



BAPTISM

THE GATEWAY TO HOLY COMMUNION

Provincial Communication Plan

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The Resolution passed at the Provincial Synod outlined what is being proposed to congregations:

Baptism and Communion

WHEREAS the House of Bishops of the Church in the Province of the West Indies, after a process of reflection on the history and theology inherent in the rites of Christian Initiation and the practices related to admission to Holy Communion, have unanimously agreed to return to the early practice of Christian Initiation inclusive of making baptism the gateway to Holy Communion;

AND WHEREAS the House of Bishops have given the assurance that this return to the early practice will only be enforced after an extensive process of teaching and communication at parish level focusing on formation in faith, formation in worship and formation in spiritual disciplines;

BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED that this Fortieth Session of Provincial Synod of the Church in the Province of the West Indies with the decision of the House of Bishops to make baptism the gateway to communion provided that change in present practice will only occur after a transition resolution by the House of Bishops and subsequently passed by the Provincial

Synod.

May 2019

A Pastoral Letter from the House of Bishops

Church in Province of the West Indies (CPWI) *To all the faithful concerning Baptism as the gateway to Holy Communion*

The Church, as the Body of Christ, has both Word and Sacrament to nourish and sustain its members. Down through the centuries, the Church has been called to the faithful preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments as part of God's mission and witness to God's Reign.

From about the fifth century, it became common in the western Church to separate the Sacrament of Baptism (in which a person is joined to the Body of Christ, and sacramentally with Christ's death and resurrection) from the ceremony of Confirmation, when the bishop, as chief pastor, welcomes the newly baptised, and lays hands upon them praying for the strengthening of the Holy Spirit. From the thirteenth century, it became customary also not to admit anyone to the Sacrament of Holy Communion unless or until they had received the sacramental act of Confirmation.

Thus, three ceremonies which the early Church had held together were separated, and the pattern was established with which Anglicans are familiar (of Baptism in infancy, of Confirmation at puberty, and Communion thereafter). These developments seemed expedient at the time that they were implemented, but in so doing, a great truth was obscured: the Sacrament of Baptism, commanded by Our Lord, is in fact the whole ceremony, entire and complete in itself, by which a person is incorporated into Christ, and recognised as a Christian.

In the Church today, there are many who believe that the witness of the Church to Jesus Christ, and the process of nurturing children and young people in the Christian faith, would be immeasurably strengthened by recovering this earliest symbolism. Baptism alone should be seen as the gateway into participation in the life of the Church, including admission to the Sacrament of Holy Communion. It is our conviction that all the baptised, by virtue of their Baptism alone, are full members of the Body of Christ and qualified to receive Holy Communion.

Following the advice of the Provincial Commission on Doctrine, The House of Bishops and by Resolution #1 of the Fortieth Provincial Synod 2019, the Province will engage in a period

of study in preparation for the change which will be further discussed and debated at the next triennial Synod of the Province proposed for 2022.

Of course, the proposed change will raise important questions for the life of the Church. Materials have been prepared to assist in the process which can be used in our parishes to instruct the faithful on the meaning and significance of the proposed change before any final agreement and implementation in the Province.

Re-adopting Baptism as the gateway to Holy Communion will also raise questions concerning the Rite of Confirmation. While Confirmation will no longer be the gateway to Communion, it will take its proper place in the sacramental acts of the Church as a channel of God's grace, affirming disciples, following the public declaration of their faith, of their place in the fellowship of the Church and commissioning them, through the laying on of hands, for greater service in the Church and the world as they are empowered by God's Holy Spirit.

We are proposing that the period of study begin in the Province by the first Sunday of Advent, November 29, 2020 or no later than the first Sunday in Lent, February 21, 2021.

We entrust the Church in the Province of the West Indies to God's good care and grace, and pray that, as we study and acknowledge the place of all the baptised at the Eucharist, he may renew our life in him and the commission we receive to his service, so that we might all grow in grace, and bear witness to his love in the world.

