

Beliefs, Traditions and FAQ

Find responses to some frequently asked questions about the Episcopal faith below. Don't see an answer to one of your questions? We'd love to have a conversation with you about that. Give us a call at 507-228-2469.

Q: Do Episcopalians believe in the sacraments?

A: Yes, besides Baptism, where we are reminded that we belong to God and nothing can separate us from the love of God, and the Eucharist (Holy Communion) where we gather for the family meal, as Jesus gathered with his disciples before His death, Episcopalians recognize and celebrate other spiritual markers in our journey of faith, to help us as we journey through life from birth through death. These include:

- Confirmation - spiritual strengthening to live as adults in the way that Jesus taught us. We believe that through confirmation, the gifts of wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord are bestowed upon the confirmand.
- Reconciliation - reflecting and seeking forgiveness from God for wrongs we have done
- Matrimony - the union of two people in heart, body and mind, as intended by God for their mutual joy, with the understanding that God is always present to support and strengthen during their lifelong journey.
- Orders - a person, married or celibate, is ordained to serve as Christ's minister to the people as a deacon, a priest or a bishop.
- Anointing of the Sick - helps to spiritually heal us, and gives us strength, peace, courage and reconciliation, when we are ill, or preparing to pass to eternal life.

Q. Can anybody receive the Eucharist?

A. Yes. We believe that God does not restrict anyone from coming to God's table, so neither do we. All are allowed to come and worship, and all baptized persons are allowed to take Communion with us.

Even though it looks and tastes just like bread and wine, we believe that the bread is actually Jesus's body and the wine is His blood. You might be surprised to see a very small child taking communion. We believe that the Eucharist is a part of life, just as a birthday. God is with us from birth until death.

Q. Can I receive Eucharist if I am divorced?

A. Yes, Episcopalians recognize the grace of God in all people's lives, and that all of us are on our own unique spiritual journey. All baptized people are welcomed to God's table to receive the gift of the Eucharist. .

Q. Why are your pastors called "priests"?

A. It's an old tradition that goes way back to our earliest roots when we were once part of the Roman Catholic Church. Really, our priests aren't much different from most pastors. They lead church services; they pray for their congregations and the world; they teach and learn; they counsel; and they visit those in need, however in the Episcopal church, a priest may be married and a woman may be ordained as a deacon, priest or bishop.

Q. What role do women play?

A. We believe God created both male and female in God's image and therefore do not discriminate. Women can have any role in the Episcopal Church that men can, including deacons, priests, and bishops.

Q. What about homosexuality?

A. Presiding Bishop Michael Curry, who heads the Church nationally but does not have local control, released a statement. “[The leaders of the Episcopal Church] are committed to the principle of full and equal access to, and inclusion in, the sacraments for all of the baptized children of God, including our LGBTQ siblings.” At St. Luke's we believe that God does not exclude anyone from God's sacraments, so all are invited to worship and celebrate the gifts that God has given us.

Q. How do I become a member?

A. You can meet with Rev Justin for instructions on how to become a full member of St. Luke's Episcopal church, however you are free to attend and take part without becoming a full member for as long as you like.

Q. Can I be remarried in the Episcopal Church if I am divorced?

A. Yes. Marriage is a godly union of two persons who commit to one another in a lifelong relationship of loving care. It is two people – body and soul – forming something new together, something God-created. But when a marriage has been terminated, we pray for those who have suffered the pain of divorce. The Episcopal church does not condemn people for making painfully hard choices amidst the complex brokenness of the world. We extend the joy of remarriage to all baptized people, whether or not you are Episcopalian.

Q. Can I be married at an Episcopal church if I am not a member?

A. Yes, any baptized person may be married in the Episcopal church, whether you are a member of that church or whether you are an Episcopalian.

Q. Are there marriage classes or classes for parents before their child can be baptized?

You can meet with Rev Justin for information on marriage or baptism preparation.

Q. Can I or my child be baptized Episcopalian, even if we are not members?

A. Yes, we welcome everyone. Since part of what baptism conveys is membership in the Body of Christ, the church, we welcome you to participate in our worship and community life--before, during, and after the baptism. Anyone who seeks God and is drawn to Jesus Christ is welcome to receive the sacrament of Holy Baptism. God's invitation extends to people of all ages and from every kind of background.

Q. Can I have an Episcopalian funeral service if I am not a member?

A. Yes, As Christians, we believe that death is a part of God's plan of salvation. It is a time for mourning and a time for bittersweet celebration as we remember the life of a loved one and give thanks for the promise of victory over death by our faith in Jesus Christ. At St. Luke's we are glad to offer you a place to remember, rest, grieve, and hope. You do not need to walk the path alone; let us join you and God as you make your way.

The Episcopal Church offers ancient traditions for a modern world. [Learn more.](#)