit Born* showing John with his cousin Jesus. In the top picture, sketch yourself with the other people on the riverbank. What might you be doing in that scene?

People from all over the region came to be baptized by John, who seemed like an outsider. He lived in isolation, wore unusual clothes, and ate unusual things. Can you think of someone people tend to make negative assumptions about based on how they dress or where they live? What might outsiders have to teach us about God?

## Dive into *Water Washed and Spirit Born*

Read pages 1–5. The story of Jesus’ baptism may have parts that sound familiar because they are similar to what happens during a baptism today. Even if we don’t see the Holy Spirit descending like a dove or hear God’s voice directly, God tells us that our baptisms are also important to the entire cosmos. Read page 4 again, and underline a few words that stick out to you. How do these words apply to your own baptism and life of faith?

## Open Your Bible

Read the story of John the Baptist and Jesus’ baptism in Luke 3:1-22 and Mark 1:9-11. Using the chart below, write down details from each story. Then compare and contrast these two versions. Circle parts that are the same. Underline parts that are different. Which parts do you recognize from baptisms you’ve observed?

Luke 3:1-22

Mark 1:9-11

## Go Deeper

On pages 2–4 in *Water Washed and Spirit Born*, Daniel Erlander wrote about many ways water was important to the Jewish people of the Old Testament. Pick one or more readings from each category below to learn more about water’s importance.

### Water for ritual cleansing

Exodus 19:9-11  
Exodus 29:1-4  
Leviticus 16:23-28

### Flood

Genesis 7  
Psalm 32:6-7  
Isaiah 43:1-2

### Drought

1 Kings 17:1, 18:1, 41-45  
Isaiah 19:1-10  
Isaiah 41:17-18  
Haggai 1

### Water as spiritual refreshment

Psalm 42  
Proverbs 25:25  
Ezekiel 47:1-12





# A Holy Baptism Glossary

People, Places, Things, and What the Great Bath Is All About

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## Words about the Great Bath

Your baptism is like a really great bath that you take just once in a lifetime. When you are baptized, you are washed with plain water, anointed with oil, and welcomed into the church community—the body of Christ around the world.

To understand more about this bath, it may help to learn some of the words that go along with it.

### apostle

“One who is sent.” Like disciples, they follow Jesus and are sent to teach and tell the good news of Jesus.

### baptism

The Greek word *baptisma* means “bath” or “immersing in cleansing water.” Baptism is a sign that your heart and mind have been changed and that you are entering a life of hearing, serving, meal sharing, and prayer together with everyone in the church community. Baptism is also a **sacrament** and a **ritual** of entry into the body of Christ.

### communion, eucharist, Holy Communion, Lord’s supper

The central **sacrament** of Christian community, in which Jesus invites each one of us to eat and drink the true body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. The bread we eat and the wine we drink remind us that Jesus is with us always.

### disciple

A follower of Jesus who went about telling the new good news and baptizing all whose hearts and minds had been changed. Jesus had twelve of them. After your baptism, you’re one too.

### feast

A day on which Christ’s death and resurrection is celebrated. That’s every Sunday! Baptism happens during **worship**, often on a feast day, so that everyone can be part of it.

### gospel

The good news that God loves us, no matter what! Also the general name for four New Testament books (Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John) that tell the story of Jesus.

### rite, ritual

Something done in a group to mark an important step. Shared by everybody in your congregation, your baptism is a ritual that marks your entry into the church.

### sacrament

A **ritual** action using something ordinary like water or bread which, when connected to the promise-filled word of Jesus Christ, becomes something extraordinary—a sign of God’s love for us. Your **baptism** is a sacrament. So is **communion**.

### worship

Gathering as the people of God to listen to God’s word and celebrate **communion** together. Baptism happens during the worship service so that everyone can be part of it!