



vibrantfaith

+ Generations Together

Baptism Stations

Here is an intergenerational session for all members of the congregation exploring several aspects of Baptism. This session is designed to be conducted in about 90 minutes, and can be adapted for a shorter or longer timeframe.

Introduction

In sharing with each other the story of our names and our Baptisms, we recall that Baptism identifies each of us as followers of Jesus and members of the worldwide community of Christ. In this session you'll be exposed to activities to help you understand the deeper meaning of Baptism and your call to Christian faith. Visit as many of the Baptism stations as you can!

Needed

Copies of the following activities:

- Your Baptism Day
- God's Promise
- Trinity Koolaid
- What is Faith?
- Heroes of Faith
- Symbols of Faith
- Three in One

Read through each activity and collect the items needed for each activity, and gather enough of each for numerous families/small groups to engage in the activity simultaneously.

Prepare in Advance

- In your large gathering space, or in separate rooms, set up the learning stations. You might not choose to set up all seven activities listed here, but choose at least four:
 1. Your Baptism Day
 2. God's Promise
 3. Trinity Koolaid
 4. What is Faith?
 5. Heroes of Faith
 6. Symbols of Faith
 7. Three in One
- Create a sign for each learning station.
- Place all the necessary items in each learning station.
- Arrange to have one or two helpers at each station. These persons will assist families and small groups as they come through to do the station activity. The helpers should carefully read their assigned activity and make any necessary adaptations since the activity will not be done in a home setting for which it was originally intended.

I. Gather

Activity Plan

1. Invite all participants to gather as one large group. Welcome them all and provide this introduction:

In sharing with each the story of our names and our Baptisms, we recall that Baptism identifies each of us as followers of Jesus and members of the worldwide community of Christ. In this session you'll be exposed to activities to help you understand the deeper meaning of Baptism and your call to Christian faith. Visit as many of the Baptism stations as you can!

2. Read aloud these Bible passages:

"And behold, you will conceive in your womb and bear a son, and you shall call his name Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. And the Lord God will give to him the throne of his father David" (Luke 1:31-32).

"And at the end of eight days, when he was circumcised, he was called Jesus, the name given by the angel before he was conceived in the womb" (Luke 2:21).

3. In family groups or small groups, share what you know about the name(s) you were given. Parents, share when you chose the name(s) for your child(ren). How long did it take to settle on a name? Why did you chose those particular name(s) for your child(ren). Who did you share the names with first? If there is a biblical connection to your name or your child's name, try to find the passage in the Bible where it occurs.
4. Read aloud 1 John 3:1.

"See what kind of love the Father has given to us, that we should be called children of God; and so we are."
5. Share about the day of your baptism and/or your child(ren)'s baptism. What did it feel like to become and/or to have your child become a "child of God"? What was the day like? Who was present? How did you celebrate?
6. Invite some comments to the large group.

II. Stations

1. Ask participants to form family groups or small groups of no more than 5-6 persons.
2. Explain that each family/group will be invited to visit the Baptism stations that you have set up, and engage in a particular baptism-related activity at each station. They will receive a printed copy of the activity that they can take home with them. Tell them that each activity will take about 10-15 minutes to complete, and that there are helpers at each station. Encourage participants to respect the other groups as they engage in each activity by remaining relatively quiet throughout the process.
3. Before sending people off to stations, have a helper from each station give a brief teaser/introduction to each activity:

Your Baptism Day - Share with each of your children the story of their baptism day to celebrate their new life in Christ and embrace their relationship with God as their Father and Creator.

God's Promise - The Bible is full of stories that teach us about God's love for God's people. In many ways the Bible is like our big family storybook. We meet our "big brothers and sisters" in our faith who have learned about God's love for us, and their stories help us learn about how much God love us too! Noah is one of the most popular of all our big brothers. In his story we learn about God's promise to always love us and never leave us.

Trinity Koolaid - This simple activity will help illustrate the concept that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—while three persons—come together to form one God, which we call the Holy Trinity.

