

I am thinking about Baptism.

What is Baptism?

Baptism is a Christian sacrament. From a New Church perspective, it symbolizes a personal commitment to take what you currently know from the Lord's Word and use it to love others more. Each day, trying to be a little more loving than the day before – this is the promise we make to ourselves and to God through Baptism.

Why is Baptism Important?

Baptism does not "save" anyone. It is not the finish line; it is not a golden ticket. Our goal at Carmel New Church is not to ensure we are "saved" but to ensure we are in the effort of awakening to spiritual life.

We want to commit ourselves to an active, purposeful relationship with the world around us. We want to show our love for God by taking care of and loving those around us, and getting rid of the parts of our life that get in the way of that love. Baptism is a commitment to this ongoing inner work.

Baptism is a personal covenant with God, a covenant to a loving life that bears fruit through a love of the Lord's Word, and useful service throughout this beautiful world.

Child Baptism

A child's baptism is an opportunity for parents to proclaim their commitment to raising that child to know God. Children are precious gifts, and baptism is a sacred way of saying 'yes' to preparing them for a life in this world with a view to their eternal welfare with God.

Adult Baptism

Adults who choose a Christian New Church baptism are not "canceling" any previous baptism. They are committing to an active spiritual life guided by these core principles,

1. *God lived and lives as Jesus Christ.*
2. *Repentance and reformation are the path to a life of joy and peace. We are guided by approaching the Lord through His Words in the Old Testament, New Testament and the Teachings for the New Church.*
3. *We are to live a life of Love to God and to others.*

What happens during a Baptism?

The ceremony itself is relatively short. It includes readings, some words from the minister, baptism with water, a blessing and prayer. You are encouraged to pick the readings. You can choose to add music or any special element to the ceremony that helps make the moment as personal and meaningful as you would like.

If you have questions, please speak to the Pastor and he can help you on your next step.



Carmel New Church

The Path
to...

Baptism &
Membership

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The Path to BAPTISM & MEMBERSHIP

Worship Together

- ◇ Attend church regularly (twice a month) for at least one year.
- ◇ Freely tithe to the church.

Serve Together

- ◇ Join a volunteer team.
- ◇ Give freely of your time and talents.

Learn Together

- ◇ Join at least one study or life group.
- ◇ Learn about the New Church faith; ask questions.

Preparation for Baptism & Membership

- ◇ Attend a Baptism & Membership Class (Speak to the Pastor).
- ◇ Attend a meeting of the membership; AGM or townhall.
- ◇ Attend and support church events and activities.

What's my next step?

Baptism

- After one year, and having worshiped, served and learnt as part of the congregation, arrange a meeting with the Pastor. Bring with you questions you have about Carmel New Church, its practices and its teachings.

- If the Pastor is satisfied that you have a good understanding of what Carmel New Church has to offer your life, that you are affirmative to the Articles of Faith, and that you are willing to strive for the life that the faith teaches, he will ask you if you are ready for baptism into the New Church faith.
- Fill out a Baptism and Membership form and return it to the Pastor.
- The Pastor will arrange with you, a Sunday for your baptism service.

Membership

- After your baptism service, your Baptism & Membership form will be sent to the Bishop's Office for acceptance into the General Church of the New Jerusalem.
- Once submitted to the Bishop, your request for membership will be submitted to the Carmel Board of Directors for review.
- When the Board of Directors is satisfied that you have fulfilled the qualifications for membership, the directors will vote to admit you as a full member of the Carmel New Church.

Religion is of Life

As a member it is expected that you will engage in personal spiritual growth by:

- Attending church regularly and learning from the Word.
- Engaging in the inner life of repentance and life transformation, turning away from the love of self and the world.
- Striving to love the Lord and neighbour in all things of thought, word and deed.

Duties & Rights of Membership

1. To participate in Church uses, activities and programs.
2. To receive the Church newsletter and copies of all general mailings.
3. To attend, speak and participate in all Meetings of Members.
4. To hold office.
5. To cast a single vote either in person or by proxy at all Meetings of Members.
6. To support the Church financially to the best of your ability according to your conscience.

Membership can be withdrawn

If duties of membership are deemed unfulfilled, the Carmel Board of Directors, in consultation with the Pastor, may resolve to remove membership status.