The House of Bishops of the Church of the Province of the West Indies

Date

BAPTISM AS THE GATEWAY TO HOLY COMMUNION

Provincial Communication Plan

SUMMARY

The Vision of the Communication plan is for every member of the Province becoming fully educated about Baptism and the policy change of Baptism being the only requirement for receiving Holy Communion. Through the different strategies and resources, we hope to effectively disseminate information on the policy change in a clear and straightforward manner.

The Plan envisions partnerships among key stakeholders: Bishops, Members of Clergy and Licensed Church Workers, Sunday School Teachers, Congregants, Parents, and children

Diocesan Communication Teams will also be required to coordinate the activities being proposed.

The Plan is divided into three main sections:

Getting the Word Out, Teaching Time and Teaching Resources

1. GETTING THE WORD OUT:

This is the promotion phase of the Plan. Promotional videos, discussion events, event launches to promote posters and flyers, and Sunday School Resources will be used to ensure that all members of the Province hear that there will be a policy change, what it will be and when it will become effective.

2. TEACHING TIME:

The Plan requires teaching about Baptism and the impact of the Policy change to Baptism as the Gateway to Holy Communion. Diocesan Communication Teams will be required to organize sessions to target the main stakeholders who will actually teach in the local congregations, i.e., Members of clergy and Licensed Church Workers and Sunday School Teachers.

Topics Include:

1. What is Baptism – Theology of Baptism
2. What is Holy Communion
3. History of Confirmation
4. Why the need for a change to Baptism as the gateway to Holy Communion

5. How to engage families in determining that their child/ ward is ready to receive Holy Communion
 6. How to engage the wider church in understanding Baptism, Holy Communion and Confirmation
 7. How to teach Sunday School teachers to engage children in understanding Baptism
- Members of clergy and Licensed Church Workers would be encouraged to share at the local congregation level both to the wider church family and specifically to parents and children. Sunday School teachers would share with parents and students.

3. TEACHING RESOURCES:

For the Communication Plan to be effective, there must be supporting resources that are agreed upon and accessible across the Province. Suggested material is presented to meet the needs of the proposed stakeholders. The resources have been divided into two Appendices:

APPENDIX 1: CORE DOCUMENTS

These are the primary teaching documents. They contain the Provincial position on the topics of Baptism and Holy Communion. Additional information on the history of confirmation is also provided. The complete documents are provided.

APPENDIX 2: CONCEPT DOCUMENTS

These are proposal documents that have been crafted using the Core Documents to address some anticipated issues and questions. Excerpts of these documents have been provided to give an idea of the content.

Core Documents: Appendix 1

1. Baptism as the Gateway short answer leaflet (Policy Background Information)
Produced in Triplicate
2. Exploring Baptismal Theology
3. Baptism as the Gateway with History of Confirmation booklet

Concept Documents: Appendix 2

1. Provincial Guidelines on Baptism as the Gateway to Holy Communion (For Church members)
2. Provincial Guidelines on Baptism as the Gateway to Holy Communion (For Clergy and Licensed Church Workers)

3. Provincial Guidelines on Baptism as the Gateway to Holy Communion (For Teachers, Parents, and Children)
4. Bible Study Guide on Baptism
5. Sunday School Curriculum: Baptism (containing lesson plans, resource materials, background information)
6. What every Parent should know and teach their child about Baptism (Covenant document)
7. When is your child ready for Holy Communion Booklet
8. Teach me about Holy Communion (Children's Guide)
9. Flyers & Posters

Policy Change

OUR VISION:

Every member becoming fully educated about Baptism and the policy change with regards to receiving Holy Communion

OUR GOALS:

To ensure the dissemination of information in a clear and straightforward manner

To convey information about the change in policy regarding Baptism as the gateway to Holy Communion.

That Baptism will become the only requirement for receiving Holy Communion in the CPWI.