What is Faith? - "Faith" is a word that children often hear but they may not understand what it means. This activity invites families to take a winter walk or look at nature together through the window. By talking about things that are happening unseen under the snow, children can start to understand that faith means believing in Jesus who promises to be with us even though we can't see him. After a winter walk or window time, family members can play a simple memory game indoors to talk further about the meaning of faith.

Heroes of Faith - In the Bible and in our current lives, we can find heroes of faith. Who are your heroes? Who inspires you to go deeper into your faith?

Symbols of Faith - Learn more about your faith by researching and creating symbols of faith.

Three in One - The Trinity—the unity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is central to Christian faith and worship. It's also challenging to understand. Using symbols can help family members grow in understanding the Trinity.

4. Allow 45-60 minutes for families/groups to visit each station.

III. Go Forth

1. Conclude the session by gathering everyone back into one large group. Invite participants (children first) to share something they learned or found interesting about Baptism. Offer your own conclusion remarks based on these comments and briefly summarizing some of the important points covered in this session.
2. Close with prayer.

*Gracious God, you have called each of us by name, and you have baptized each one of us in the name of the Father, and the Son, and Holy Spirit (make the sign of the cross). And so it is with confidence that we pray the prayer taught by Jesus, that identifies us as followers of you. **Our Father . . .***

Your Baptism Day

By Julie Filby

Share with each of your children the story of their baptism day to celebrate their new life in Christ and embrace their relationship with God as their Father and Creator.

For

Young Families

Season

Spring, especially around Easter



Needed

Recollection of the day your child was baptized, related memorabilia (baptism candle, vestment or gown, certificate, holy water), special dinner or cake or other treat, small gift (optional)

Prepare in Advance

- Recall the day your child was baptized and be prepared to relay the story
- Gather memorabilia and photos to share
- Plan dinner and/or dessert

Activity Plan

1. Say this prayer aloud to begin.

Dear God, thank you for the gift of _____ being part of your family through his/her baptism. We are thankful for your parental love. We ask that you bless _____ and all of us today as we remember and celebrate his/her baptism. Amen.

2. Plan a special meal and/or a special dessert. Light their baptism candle, or another blessed candle, to use as a centerpiece.
3. Gather around the table for dinner and share the story of the child's baptism day:
 - What was the date? How old was the child?
 - Who are the godparents, and why were they chosen?
 - What did the child wear?
 - What church? Who was the presiding minister?
 - Did the child cry? Laugh?
 - What was the child's reaction to having water poured on their head?
 - Who attended the ceremony, family and friends?
 - Was there a party or reception?
4. Share any mementos from the day (photos, cards, etc.).
5. Say the following prayer before blowing out the candle.

Dear God, thank you for this celebration of _____'s baptism. Please continue to shower _____ with your love and grace to help him/her grow in holiness every day. Amen.

6. Variation: Consider making this an annual event on the anniversary of each family member's baptism.

God's Promise

By Heath Howe



The Bible is full of stories that teach us about God's love for God's people. In many ways the Bible is like our big family storybook. We meet our "big brothers and sisters" in our faith who have learned about God's love for us, and their stories help us learn about how much God love us too! Noah is one of the most popular of all our big brothers. In his story we learn about God's promise to always love us and never leave us.

For

Young Family

Season

Summer

Needed

Bible, children's Bible with story of Noah, water, baby pool or large bucket, a variety of plastic toy animals and people, a small bowl or container to serve as an ark, paper (one piece per person), crayons/paint and brushes, rainbow template (optional)

Prepare in Advance

- Read the whole Noah story, Genesis 6:9 - 9:17
- Mark the story of Noah in a children's bible
- Have pool/bucket next to water source (recommend outdoors)
- Have paper, rainbow template (optional) and crayons/paint and brushes on table

Activity Plan

1. Say this prayer aloud to begin.

God, thank you for the many people we meet in the stories of the Bible. As we hear today of the story of Noah, may we begin to know more and more how much you love us. Amen.

2. Read the story of Noah aloud. Ask the following "Wonder" questions. Allow time and space between each, and listen carefully to all responses.
 - I wonder what your favorite part of the story was?
 - If you were a character in the story I wonder who would you like to be?
 - If you were a (pick an animal, i.e. a giraffe), what might you say to Noah? To God? Other animals?

