

# INVITATION TO FALL 2021 WEBINAR SERIES ON 'BAPTISM IN TIMES OF CHANGE'

[churchesintimesofchange.org](https://churchesintimesofchange.org)

In the Nordic region, the situation for the churches is quite comparable theologically, historically, and sociologically. This calls for common reflection and increased ecumenical cooperation between the Nordic folk churches. The project "Baptism in times of change" is part of the joint Nordic initiative *Churches in Times of Change* (CITC) which focuses on changes in ecclesial practice and theology in the Nordic region.



## WHY BAPTISM?

Due to falling numbers, much attention has been given to baptism in recent years. The pilot project is a meta-study, aiming at gathering and analyzing existing material and experiences. In this way, the pilot project facilitates joint reflection and aims to develop recommendations by researchers, church leaders, and practitioners.

## HOW TO ENGAGE?

In spring 2021 we conducted a series of 5 webinars on main areas of the current Nordic discussion: Statistics, empirical and qualitative research on baptism, rituals and practice, communication and campaigns, and theological development. Attendance was high and a total of 320 participants from all Nordic countries participated and shared their insights in one or more webinars. Recordings of these webinars can be seen at [churchesintimesofchange.org](https://churchesintimesofchange.org). We are now inviting for a new series of 4 webinars covering baptism after corona, religious pluralism, drop-in baptism, and eco-theology.

## REGISTRATION

Please use the following link to register for webinars: <https://forms.gle/GPa15VYx9jAf2bHAA>

## WEBINAR 6: BAPTISM AFTER CORONA

**Theme:** Baptism after corona

**Date:** Webinar 6: Tuesday 7th September 1300-1500 CET

**Contributors:**

- Josephine Ganebo Skantz, (SE, Svenska Kyrkan)
- Bjarke Mortensen, (DK, Folkekirkens Videns- og Uddannelsescenter)
- Berit Weigand Berg (DK, Kirkefondet)



**Introductory text:** The corona pandemic has led to a substantial drop in the number of infant baptisms. Whether those not baptized under corona will be baptized later or remain unbaptized, is not known. What should the strategy of the churches regarding baptism be in the aftermath of corona? Is a return to a pre-corona situation possible, or should churches think differently regarding their practices and self-understandings? And which lasting consequences will corona have for baptism in the Nordic folk churches? What are our experiences with postponing baptism?

## WEBINAR 7: BAPTISM AND RELIGIOUS PLURALISM

**Theme:** Baptism and religious pluralism

**Date:** Thursday 23rd September 1300-1500 CET

**Contributors:**

- Sunniva Gylver (NO, Den Norske Kirke)
- Ane Kirstine Brandt (DK, Folkekirke og Religionsmøde)
- Kati Tervo-Niemelä (FI, University of Eastern Finland)



**Introductory text:** The Nordic folk finds themselves in an increasingly pluralistic situation regarding religion and world views. This represents a changed context for the practice and understanding of baptism. While baptism in earlier times was practiced in a society where almost everyone were baptized, baptism today is one option among many. The reality of interreligious families, where family members do not share a common religious affiliation, represents a particular challenge. This situation challenges the churches' practices and interpretations of baptism in a profound way.

## WEBINAR 8: PRACTICING BAPTISM IN A NEW TIME: THE CASE OF DROP-IN BAPTISM

**Theme:** Practicing baptism in a new time:

The case of drop-in baptism

**Date:** Tuesday 12th October 1300-1500 CET

**Contributors:**

- Stein Ellinggard (NO, Den Norske Kirke)
- Rene Høeg, (DK, pastor, Folkekirken)
- Jussi Laine (FIN, Tampere Parish Union)
- Ulla Siirto (FIN, Advisor, multicultural and immigration work, Ev.Luth Church of Finland, Deacon, D.Soc.Sc.)



**Introductory text:** In the last years, the Nordic folk churches has developed new practices rela-ted to baptism. This applies to the setting and context baptism is practiced, as well the liturgical performance. Among these new practices is the practice of drop-in-baptisms, which has become quite popular in several of the Nordic countries. In this webinar we will focus on experiences and research related to drop-in baptism, and discuss dilemmas and challenges that arises from this practice, including the educational aspect: How can we secure that baptism is prepared or followed up by sufficient instruction in the Christian faith?

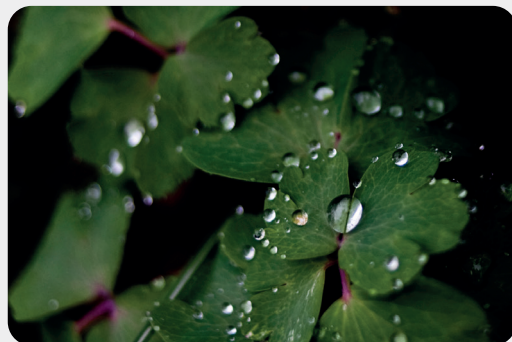
## WEBINAR 9: BAPTISM AND ECO-THEOLOGY

**Title:** Baptism and eco-theology

**Date:** Wednesday 24th November 1300-1500 CET

**Contributors:**

- Sigríður Guðmarsdóttir (IS, Haskoli Islands)
- Lovisa Mienna Sjöberg (NO, Sámi University of Applied Sciences)
- And others



**Introductory text:** By the use water in the sacrament of baptism, we are linked to nature as the creation of God. This symbolic element connects the theology and practice of baptism to one of the most urgent issues for church and society today, namely the integrity of the natural world. In this webinar we ask how baptismal theology and practice might contribute to the development of an eco-theology, and vice versa: how a renewed eco-theological consciousness might contribute to the understanding of baptism. In particular, we ask how the experiences of indigenous people might contribute to this.