OUR TARGET GROUP

Overall: Every member of the congregations in the Province of the West Indies


1. Bishops
2. Clergy and Licensed Church Workers
3. Members
 - 3.1 Parents
 - 3.2 Children
 - 3.3 Sunday School Teachers

HOW: DIOCESAN COMMUNICATION TEAM

Each Diocese should establish a communication team to craft and implement the Diocesan plan for communicating the policy change

Diocesan Communication teams will be responsible for:

1. Establishing online access to all promotional material or pointing to Provincial online resources
2. Production of Diocesan Promotional Resources/ or use of Provincial resources (Videos, posters, flyers, booklets)
3. Organize Promotional/ Engagement Events for key stakeholders



**Stage 1
Getting the
Word Out**

Avenues of Communication

1. Promotional Videos

METHOD	PRESENTER	TARGET
Initial Promotional Video	The Archbishop	All members of the Province
Promotional Videos	Diocesan Bishops	All members of each Diocese

Goals: The promotional videos will state the change, outline possible effects and the Plan for teaching and encourage participation

Access: All promotional videos to be made available on the CPWI website and where applicable on individual Diocesan websites

A specific website can be created to host the material if there is a concern that Diocesan websites are overcrowded. In that case, a link would be made available and prominently displayed on the Diocesan websites or leading to the Provincial website.

2. Discussion Event with Members of Clergy and Licensed Church Workers

(Recognizing that some provisional discussions may have taken place)

Goal:

- i. Discuss the policy change
- ii. Discuss the impact on admission to Holy Communion and The impact on Confirmation
- iii. Convey communication/teaching strategies to share the policy change
- iv. Provision of an information packet

Each Diocese will set aside a date and plan an event to share with Members of Clergy and Licensed Church Workers.

This in-person or virtual event to be led by the Diocesan bishop and Communication team

Materials: Diocesan Promotional Videos
Bible Study
Baptism information booklet
Baptism Sunday School packet
History of Confirmation information booklet

3. Launch Posters and Flyers Competitions

Goal: To state the change and provide a quick, short answer format to potential questions for each Diocese

Background: Each Diocese is unique and may choose to create their own or use the Provincial material. If each has an input in the creation of the resources, it will increase their involvement and ownership of the process of disseminating the information

Note: The creation of the posters/ flyers can become an activity for children, youth groups, church groups

The basic information for the posters and flyers would be provided, and the instructions for submission of entries can be completed by each Diocese

Access: To be displayed on websites (Provincial and Diocesan) and printed

4. Launch Diocesan Sunday School Resources

Goal: To Provide resources for Sunday School teachers to use to teach students about Baptism and Holy Communion

Target:

Members of Clergy and Licensed Church Workers
Sunday School Teachers
Parents
Sunday School Students

Each Diocese will set aside a date/s to engage the stakeholders of the Sunday School to discuss the impact of the policy change and the resources being made available

Resources:


Diocesan Guidelines for Implementation of Policy Change for Teachers, Parents, and children

Sunday School Curriculum for teaching about Baptism

Background information on Baptism for teachers

Covenant for parental involvement

Sunday School events for engaging students – VBS, Competitions, Bible Study

A graphic of a blue notepad with yellow pencil marks and a blue shadow. The notepad is tilted and has several yellow pencil marks around it. The text "STAGE 2 TEACHING TIME" is written in bold black letters on the notepad.

**STAGE 2
TEACHING
TIME**

Teaching Series:

Each Diocesan Communication Team will organize teaching series using suitable methodologies to engage key stakeholders.

Initially, the focus will be on Members of Clergy and Licensed Church Workers as well as Sunday School teachers because these are the trainers who will deliver the content at the local level in the congregations to both adults and children

Provincial Master Teachers could be engaged to provide recorded lectures or online interactive presentations so that all Dioceses would have equal access to resource persons.

TEACHING SERIES: TRAINING THE TRAINERS **Members of Clergy and Licensed Church Workers:**

Topics:

1. What is Baptism – Theology of Baptism
2. What is Holy Communion
3. History of Confirmation
4. Why the need for a change to Baptism as the gateway to Holy Communion
5. How to engage families in determining that their child/ ward is ready to receive Holy Communion
6. How to engage the wider church in understanding Baptism, Holy Communion and Confirmation
7. How to teach Sunday School teachers to engage children in understanding Baptism

Sunday School Teachers:

Topics:

1. What is Baptism – Theology of Baptism
2. What is Holy Communion
3. History of Confirmation
4. Why the need for a change to Baptism as the gateway to Holy Communion
5. How to teach the Sunday School lessons on Baptism
6. How to engage children and parents in a discussion about receiving Holy Communion



TEACHING RESOURCES

Resources Note:

Specific resources will be made available to their target group. However, all will be made available online at the Provincial website (for Provincial Resources) and Diocesan websites for specific Diocesan resources.