- What did God's promise Noah and his family? I wonder what you think about that promise?
 - I wonder how we can care for God's creatures today?
3. Move to the pool/bucket and water source. Explain that you have some activities to help understand the story even better.
 - Have one child help fill the bucket with water. Allow all players to place their hands in the water and feel it.
 - Place all the plastic figures in front of the children and allow each player to choose who he/she would like to be.
 - Place the container in the pool of water and explain that this will be the ark.
 4. Say the following: "God loves creation, is in creation. Sin cannot destroy it. The flood water can cleanse all as we start anew." Now, read the story a second time and allow the children to reenact the story as you read. If one child is a reader he/she may read this time. Encourage the children to reenact the story another time from memory.
 5. Once the play has ended move the children to the craft table. Ask the following questions:
 - The flood waters remind us that we are washed clean and can never be separated from the love of God. What else might water remind us of? (Listen for response. Silence is okay!)
 - How are these waters like our baptism? (Listen for responses. Silence is okay!)
 - I wonder if you remember the sign God gave Noah and his family. This was the sign that promised God would always love them and all of creation.
 - Once the rainbow has been named, instruct each player to draw or paint his/her own rainbow.
 6. When all the rainbows are finished, hang them in a special place in the home where they may be enjoyed by all and serve as a reminder of the Noah story. (After a few weeks move the rainbows to each person's room where he/she may hang it for years.)
 7. End with this prayer:

God, we thank you for Noah and all he has taught us. We thank you for washing us clean and for your promise of love. May we never forget it and may we love others as you love us. Amen.

Variations

- This activity can also be done in the bathtub during the day or at bath time. The Noah story can be read again at bedtime that night or throughout the week.
- This is also a GREAT activity to do on the beach during a family vacation or weekend.
- For the "crafty family" the plastic people and animals may be replaced with handmade figures made from sticks, acorns, wood, etc. Have fun with it!
- Take the Noah story into a family service opportunity. Have a neighborhood party and raise money for the local Humane Society. Or have the neighborhood pot flowers for neighborhood homebound people or local elderly folks.
- For other Noah/rainbow activities visit: www.first-school.ws/activities/bible/rainbow.htm

Trinity Kool-Aid

By Julie Filby



This simple activity will help illustrate the concept that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit—while three persons—come together to form one God, which we call the Holy Trinity.

For

Young Family

Season

Summer

Needed

Clear pitcher, cups, water, sugar, powdered drink mix, spoon, ice and snack (optional), Apostles' Creed

Activity Plan

1. Start by saying this prayer together:

Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

2. Gather the supplies: a clear pitcher, water, sugar, drink mix and a spoon. Explain to your children that you are going to make a drink from three ingredients.
 - Hold up the sugar and ask: "Is this the drink?"
 - Hold up the sugar and drink mix and ask: "Is this the drink?"
 - Allow the kids to respond and ask them to explain how they think the drink should be made.
3. Then mix the powder and sugar with the water in the pitcher; hold it up and say: "See how it took all three ingredients to make one drink."
4. Discuss how each ingredient contributed to the drink. For example, the powder adds flavor and color, the liquid makes it drinkable, and the sugar makes it sweet. Emphasize that each ingredient had a unique, yet equally important, role.
5. Compare this analogy to the explanation of the Trinity: While God is one God, there are three distinct persons: God the Father, Jesus the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Each is holy, all-powerful and eternal.

6. Discuss some of the distinct roles of each person of the Trinity: God the Father lives in heaven and He created the world. He sent his Son, Jesus, to earth to show us what He is like. When Jesus was on earth, he was both God and man. Variation: If your kids are appropriately mature, explain that He died on the cross for us. The Holy Spirit is a friend who lives in our heart, tells us right from wrong, and helps us make good choices.
7. Pour everyone his or her own cup of Kool-Aid and toast to each person of the Trinity. Variation: Toss in a snack, like some cookies, as well. Optional: end with a recitation of the Apostles' Creed.

Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty,
Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord.
He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit
And born of the Virgin Mary.
He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.
He descended to the dead.
On the third day, he rose again.
He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father.
He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and life everlasting. Amen.

What is Faith?

