

***Joining St. Luke's
Christian – Episcopalian – Member of St. Luke's
How do I know who I am?***

In **BAPTISM** you are welcomed into the Christian Church. If you have been baptized, you are a Christian.

Baptism is the sacrament by which God adopts us as God's children, members of the body of Christ, and inheritors of the kingdom. We believe that baptism is once and for all. If you have already been baptized in any other Christian denomination, no matter at what age, it is valid in the Episcopal Church. You need not be re-baptized.

In the Episcopal Church, all baptized Christians, regardless of denomination, are welcomed to the table to share the bread and the cup of the Eucharist.

In **CONFIRMATION** you are welcomed into a specific denomination of the Christian Church. If you have been confirmed by an Episcopal Bishop, you are an Episcopalian.

In the Episcopal Church, Confirmation is a sacramental act in which we affirm our faith in God as expressed in the Bible, revealed through Jesus Christ, and received as a gift of the Holy Spirit. Each spring we support teens and adults for Confirmation by our Bishop.

Unlike baptism, confirmation is not necessarily "once for all." Sometimes our hearts or circumstances draw us to a different denomination. If you have been confirmed previously in another denomination and you choose to be an Episcopalian now, you will need to be confirmed by the Bishop of our diocese. If you have been confirmed previously in the Catholic Church, the Lutheran Church or the Orthodox Church, you will be *received* into the Episcopal Church by the Bishop of our diocese.

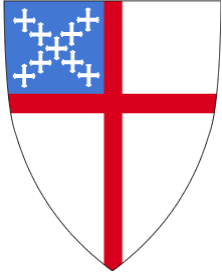
In **ACTIVE PRESENCE** you welcome St. Luke's Episcopal Church into your life.

If ...

- you are baptized (either at St. Luke's or at another church) and
- you regularly attend the worship services of this church (meaning you are more frequently present than absent, unless good cause prevent it) and
- you contribute regularly to the finances of this parish...

then you are a member of St. Luke's, whether you are confirmed or not. To formalize your membership you should notify our church office of your desire to be counted a member. If you have been a member of another Episcopal church, our office will contact your former church and request a letter of transfer.

Regardless of where you are on your journey of faith, it will be important to attend our **NEW MEMBER CLASSES**. Offered in the Fall and Spring, the three sessions introduce you to the Church (what it means to be a Christian), the Episcopal Church (what it means to be an Episcopalian) and St. Luke's (what it means to be a member of St. Luke's). They provide a wonderful way to meet and begin to know other people; and they provide the necessary instruction should you decide to be Confirmed or Received in the Episcopal Church.



**St. Luke's
Episcopal Church
Welcomes You!**

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me."

"Lord...when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you?"

"Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me."

– Matthew 25:35b - 40

Why are we intentional about welcoming people to St. Luke's? It's really pretty simple. Jesus asks us to be.

We don't know why the stranger has entered our doors. Someone new to the community? Someone facing a sudden hardship? Someone seeking God for the first time? Someone concerned about the faith of their children?

And we don't know what gifts they might have to offer St. Luke's should they choose to stay. A potential Sunday School teacher or choir member or head of the altar guild? The next treasurer or warden or lay reader?

And none of that really matters. There is no motive in welcoming, except one. That to welcome the stranger is to welcome God into your house and to be open to the surprises that God has to offer.