Alternately:

As Dioceses craft their specific resources, these could be made available and labeled for each Diocese on the Provincial website.

This will ensure that all resources can be accessed by everyone across the Province. This will enable the sharing of resources as well.

Specific Resources have been produced in triplicate for three target groups:

Standard - Text which has not been simplified

Simplified Text (Adult) – Paraphrased text for adults

Simplified Text (Child) – Paraphrased text for children

LIST OF RESOURCES

1. Baptism as the Gateway short answer leaflet (Policy Background Information)
Produced in Triplicate +
2. Exploring Baptismal Theology +
3. Baptism as the Gateway with History of Confirmation booklet +
4. Provincial Guidelines on Baptism as the Gateway to Holy Communion (For Church members) *
5. Provincial Guidelines on Baptism as the Gateway to Holy Communion (For Clergy and Licensed Church Workers) *
6. Provincial Guidelines on Baptism as the Gateway to Holy Communion (For Teachers, Parents, and Children) *
7. Bible Study Guide on Baptism *
8. Sunday School Curriculum: Baptism (containing lesson plans, resource materials, background information) *
9. What every Parent should know and teach their child about Baptism (Covenant document) *

10. When is your child ready for Holy Communion Booklet *
11. Teach me about Holy Communion (Children's Guide) *
12. Flyers & Posters

Key:

† Core Resources. See Appendix 1 for Completed Document

* Concept Document. See Appendix 2

Resources Recommended For Members of Clergy and Licensed Church Workers:

1. Provincial Guidelines on Baptism as the Gateway to Holy Communion (For Church members)
2. Provincial Guidelines on Baptism as the Gateway to Holy Communion (For Clergy and Licensed Church Workers)
3. Provincial Guidelines on Baptism as the Gateway to Holy Communion (For Teachers, Parents, and Children)
4. Baptism as the Gateway short answer leaflet (Policy Background Information)
5. Exploring Baptismal Theology
6. Baptism as the Gateway with History of Confirmation booklet
7. Bible Study Guide on Baptism
8. Sunday School Curriculum: Baptism (containing lesson plans, resource materials, background information)
9. What every Parent should know and teach their child about Baptism (Covenant document)
10. When is your child ready for Holy Communion Booklet
11. Teach me about Holy Communion (Children's Guide)
12. Flyers & Posters

Resources Recommended For Church Members:

1. Provincial Guidelines on Baptism as the Gateway to Holy Communion (For Church members)
2. Baptism as the Gateway short answer leaflet (Policy Background Information)
3. Baptism as the Gateway with History of Confirmation booklet
4. Bible Study Guide on Baptism
5. Flyers & Posters

Resources Recommended For Sunday School Teachers:

1. Provincial Guidelines on Baptism as the Gateway to Holy Communion (For Church members)
2. Provincial Guidelines on Baptism as the Gateway to Holy Communion (For Teachers, Parents, and Children)
3. Baptism as the Gateway short answer leaflet (Policy Background Information)
4. Baptism as the Gateway with History of Confirmation booklet
5. Sunday School Curriculum: Baptism (containing lesson plans, resource materials, background information)
6. Flyers & Posters