By Paige Evers



“Faith” is a word that children often hear but they may not understand what it means. This activity invites families to take a winter walk or look at nature together through the window. By talking about things that are happening unseen under the snow, children can start to understand that faith means believing in Jesus who promises to be with us even though we can’t see him. After a winter walk or window time, family members can play a simple memory game indoors to talk further about the meaning of faith.

For

Young Family

Season

Winter

Needed

Winter clothing if you want to do a nature walk outdoors, binoculars if you have them, tray or cookie sheet, about five objects (toys, kitchen items, stuffed animals) that are familiar to your child, towel to cover the tray or cookie sheet.

Prepare in Advance

- Spread the objects out on the tray or cookie sheet so they can all be easily seen.

Activity Plan

1. Say this prayer aloud to begin.

Dear God, thank you for this time together. Be with us as we learn more about you. Help us grow in faith so that we can always pray with confidence in Jesus’ name. Amen

2. We just asked God to help us grow in faith. Let’s talk about that word “faith.” What does it mean? What is faith? Read aloud Hebrews 11:1

“Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see.”

In other words: faith is believing that something is there even when we can’t see it. Faith is knowing that something is going on, even when our eyes can’t see it happening.

3. Move to a window and look outside. Show your child how to use binoculars if you have them. You could also go for a winter walk and do the activity outdoors. Ask your child what she or he sees in nature in winter. Can they think of anything else that is going on outside in the winter, even though they can’t see it happening? Some possibilities are:

- Moles are traveling through their tunnels underground.

- Turtles and frogs are hibernating deep in mud.
 - Squirrels are nibbling on pine cones.
 - Chipmunks are hibernating in burrows.
 - Woodpeckers are resting in their nests in holes in trees.
 - Some butterflies spend winter as a chrysalis, preparing to emerge as a butterfly in the spring.
4. Say to your child/family that on a quiet winter day, we know that things are happening in nature even though we can't see them. Faith is like that: it's trusting that Jesus is always with us, even though we can't see him. Faith is knowing that God loves us and helps us every day. Faith is believing that we are God's children and that God has good plans for us.
 5. Go inside or move to an area where you can sit together. Play a simple memory game to demonstrate the verse from Hebrews: "Now faith is confidence in what we hope for and assurance about what we do not see."
 - Place the objects you selected ahead of time on a tray or cookie sheet.
 - Show your child the objects and name each one.
 - Look at the objects for a minute or so and then cover the entire tray with a towel.
 - With the items covered, ask your child to remember and name all of the objects that are on the tray.
 - Remind them that even though you can't see them now, you know that they are there.
 - Remove the towel and check how many you were able to name.
 6. Remind your child that you started the activity with a prayer that God would help you grow in faith. When you played the memory game, you had faith that those objects were still on the tray even though you couldn't see them.
 7. The Bible tells us that Jesus is always with us. Jesus loves us and gives us new life every day. We put our faith and trust in Jesus. We want to grow in faith so we can follow Jesus and live joyfully as children of God.
 8. Finish by saying this prayer.

Dear God, it's winter and sometimes it looks like nothing is happening. But we know that you are at work in the beautiful outdoors. We know that you are with us, too. Help us grow in faith in Jesus. Fill up our hearts with Jesus' love. Show us how to share his love with others. Teach us how to serve family, friends, and strangers with joy. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.

Heroes of Faith

By Jolene Roehlkepartain

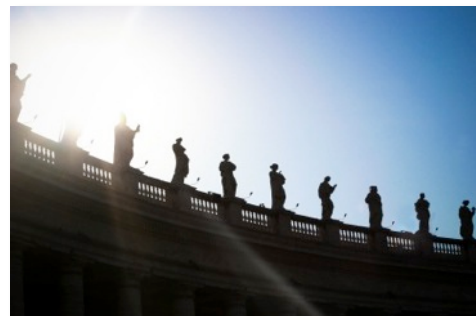
In the Bible and in our current lives, we can find heroes of faith. Who are your heroes? Who inspires you to go deeper into your faith?