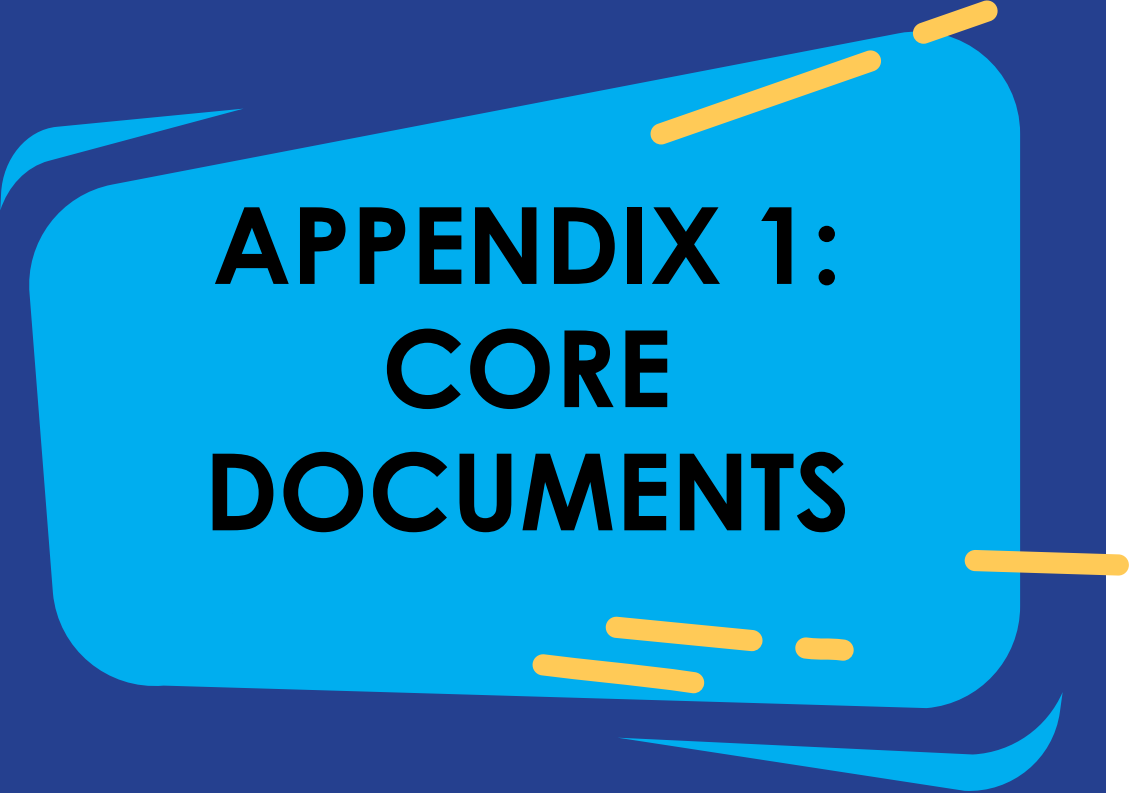
Resources Recommended For Parents and Guardians:

1. Provincial Guidelines on Baptism as the Gateway to Holy Communion (For Congregants)
2. Provincial Guidelines on Baptism as the Gateway to Holy Communion (For Teachers, Parents, and Children)
3. Baptism as the Gateway short answer leaflet (Policy Background Information)
4. Baptism as the Gateway with History of Confirmation booklet
5. Sunday School Curriculum: Baptism (containing lesson plans, resource materials, background information)
6. What every Parent should know and teach their child about Baptism (Covenant document)
7. When is your child ready for Holy Communion Booklet
8. Flyers & Posters

Resources Recommended For Children and Youth:

1. Provincial Guidelines on Baptism as the Gateway to Holy Communion (For Church members)
2. Provincial Guidelines on Baptism as the Gateway to Holy Communion (For Teachers, Parents, and Children)
3. Sunday School Curriculum: Baptism (containing lesson plans, resource materials, background information)
4. Teach me about Holy Communion (Children's Guide)
5. Flyers & Posters

NOTES



**APPENDIX 1:
CORE
DOCUMENTS**

The Core Documents provide the most basic and complete information on the Provincial position on major issues surrounding the policy change on Baptism as the Gateway to Holy Communion

List of Core Documents:

1. Baptism as the Gateway to Holy Communion short answer leaflet (Policy Background Information) Produced in Triplicate
2. Exploring Baptismal Theology
3. Baptism as the Gateway with History of Confirmation booklet