For

Teen Family

Season

Summer



Needed

Bible, Faith Heroes: What's Admirable worksheet, pen for each family member

Activity Plan

1. Say this prayer aloud to begin.
God, help us to see the heroes of faith in the Bible and also in the world around us. Encourage us to integrate what we most admire about our heroes into our own lives. Amen.
2. Have a family member read aloud Genesis 12:1-9 (use your Bible or handout). Discuss the scripture passage with these questions:
 - Who is the hero in this story? Why?
 - What does it mean to be a hero of faith?
 - Do you think it's hard to be a hero? Why or why not?
 - How is being a hero of faith different from being another kind of hero?
 - How much does our society value heroes of faith? Why?
3. Have another family member read aloud Exodus 2:1-10 (use your Bible or see handout). Discuss the scripture passage with these questions:
 - How is Miriam, the sister of Moses, a hero in this passage?
 - Do you think Miriam was afraid in this story? Why or why not?
 - Do you think Miriam's family gave her ideas of how to be a hero before she did this? Why or why not?
 - Which is easier: being a male hero of faith or a female hero of faith? Why?
 - At what age can you be a hero? Why?
4. Give each family member a copy of the Faith Heroes: What's Admirable worksheet and a pen. Allow time to fill out the handout. When everyone finishes, talk about what you wrote and why. Explain that all these characteristics are attributes of heroes and that it's important to know which ones we value.
5. Identify other faith heroes.
 - Talk about other faith heroes in the Bible. Who do you admire? Why?
 - Identify three to five faith heroes who are alive today (or have been alive recently). Why are these people important?
 - Identify two faith heroes that you know in your personal life. Maybe this person is a friend, a family member, or someone who goes to your church. Why is it essential to have heroes of faith that we know personally?
6. Close with a prayer:
God, thank you for the heroes of faith who show us how to live deep lives of faith. Amen.

Faith Heroes: What's Admirable

What do you admire most about your faith heroes? Circle five words below that you think are most important for being a hero of faith. Then rank the circled words from one to five with one being the most important.

Courageous

Quiet strength

Called by God

Ambitious

Follows God

Altruistic

Advocates for social justice

Peacemaker

Intelligent

Independent

Kind

Has a great sense of humor

Creative

Dedicated

Perseverance

Selfless

Determined

Honest

Compassionate

Willing to make sacrifices

Hard working

Humble

Flexible

Strong

Giving

Dedicated

Willing to help

Conviction

Willing to lead

Loyalty

Strong willed

Loving

The Call of Abram

Genesis 12:1-9

Now the Lord said to Abram, "Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you. And I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed."

So Abram went, as the Lord had told him, and Lot went with him. Abram was seventy-five years old when he departed from Haran. And Abram took Sarai his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their possessions that they had gathered, and the people that they had acquired in Haran, and they set out to go to the land of Canaan. When they came to the land of Canaan, Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. Then the Lord appeared to Abram and said, "To your offspring I will give this land." So he built there an altar to the Lord, who had appeared to him. From there he moved to the hill country on the east of Bethel and pitched his tent, with Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. And there he built an altar to the Lord and called upon the name of the Lord. And Abram journeyed on, still going toward the Negeb.

The Birth of Moses

Exodus 2:1-10

Now a man from the house of Levi went and took as his wife a Levite woman. The woman conceived and bore a son, and when she saw that he was a fine child, she hid him three months. When she could hide him no longer, she took for him a basket made of bulrushes and daubed it with bitumen and pitch. She put the child in it and placed it among the reeds by the riverbank. And his sister [Miriam] stood at a distance to know what would be done to him. Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to bathe at the river, while her young women walked beside the river. She saw the basket among the reeds and sent her servant woman, and she took it. When she opened it, she saw the child, and behold, the baby was crying. She took pity on him and said, "This is one of the Hebrews' children." Then his sister said to Pharaoh's daughter, "Shall I go and call you a nurse from the Hebrew women to nurse the child for you?" And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Go." So the girl went and called the child's mother. And Pharaoh's daughter said to her, "Take this child away and nurse him for me, and I will give you your wages." So the woman took the child and nursed him. When the child grew up, she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. She named him Moses, "Because," she said, "I drew him out of the water"

Symbols of Faith

By Erin Davis

Learn more about your faith by researching and creating symbols of faith.

For

Young Adult

Season

Spring

Needed

Computer with Internet access, paper and pencil



Activity Plan

1. Brainstorm some symbols of faith and Christianity that you have seen. Write them down.
2. Do an Internet search for “symbols of faith” and “symbols of Christianity”. What did you find and what do they mean? Write down some of your favorites or compile them in a word processing document.
3. Do an Internet search for other types of symbols. Add those to your list.
4. Read these Scripture passages:

Matthew 3:16

As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him.

Genesis 8:8-12

Then he sent out a dove to see if the water had receded from the surface of the ground. But the dove could find nowhere to perch because there was water over all the surface of the earth; so it returned to Noah in the ark. He reached out his hand and took the dove and brought it back to himself in the ark. He waited seven more days and again sent out the dove from the ark. When the dove returned to him in the evening, there in its beak was a freshly plucked olive leaf! Then Noah knew that the water had receded from the earth. He waited seven more days and sent the dove out again, but this time it did not return to him.

What symbol is represented in these verses? What are the meanings for this symbol?

5. Using the information you’ve gathered, brainstorm some ideas for symbols that might represent *your* faith. Draw or use a computer program to create a symbol and write an explanation for how it shows *your* faith.

Three in One

By Erin Davis Gibbons



The Trinity—the unity of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—is central to Christian faith and worship. It’s also challenging to understand. Using symbols can help family members grow in understanding the Trinity.

For

Teen Family

Season

Spring

Needed

The Trinity worksheet (see handout), pens

Prepare in Advance

Make a copy of The Trinity worksheet for each person.

Activity Plan

1. Say this prayer aloud to begin:

God the Father, we see in you our Holy Parent, the one who creates and loves us.

God the Son, we know you suffered and died to give us forgiveness and mercy because you love us.

God the Holy Spirit, we feel you move our hearts and minds as you lead us in your way, because you love us.

Holy God, blessed Trinity, help us feel your presence and your love every day in many ways. Amen.

2. As a family, list words you’ve used and heard used to describe God. Comment that each spring many churches celebrate Trinity Sunday in honor of the Holy Trinity, the name for the unity of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
3. Give a copy of The Trinity worksheet to each person. Read about the Trinity symbols given on the worksheet. Discuss:
 - Which symbol makes the most sense to you? Why?
 - How do the words we’ve heard used to describe God fit into these ideas about the Trinity?
4. Invite each family member to design a new symbol for the Trinity and draw it at the bottom of the worksheet, or work as a group to design one. What is the meaning of your symbol? Consider showing your symbols to your priest, pastor, or minister.
5. Pray aloud:

Holy God, Three-in-One, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, you are a mystery to us. We may feel your presence and hear your voice, but we know we will never understand you fully in this life. Thank you for showing us your love each and every day. Inspire us to extend your love to others. Amen.

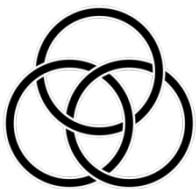
The Trinity



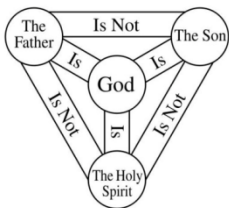
The equilateral triangle was one of the first symbols of the Trinity. The three persons of the Trinity—Father, Son, Holy Spirit—are equal and connected to each other, but they are not the same. Sometimes a circle is added around the triangle to represent how God encompasses the Trinity.



This symbol is called a triquetra. It has three separate points that are made using one continuous line. There are three parts to this figure and are all connected through loops that cross over each other. This shows that the three persons of the Trinity have unique characteristics, but that they exist as one God.



This symbol is called the Borromean Rings. It contains three rings that are connected with each other. There are three separate rings. They share a unique overlapping space between each other, as well as a space shared among all three. This shows that the three persons of the Trinity cannot be separated from unity in God.



This symbol is called the Shield of the Trinity. It shows how Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are related, as described in the Nicene Creed. ([The Nicene Creed](#)). All are God, but all are not the same. God is the Father. God is the Son. And God is the Holy Spirit.

Design Your Own Trinity Symbol: