

# Annotated Bibliography: Baptism in Times of Change in the Nordic Region 2000-2020

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*The following is an annotated bibliography for statistics, discussions, and reports on baptism in the Nordic Lutheran folk churches in the period from 2000 to 2020. A short abstract is provided for each entry and an evaluation in italics. For more information on the project on baptism and downloadable data files, please visit the homepage [www.churchesintimesofchange.org](http://www.churchesintimesofchange.org)*

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## 1. Statistics

### 1.1 Denmark

Danish Ministry of Ecclesial Affairs  
2020 [Statistics of baptism](#)

Website of the ministry of ecclesial affairs, stating the statistics for baptisms in Denmark from 1990-2019.

Danmarks Statistik (National Bureau of Statistics)  
2020 [Statistics of baptism](#)

Official statistics gives overview of the populations' relation to the ELCD and contains information on baptism, confirmation and funerals. The statistics starts from 1974 and except the period from 2003-2006 continues to 2019.

### 1.2 Finland

Soumen Ev. Lut. Kirkko/ Ev. Luth. Kyrkan i Finland  
2008 [Tilastollinen vuosikirja/Statistisk årsbok](#)

Church statistics which include for example statistics about amount of baptised children in each parish in Finland, covering the years, covering the years from 2008 until 2016

Soumen Ev. Lut. Kirkko/ Ev. Luth. Kyrkan i Finland  
2020 [Kirkon tilastot/kyrkans statistik](#)  
Church statistics covering the most recent year.

### 1.3 Iceland

A. Björnsdóttir, Steinnun  
2020 *Statistics on baptism as a percentage of born infants 2000 – 2019*

The statistics show a decline in number of baptism in the ELCI in relation to newborns in Iceland from 89% in 2000 to 48% in 2019.

### 1.4 Norway

National Church Council - Church of Norway  
2019 [Statistics on baptism](#) – Church of Norway, Kirkerådet,

The annual report of the Church of Norway from the year 2018 includes (at p 18-20) statistical information about baptisms. In 2018 the number of baptized corresponds to 51,9 % of all born in Norway. This percentage has fallen from 85 in 2005. The percentage of children born by church members was 75. The decline in the percentage of all newborn is partly explained by the growth in the number of immigrants to Norway. The percentages show regional variations: The diocese of Oslo is at the bottom both when it comes to

percentage of baptized in relation to all newborn (30,6 %) and to newborn by members (63,1).

*The statistics is a solid basis for understanding the role of infant baptism as a popular rite in Norwegian society. Information about the use of infant baptism by the church members, gives an indication of the loyalty of the members to the church. A weakness of the material is that it counts baptisms of all age groups and compares them to the number of newborn. As the number of youth and adult baptism are increasing, this represents a certain misinformation.*

## 1.5 Sweden

Svenska Kyrkan, Dept. for Analysis and Research

2012 "Tid och plats för dopet (Time and Place for Baptism)", *Nyckeln till Svenska kyrkan* p. 76-84, Ineko/Svenska kyrkan, Uppsala

In the article, the department of analysis and research at the Central Church Office have gathered data concerning, the time and place for baptism. The results indicate that the most popular day for baptism service to take place is Saturday in all but two of the dioceses (Göteborg and Lund). However, the discrepancy in numbers differ depending on geographical region and the authors argue if such a trend is consistent with whether the custom of attending service, particularly the main service on Sunday, is strong or weak in the region. The most common time during the year for a baptism to take place is in October. May and October are most common in larger cities, with the summer months being preferred in areas with a high percentage of vacationers and summer visitors. The tendency for city dwellers to have the baptism in rural areas can also be explained with a high number of individuals moving to the city yet choosing to baptize in the region they were born (and possibly baptized themselves).

*It is interesting to have answers to where and when a baptism takes place, especially for comparative purposes within the project. This is especially relevant concerning which day of the week the service is held, since the weekday chosen indicates whether the baptism service is included in the main Sunday service or held separately. Much of the data is difficult to establish, however—noted several times in the text—which make them difficult to assess, as well as the arguments based on such data.*

Svenska Kyrkans statistikdatabas

2020 [Dopet \(The Baptism\)](#)

This website contains general information and statistics on baptism. The baptism makes up an important issue for the future in the Church of Sweden. The numbers of baptisms are decreasing each year; today about two thirds of the children of members in the Church of Sweden are being baptized. However, baptism as custom and tradition varies throughout the country. In some regions, the number of baptism is increasing whereas in other parts of the country the numbers are stable, in spite of large demographic changes. The custom of baptism is still important, and has a strong standing in the dioceses of Karlstad, Skara and Växjö. Here, three fourths, or 75 % of the children of members in the Church of Sweden, are baptized. Baptism as custom has the weakest standing in the dioceses of Stockholm, Uppsala, Strängnäs and Gothenburg. The numbers of births are increasing, nationally, at the

same time the numbers of baptisms are decreasing. This fact marks a shift historically, where earlier generations of children born were similar in number as children baptized. In 2017, almost 49 000 baptisms took place, which means about 50 % of the children born that year.

*All the statistical information necessary for evaluation and comparative analysis.*

Svenska Kyrkans statistikdatabas

2020 [Svenska kyrkans statistikdatabas \(Database of statistics, Church of Sweden\)](#)

The main website for various kinds of statistical information regarding the Church of Sweden, therefore it is also possible to search for statistics concerning baptism nationally, regionally per diocese or locally per parish. Furthermore, it is possible to get access to information concerning visits and number of guests at baptisms.

*This website contains all the necessary material regarding the Church of Sweden in order to make a comparative analysis of the statistics on baptism in the Nordic region.*

Diocese of Lund

2016 *Förstudie av dopstatistik (concerning statistics), Lund*

Concerns mainly numbers from the central church office applied to the diocese of Lund.

## 2. Practice

### 2.1 Denmark

Folkekirke og Religionsmøde

2016 [Guideline for baptism of asylumseekers](#), Fyens Stift, Odense

Official guidelines for baptism of asylum seekers from Muslim background. Briefly discusses ethics, registration, preparation for baptism, and the role of the local congregation in baptism of asylum seekers.

Frøkjær-Jensen, Nikolaj

2016 ["Dåb til dobbelt religiøs identitet"](#), *Kritisk forum for Praktisk Teologi*, vol. 145/2016, p.3-11, Anis, Frederiksberg

According to Danish law one automatically loses membership of the ELCD if becoming member of another faith community. The legislation does not take into account the phenomenon of double religious belonging and identity. As an example, the author retells an encounter with a Christian mother and Asa believing father who wants their child baptized as well as becoming an Asa member.

Brandt, Ane Kristine

2017 *Folkekirke og Religionsmøde - rapport om tværkulturelle ritualer*, F&R, Frederiksberg

The report maps and discusses the nature of liturgy and rituals in an interfaith setting, including considerations for designing an interfaith wedding and funeral - but not an interfaith baptism.

Dietz, Ida og Christina Sønderkov Iversen

2018

[Børn i kirken. Rapport om børnefamiliers brug af folkekirken og forhold til kirke og kristendom i København og på Frederiksberg.](#), Stiftsudvalget Børn i kirken, Københavns Stift og Frederiksberg Provsti, Copenhagen

Empirical study and report on parents use of churches and relationship to religious life in Copenhagen in 2017. Demographic profile of parents, view on organized religion, view on baptism, participation in activities in churches, religious practice. Main questions answered in the report is: a) what motivates parents with children in participation in activities in churches in Copenhagen; b) what is the effect of 'babysalmesang' and other initiatives aimed at very young children and their parents; c) what role does the parents view on religious ritual and practice play; d) how do staff and pastors look at the content of children's activities? The report segments parents in five groups according to their key motivation: 1) church and Christianity as central; 2) church as place of good values; 3) social aspects; 4) activities and music in focus; 5) meal, price and informal participation. Results show that high education, membership of church, and to a slightly lesser degree baptism predicts participation in churches children's activities. The most popular activity is musical activities with infants, secondly children's services, thirdly family service during week. Furthermore, the social aspect and the quality of communication to children on Christianity is rated high. In contrast, personal knowledge of pastor or staff does not play any role for participation. Basic introduction to Christianity and liturgy is also rated highly. Most respondents did not show any high commitment prior to becoming parents, but parenthood has made them reflect which values they want to pass on to their children. Participation as a family is therefore critical. Concerning baptism, the report states following findings; a) not being baptized is not necessarily distancing oneself from the church; b) 90% of parents participating in children's services have baptized their children but only 61% in the musical activities for children in churches; c) baptism is viewed as important family tradition and entrance to fellowship; d) baptism is viewed as preliminary and to be negotiated.

*The report is valuable with its focus on qualitative interviews and empirically grounded data. There is no reflection or recommendations as to how to attract others than highly educated members of the church or on the intercultural aspect of society in Copenhagen where approximately 25% are migrants - refugees but also professionals - or descendants.*

Enggaard, Nete Helene & Rasmus Nøjgaard

2018

"Gudstjenesteliv i Københavns Stift", *Tradition og fornyelse*, Eksistensen, Frederiksberg

The book documents changes in service since change of liturgy in 1992, focusing on the period 2013-2016. Especially baptism is in focus, and is mainly empirical with outlook to more systematic and practical aspects of theology. In the study on Copenhagen, Enggaard notes that more than half of the respondents answer that they change the liturgy. The changes relate to the initial question 'has the child been baptized before?' and to wording of the exhortation to the godparents after the baptism. Majority of churches offer baptisms on Saturdays, and some churches have more than 40 Saturdays a year with baptisms. Three empirical studies from Copenhagen, Frederiksberg and Elsinore are presented in three

chapters, and followed by two sociological chapters (individualization and religion in the market), while the remaining chapters focus on liturgy, music, prayer, sermons and sacraments. Especially the Elsinore study is interesting when discussing baptism, as the study concerns parents to baptized children. The study documents changes in liturgy according to whether baptism takes place Saturday (family occasion) or Sunday (situated in the traditional service). In the study on Elsinore, Enggaard notes that parents seeking baptism for their children seems to be motivated by traditionalism and tradition. 45% places baptism at the place of the credo, and 25% after communion. 80% uses the full wording of the ritual and 30% does not use the Lords prayer for communion if there is baptism, meaning that the Lords prayer becomes the prayer of the baptized. 25% has between 20 and 40 dedicated baptismal services through the year. Ulla Morre Bidstrup focus on baptism as a sacrament as well as a casual ritual, that is, a ritual with a special reference in life and occasion. Baptism takes place in the tension between church, proclamation, and lived life, family and situation. According to Bidstrup, contemporary baptism tends to favor casual ritual over sacrament, and this is a challenge to the evangelical Lutheran understanding of baptism as passive, unconditioned, and communal.

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Haugaard Nielsen, Carsten & Karsten Høgild & Anja Stoklund & Esben Thusgård & Marie Ørgaard  
2016 *Giver det mening? Samtaler om dåb i en tid i forandring*

The report focuses on Aarhus, the second largest city in Denmark, and developments in baptismal practice and theology. From 2004 to 2014, the number has fallen from 78,3% to 67,3% among ethnic Danish members of the national Lutheran Church in Aarhus. The report point to one fundamental aspect, namely the modern need to feel authentic in one's choice for baptism. Declining numbers of baptism is seen in relation to this increased need to feel authentic - baptism can not simply be inherited but must be personal and meaningful. In Aarhus rates of baptism is lowest in most urbanized areas and among the more well educated - there is, in other words, a secularization factor.

Engholm, Birgitte & Rene Høeg  
2016 *Drop-in-dåb, Eksistensen, Frederiksberg*

On the basis of several years practice with drop-in-baptisms, the anthology asks 'why do we have to frame baptism differently today?', and presents a manual for 'drop-in-baptisms'. The ritual for drop-in-baptism is unchanged from the 1912 ritual, but the setting and framing is different. Individualization of religious identity and autonomy in relation to tradition and family have meant that an increasing number of adults want to be baptized as a consequence of their wish to become members of the church. The traditional Sunday service and baptism became a hindrance for this group of potential members, and thus the idea of a drop-in-baptism emerged. The actual planning of drop-in-baptisms started in 2016 with a Swedish concept as point of departure, and a contextualized version for baptism of adults was planned. In the years 2017-2019 som 200 persons were baptized at Vesterbro Provsti and 1.000 persons nationally. Catechism should take place in connection to baptism, but as large majority of candidates have finished Danish public school it is taken for granted

that they have been introduced to Christian tradition and bible thorough schooling. Authors argue that they have catered to a need among contemporary Danes, and that they have exercised their duty as 'folk church', a church for the whole people.

*Questions about catechism and whether drop-inn-baptism is a pragmatic and 'market-driven' form of Christianity is touched upon but not critically examined. Drop-inn-baptism is still a very novel thing in Danish context, and authors might do right in restricting themselves from judging the outcome of the practice yet. There are chapters in the book touching upon the theological significance of baptism (Luther and CA), and discussing the change in contemporary Danish Christianity from a 'religion of salvation' to a 'religion of blessing', and in relation to baptism from infant baptism viewed as a cleansing from sin to adult baptism viewed as incorporation in a fellowship. In forms of Christianity practicing believers baptism, careful instruction forego baptism. What is the reason this should not happen in case of Danes seeking 'drop-inn-baptism'?*

Hausgaard Nielsen, Carsten & Karsten Høgild & Anja Stoklund & Esben Thusgård & Marie Ørgaard  
2016 *Giver det mening? Samtaler om dåb i en tid i forandring*, Rapport fra dåbsudvalget i Aarhus, Aarhus Stift

The report focus on Aarhus, the second largest city in Denmark, and developments in baptismal practice and theology. From 2004 to 2014, the number has fallen from 78,3% to 67,3% among ethnic Danish members of the national lutheran in Aarhus. The report point to one fundamental aspect, namely the modern need to feel authentic in one's choice for baptism. Declining numbers of baptism is seen in relation to this increased need to feel authentic - baptism can not simply be inherited but must be personal and meaningful. In Aarhus rates of baptism is lowest in most urbanized areas and among the more well educated - there is, in other words, a secularization factor.

Iversen, Christina Sønderskov  
2016 *Børn i Kirken*, Københavns Stift, København

The report is broader than the question of baptism, and analyzes parents motivation and use of churches in Copenhagen area. On the basis of interviews with 411 persons, the report shows that 77% opts for baptism but 22% does not. The motivation for baptism is a) tradition; b) faith; c) community

Iversen, Hans Raun & Jørgen Demant & Birgitte Thyssen  
2008 *Dåbsmanual – opskrifter til arbejdet med dåb og dåbsoplæring i folkekirken*, TPC, Copenhagen

The publication is part of a national campaign on baptism. The publication aims to qualify liturgy, preparation of baptism with candidate and/or parents, and follow up activities in local parishes. The publication points out how different from other aspects of modern life church is. Relation building with parents and children is in focus, and the last part of the material reflects on baptism of young adults and adults including presentation of learning materials, and instruction of parents to young adults choosing baptism.

Munksgaard Davids, Iben & Martin Rønkilde  
2018 [Det, der sker i dåben, går os trykke. Dåbspraksis i Haderslev Stift. En interviewundersøgelse blandt præster og menigheder.](#), Haderslev Stift, Haderslev

The report sums up findings from a 2017 qualitative research project in Haderslev Diocese in Southern Jutland. The first part of the report concentrates on to what degree the pastors follow the official ritual or what they modify and change. The official liturgy is followed to a high degree with the speech to the Godparents as an exception. The Danish formulation is hardly understandable for modern day speakers, and many substitute the speech with their own wording. The report mentions that contact and relation building with the family before infant baptism is viewed as all but mandatory by the pastors. The conversation with the family is used to explain and dialogue about the meaning of baptism, the ritual itself, the family and activities in the local parish.

Pedersen, Per Damgaard

2017 [Landsforeningen for Menighedsråd - rapport fra udvalget om dåb og dåbsoplæring](#),  
Menighedsrådsforeningen, Sabro

The webpage of the project lists a number of ideas how to engage as parents or as a local congregation in baptism. Unfortunately, the text of the report of the project has not been located yet.

Sørensen, Jens Rønn

2011 *Vil du døbes på denne tro?*, RPF, Frederiksberg

Book focuses how persons are met by the church when they want baptism, and how the pastor prepares for the pastoral work with baptism. The book offers suggestions on how to meet persons seeking out the church and offers a number of baptismal sermons for inspiration for the pastor. A short paragraph on baptism as a hospital chaplain is included as well as meeting persons from other religious backgrounds in relation to baptism.

Haderslev Stift (Diocese of Haderslev)

2015 *Gudstjenesteliv - med dåben som prisme. Stiftsbog for Haderslev Stift*, Haderslev stift, Haderslev

Fyens Stift (Diocese of Fyen)

2016 [Dåb. Tro & Tradition. Stiftsbog for Fyens Stift](#), Fyens stift, Odense

Annual magazine of the diocese of Fyen, in 2016 focusing on baptism. The magazine contains a number of popular articles describing baptism in Fyen.

Ribe Stift (Diocese of Ribe)

2018 *3 dråber vand. Ribe Stifts Årbog*, Ribe stift, Ribe

## 2.2 Norway

Austnaberg, Hans

2019 "Dåpssamlinger i Den norske kyrkja. [Consultations with parents before baptism in the Church of Norway]", *Tidsskrift for praktisk teologi*, 36/1 p. 51-61

A compulsory conversation between the baptizing pastor and the parents bringing their child to baptism has since the 1960ies been institutionalized in the Church of Norway. In many congregations this conversation before baptism now is held as a consultation with several parents, and this practice is the focus of the article. I limit myself to investigate the consultations from the perspective of the church, i.e. how pastors and catechists organize the consultations. The aim is to explore the understanding of knowledge and learning apparent in the consultations and I use concepts from pedagogical theory: to transmit, to socialize, and to actively take part. The empirical material underlying the article stems from observation of consultations before baptism and qualitative research interviews in six congregations from two dioceses. According to researchers Kåre Fuglseth, Elisabeth Haakedal og Ulla Schmidt transmitting of knowledge, learning as socializing, and learning as actively taking part complement each other and all three approaches are needed. What I find is that although there are traces of learning as socializing and actively taking part in the consultations, the main focus lies on transmitting of knowledge. The article challenges the church workers to engage the parents in a real dialogue, where both the parents bringing their children to baptism and the church workers actively take part.

*Conversations with parents before baptism is an important practice both as preparation for baptism and as the first stage in the program for baptismal education. Research on how pastors understand this event, and what is communicated, is important in order to understand interaction between church employees and parents related to baptism.*

Lerheim, Birgitte

2017 "Omsorg, g ave og n ade?: ei dr fting av Den norske kyrkja sin kommunikasjon til fadrar ved d ap. [Care, gift and grace? A discussion of the communication of the Church of Norway with godparents in connection with baptism]", *Skapelsesn ade: festskrift til Svein Aage Christoffersen*, Novus forlag, Oslo

The article describes the official understanding in the church of the role of godparent and compares this understanding to how respondents in a survey understand this role. While the church primarily understands this task as a task in the religious education of the baptized child, the informants seem to underline the care aspect with being godparents. The author challenges the church to include aspects of ordinary human life in its understanding of baptism and baptismal practices.

*The article is an attempt to interpret baptism and communication around baptism in the context of Nordic creation theology.*

Kleiven, Tormod

2016 "D pssamtalen. Refleksjonssted over omsorgen for barnet. [The conversation preparing for baptism. A place to reflect on care of the child]", *Beskytt  yeblikket mitt. Kirkens og foreldrenes omsorg for de minste barna. [Protect my moment. The Church's and parents' care for the smallest children]*, p. 49-67

The anthology Protect My Moment is one outcome of a project initiated and financed by the Norwegian Lutheran Church. All articles in this anthology focus on different perspectives of caring for the child in the context of the Church. One of these articles explicitly discusses the

perspective of care as emphasized in the liturgy and practice of baptism in the Norwegian Church (Sjur Isaksen).

The project aimed to develop a tool in the conversation between a representative from the Church and the parents preparing for their child's baptism. The article focuses on this preparatory conversation by exploring what happens when care of the child is the focus. It presents empirical material based on qualitative research interviews with the parents and with the Church representatives (pastors) about these preparatory conversations six months after the baptism. The pastors used the above-mentioned tool in this conversation, emphasizing care of the child as the central element. The questions opened up for reflection on the parents' life stories of their own upbringing with regard to dimensions of care, and in what ways these stories might influence their understanding and practice of childcare. The article discusses the outcome of this approach in the context of theory about power, memories and reconciliation. One important finding was the parents' surprise at the focus on care of the child in this context, but at the same time, they describe it as an unequivocally positive experience. They perceived this as an invitation to talk about essential, but also vulnerable issues. It seemed to open up for an understanding of the Church as a relevant dialogue partner about core issues in their lives.

*The study presents a diaconal perspective on baptism and baptismal upbringing. As such, it links what happens in baptism to the ordinary life of people, not just limiting it to a "religious" event in a restricted sense. What happens in baptism is related to all aspects of life, including the care of the parents for their child.*

Bispemøtet [Bishops, Conference, Church of Norway]

2016

[Dåp av asylsøkere – en veiledning \[Baptism of asylum seekers – a guide from the bishops\]](#), Bispemøtet (BM 14/16), Oslo

The background for the guide is that many congregations have been approached by asylum seekers asking to be baptized. The guide mainly focuses on converts from other religions to Christianity. The bishops state that the same criteria for conducting baptism should be applied when baptizing asylum seekers as in other baptisms of adults. This includes necessary preparations before baptism, including instruction in the content of Christian faith. As baptism might be used as an argument for obtaining asylum, it is especially important to clarify the motivation for seeking baptism in such cases. Even if the right to convert from one religion to another is secured in the international declaration on human rights, there is a risk of persecution for the convert if returned to the home country. The pastor needs to discuss this risk with the baptismal candidate, as there is no guarantee for a convert to be given asylum in Norway. When minors ask for baptism without having consent from their parents, baptism should not be conducted before the age of 15. The guide underscores the responsibility of the congregation for the asylum seekers. The guide also include advice in practical matters.

*The guide shows a new role for baptism in the folk church – not only restricted to baptism of children of church members. As the basic rite of initiation in the Christian church, baptism in this context becomes the point of conversion for people with other religious backgrounds. The fact that baptism might be used as an argument in an ongoing asylum application process, gives baptism a potentially legal and political role that might be controversial.*

Church of Norway Ressursbank

2019

[Gode erfaringar med drop-in-dåp \[good experineces with drop-in-baptism\]](#)

The documents include experiences from congregations that has practised drop-in-baptisms.

*Drop-in-baptisms has become an important practice in the Church of Norway the last years.*

Isaksen, Sjur  
2015

[Fokus: Dåp. Et samtalehefte om menighetens dåpsarbeid \[Focus Baptism: A booklet for conversation about the congregation's baptismal work\]](#), IKO-forlaget, Oslo

This booklet is meant as a basis for conversations in congregations about the first encounter with parents in connection with baptism. It asks how contact can be established in a good way and how the church can make this contact a good experience for parents and families. It also asks how the baptismal service might be a good experience.

*The booklet is an example of the awareness of making baptism relevant and attractive for potential baptismal parents.*

Andersen, Rolf Simeon and Hans Arne Akerø (ed.)  
2002

*Himmelgaven: kirkens møte med mennesker ved dåp. [The heavenly gift. The church's encounter with people in connection with baptism]*, Den norske kirkes presteforening, Oslo

This is an anthology that covers various aspects of the encounter between the church and people who consider baptism for themselves or for their child. It covers especially conversations between pastors and parents.

*The book was published before the educational reform and does thus not fully reflect the present situation in the Church of Norway, even if much is still relevant.*

## 2.3 Sweden

Diocese of Lund

2006-15 *Källa till liv (pastoral aspects)*

No written information available.

www.dropindop.se

2020 [drop-in baptisms](#)

Drop-in baptisms started in the diocese of Västerås but exists in every diocese (but not in every parish) in the Church of Sweden. For information on how it can be organized, there is a website from the parish (pastorat) of Umeå. The practice of baptismal trees exists in many parishes and has become a popular feature in many churches, as a way to follow up on and commemorate baptisms that have taken place in the parish. Different objects are places in the tree, such as small porcelain angels or glass leaves, one for each baptised child.

*Comparison between Nordic churches of how this practice is performed in the church setting.*

### 3. Liturgy

#### 3.1 Denmark

Folkekirken (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Denmark)

2020 [Sådan foregår dåb i folkekirken](#)

Webpage explaining how baptism takes place in ELCD and a check-list for preparation of the baptism. The webpage also contains number of short articles on the theological significance of baptism, the symbols of baptism, and the history of baptism.

Davidson, Mads, Arne Mårup og Kjeld Slot Nielsen

2018 [Dåbstaler til Trinitatis Anden Tekstrække](#), Eksistensen, Frederiksberg

The book falls in two parts: First, a historical and systematic and statistical and liturgical view on the development of baptismal theology and -practice in the Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church, and secondly 27 sermons preached at baptismal services. The sermons have been prepared with special reference to 'life themes' and is the outcome of a common study and writing process, and covers texts used during the second half of the ecclesial calendar (trinitatis). In the historical and systematic section, the author Anders-Christian Jacobsen points out how baptism has developed from a question about salvation of the individual to a quest for security and belonging. In classical Lutheran theology, baptism signifies the death and resurrection of Christ which the individual now becomes part of. The original sin of the infant is removed by baptism. This theological understanding has to a large degree been replaced by a theology underscoring baptisms as God's unconditional acceptance and promise of security to the newborn infant, the author argues.

Due, Elmo

2009 *Livsmød. Fjorten dåbstaler*, Aros, Frederiksberg

Sermons for baptism - book out of print and no summary possible.

Harbsmeier, Eberhard & Christian Højlund & Søren Lodberg Hvas & Eva Meile

2002/2017 *For festens skyld. En bog om de kirkelige handlinger*, Anis, Frederiksberg

The book focus broadly on rituals in Folkekirken and includes a chapter on the theology of the rituals and one on baptism, both which are relevant for the baptism in times of change project. The chapter on baptism contains a number of short speeches to parents, motivating the reading from 1 Peter in relation to baptism. In the chapter on theological reflection on rituals, the author notes that while sermons and homeletics have attracted great attention, only minor focus has been on baptism and other rituals. Often rituals are not even spoken of as church services but as casuals, and the level of preparation and energy is low in these events. The fellowship consists not of the congregation but of the family and friends of the persons in focus in baptism. Countering this trend, the author proposes to place all baptisms during the Sunday service, insisting on the nature of the ritual as a sacrament and therefore in connection with the preaching of the gospel and the liturgy of the fellowship.

Bishops' 2002 commission on baptism

2005 [Beretning fra den af biskopperne nedsatte arbejdsgruppe om dåb](#)

In 2002 the Danish bishops decided to establish a commission to shed light on the nexus between ecclesial law and theological reflection on baptism. The text is first part of three reports from the commission. The commission takes as historical point of departure the CA and describes how baptismal ecclesial law established the close link between church

membership, national identity and societal rights. In other words, it was not possible to be a citizen without being baptized in the evangelical Lutheran church of Denmark. The report is to a large degree historical but also gives some input to current discussions: Discussions about the age of a child to decide for itself for baptism and the relation between baptism and membership are also historical discussions. The tradition with godparents should be supported and could be expanded to include instruction in Christian faith and life.

Bishops' 2002 commission on baptism

2007

[Beretning fra den af biskopperne nedsatte arbejdsgruppe om dåb – del 3](#)

This part of the report from the bishops' commission from 2002 focus on the ecclesial law and presents a short text as legal basis for baptism. The reason for this somewhat strange way of proceeding is that folkekirken is guided by national law, not a synod or the bishops as such. The text also stipulates the criteria for membership and the relation between baptism and membership. It is worth noting that the minimum age for children wishing to be baptised irrespecible of their parents views is 12 years. However, if parents or parental guards directly opposes baptism, the pastor is not free to baptize the child. If the child is 15 years old, the wish of the child carries greater weight than that of the parents or parental guards.

Bishops' 2002 commission on baptism

2010

[Beretning fra den af biskopperne nedsatte arbejdsgruppe om dåbsoplæring](#)

This part of the report from the bishops' commission from 2002 focus on instruction and baptism. The historical reason was a new practice, introducing Christian instruction for 'mini-konfirmander' aged 10-11 years old. The report deliberates different didactic approaches to Christian instruction and the content of the instruction.

Bishops 2016 Commission on Liturgy

2019

[Dåb og nadver. Om sakramenterne i Den danske Folkekirke](#). Fyens Stift, Odense

The report from the Danish bishops workgroup on baptism, headed by the bishop of Fyen Tine Lindhardt which started in 2016 and delivered their report in 2019. The workgroup was one of three commissioned by the bishops, the other two covering communion and authorization. The areas of problems discussed in the report includes: a) whether baptism is necessary for salvation (theological problem); b) original sin and baptism (anthropological problem); c) the meaning of 'child of God' in the ritual (ritual problem); d) relationship between baptism as ritual and Christian discipleship and life (practical problem). The first part of the report draws the longer historical line from New Testament theology of baptism to reformation and current Danish Lutheran ritual. The current ritual maintains a reminiscence of the exorcism through the question 'do you forsake the devil?' and underscores baptism's character of covenant. There is only one authorized ritual for baptism in ELCD, used irrespectively of what kind of baptism is in focus (infant, adult, drop-in, etc.). On this background, the workgroup recommends that a) variations of the authorized ritual is allowed to reflect whether it is an infant, adult, or convert being baptized; b) a new ritual for baptism outside of the Sunday service, c) larger degree of inclusion of baptismal candidates in authorized ritual.

*The report does not offer a conclusive argument but a number of points to be taken into consideration as new rituals are being formed.*

### 3.3 Iceland

Helgisiðanefnd / Committee on Liturgy

2009

[Prímsigning. Þakkargjörð og fyrirbæn fyrir nýfæddu barni](#)

The introduction chapter to this trial liturgy states that increased number of parents have different religious background. The wish of one parent that the child be baptized can be rejected by the other. The proposal here is a sort of "prímsigning" that is a prayer and blessing, aiming at the possibility of a baptism later, but it is neither a full baptism nor name giving or a child-blessing like e.g. Pentecostal churches have. The pastor should explain carefully what this service means to be certain of the agreement of both parents.

*The Icelandic name for the liturgy is the old word "prímsigning", from latin "prima signatio", which was used e.g., in Viking times when heathen men accepted the sign of the cross, to be able to trade with Christian nations. This is stressed in the Address. The liturgy includes readings, including from Mark 10.13-16, a sign of the cross for the child, a prayer for the child, the Lord's prayer and a blessing.*

Biskupsstofa  
1981

*Handbók íslensku kirkjunnar, p. 107-121, Kirkjuráð*

The chapter on liturgy is divided into four chapters. The first is the liturgy if the baptism is part of the Sunday worship. The second is a separate baptismal service. The third is a liturgy for an emergency baptism (e.g. If a child is very ill) and the fourth is for the ritual when an emergency baptism is declared and confirmed in the congregation.

*The handbook was published in 1981. The liturgy uses a very formal language, including pronouns which are no longer used in Icelandic, outside of the church.*

Biskupsstofa  
2020

[Helgisiðanefnd / Committee on Liturgy](#), Biskupsstofa / The Bishop's Office, department of education

For the annual Youth day in the ELCI the theme was baptism. A liturgy was created using the Messy Church approach. It included various stations, such as music station, a station where cakes are decorated, a station on the apostolic confession, a station where white t-shirts were painted, a station where participants could make their own bowls or fonts for baptism. Another proposal included a play where all participants were invited to participate in enacting a baptism, with the pastor explaining the liturgy and meaning to all present.

*The material can be used for a messy church service or parts of it for a family service where baptism is highlighted.*

Valur Ingólfsson, Kristján

2019

*Skírnin. Tillaga um nýtt og breytt skírnarform./Baptism. A proposal for a new and changed ritual.*

A new form for baptismal liturgy. It has been sent to a handful of pastors to try. So far there is not official evaluation. The language is less antiquated than the present form and sentences are added to explain or place parts of the ritual. It also involves the godparents more than previous ritual.

### 3.4 Norway

Elstad, Hallgeir and Dag Thorkildsen

2017

*"Hvilket kirkesyn gjenspeiler dåpsritualet fra 1889 til i dag? [Which understanding of the church is reflected in baptismal ritual from 1889 until today]", Gudstjeneste à la carte: liturgireformen i Den norske kirke, 121/4, 374-394*

The article gives an account of the development in baptismal liturgy in Norway from the reformation until 2017, but concentrates on the development from the 1889 reform. The article describes various tendencies that has been strengthened and weakened during the

development, as theological emphasis and ideals have changed, especially when it comes to ecclesiology. Regarding the liturgy from 2017, the article points to the increased emphasis that is given to theology of creation.

*The article gives important historical background for the recent developments in baptismal theology, and it shows the interaction between theological ideas and liturgical wording and practices.*

Den Norske Kirke (Church of Norway)

2017 [Ordning for dåp i hovedgudstjeneste. \[The order of baptism when placed in the principal service\]](#)

Dokka, Trond Skard

2015 Dåpsliturgien – mellom folkelig lutherdom og liberal pietisme. [The baptismal liturgy – between popular lutheranism and liberal pietism], *Gudstjeneste à la carte: liturgireformen i Den norske kirke*, red. Balsnes, Anne Haugland, Solveig Christensen, Jan Terje Christoffersen and Hallvard Olavson Mosdøl, Verbum, Oslo,

The article gives a critical analysis of the baptismal liturgy in the Church of Norway from 2011. The article analyzes the structure of the liturgy and how it understands the change that baptism represents. It criticizes the liturgy for not taking the dramatic character of baptism serious enough, in theological sense the passing from death to life, from darkness to light etc. This drama parallels the dramatic experience of becoming parents, which also should be reflected in the liturgy.

*The article is part of the discussion that resulted in a revision of the baptismal liturgy in 2017. It still has important perspective on baptismal theology and liturgy.*

### 3.5 Sweden

Alingås Parish

2009 *Alingåsliturgin* (Alingås baptismal liturgy), Diocese of Skara

Baptism liturgy developed by the parish of Alingsås, diocese of Skara, as part of baptism project. Discussed in Hammar 2009 and in Löwegren (ed.) 2013.

*It would be an interesting task as part of the comparative analysis to analyze to what extent extra materials on baptismal liturgy exist outside of the normative handbook in other Nordic churches.*

Diocese of Lund

2006 *Dopen som rit* (baptismal liturgy), Diocese of Lund  
No written information available.

Sjölin Ingerd & Hössjer Sundman, Boel

2018 *Barnkonsekvensanalys av handboken 2018* (concerning consequences for children in relation to the new Service book), Uppsala

This document contains an analysis for the consequence for children regarding the service manual that was accepted by the general synod in 2017. the documents contains several aspects pertaining to children and teenagers, one such aspect is baptism. The material on baptism is largely similar to passages in Dop i förändring, cf. below.

## 4. Communication

### 4.1 Denmark

Folkekirkens Døbshilsen

2010 [Dåbsmanual - opskrifter til arbejdet med dåb og dåbsoplæring i folkekirken](#), Eksistensen, Frederiksberg

Campaign aimed at local pastors and parishes, guiding them through a number of steps concerning communication on baptism, the role of the local church in welcoming parents, infant and adult baptism, liturgies for baptismal services, liturgies for other type of toddlers and childrens services.

Henriksen, Aage

2006 *Dåben er mere end tre håndfulde vand*, Danmarks Kirkelige Mediecenter, Aarhus

No information available

Danmarks Kirkelige Mediecenter (Church Media Center)

2016 [Dåben er mere end et telefonnummer til folkekirken](#), Danmarks Kirkelige Mediecenter, Aarhus

Campaign aimed at local parish pastors and congregations, encouraging them to go through information on baptism, ritual, and relation to parents; resembles 'Dåb i dag' campaign and catalogue of ideas.

Helsingør Stift (Diocese of Helsingør)

2016 [www.daaben.dk](http://www.daaben.dk), Helsingør Domprovsti, Helsingør

Campaign aimed parents before and after choosing baptism. Sponsored by the largest diocese in Denmark in terms of population.

Menighedsrådsforeningen (National organization of parishes)

2017 [Overvejer du barnedåb?](#), Menighedsrådsforeningen, Grundtvigsk Forum, Forlaget Eksistensen, folkekirken.dk, Sabro

Campaign aimed at new parents considering baptism.

Kirkefondet

2018 [Dåb i dag](#)

Campaign aimed at local parish pastors and congregations, encouraging them to go through information on baptism, ritual, and relation to parents.

## 4.2 Finland

Parish Union of Helsinki

2020 [“Pienelle Parasta”](#) (Best for the little one), Helsinki

Website providing materials for families with recently baptized children.

## 4.3 Iceland

The Bishop's Office

2020 [“Skírnarskógur. Introduction of a baptismal forest”](#)

In September 2020 the Bishop of Iceland along with several church members planted the first trees in what will become a forest, one tree for every new baptized member in the country. This forest is at the old bishop's seat Skálholt, but the plan is that churches around the country designate part of their land to a baptismal forest.

ELCI's Educational Department

2020 [T-shirt, sent to every prospective confirmant. Linked to website.](#)

All children born 2007 received a t-shirt with the logo of the ELCI to remind them of upcoming confirmation classes. Linked to this is a website. There, a link to the baptism is found as the t-shirt should remind them of the white baptismal gown, white for grace, long so that they can grow into it and the baptismal gown is linked to the white confirmation robe.

*It is an attempt to increase enthusiasm for confirmation and links it to baptism, to growing as a Christian and being confirmed.*

## 4.4 Norway

Sandvik, Lena Skattum

2016 [Kirken ønsker velkommen til dåp! \[The church welcomes to baptism\]](#), IKO-forlaget, Oslo.

This brochure is meant for distribution among potential baptismal parents. It gives reasons for baptism as well as practical information regarding registration, liturgy etc. It also contains information about the church's educational program.

*This is one and many examples of the efforts of recruitment and information related to baptism.*

National Church Council - Church of Norway

2020 [Filmer \[Videos\]](#)

The web page contains links to 29 short videos or variations of videos on baptism. 9 videos are for Instagram, 20 are for webpages and Facebook. The videos are used in national campaigns and are available for use by local congregation. Some videos gives a presentation of some aspect of baptism from the point of view of a presenter. Some videos presents couples that have chosen baptism and their reasons for doing so. The videos also present discussion between parents whether to baptize or not, thus pointing to dilemmas that parents face. There are also videos about a person that chose to be baptized as an adult.

*The videos are important samples of how the Church of Norway communicates baptism to a broad audience. It thus gives insight in how the church understands its audience, and what it wants to communicate in such a situation.*

2021 [Dåp - kommunikasjon \[Baptism - communication\]](#)

This web page contains links to various resources for communicating about baptism, especially to parents. It also contains links to material regarding administrative and digital aspects.

*This documents the emphasis that has been put on communicating about baptism in the Church of Norway the last years.*

## 4.5 Sweden

Diocese of Lund

2020 [Dopsajten](#), Lunds stift, Lund

Website in Swedish from the diocese of Lund, with many different angels on baptism, there are tabs on baptismal theology, how to book baptism, how to choose hymns, etc.)

*This website contains practical issues as well as theological perspectives.*

Diocese of Härnösand

2020 [Dop](#), Härnösand Stift

The aims of the campaign focus on how to increase the number of baptism in the parishes of the diocese. The campaign starts at the level of the diocese, in order to contribute to continued work in the different parishes. The workshop held at the diocese contains a lecture on the theological aspects and history of baptism.

*Interesting to compare to what extent different regional projects have been described and completed in other Nordic churches, if there are similar challenges and problems that need to be adressed.*

## 5. Education

### 5.1 Denmark

Auken, Margrethe & Erik A. Nielsen

2005 [Dåben](#), Aros, Frederiksberg

Educational material aimed at new parents in their discussion on whether or not to have their child baptised. Questions discussed include: What is expected of parents who baptize their children? What is the meaning of the various parts of the ritual? What is the theological ideas underlying baptism? What are the legal implications of baptism?

*The material discusses in a down-to-earth manner the meaning and theological significance of baptism. The material aims to qualify the understanding of parents and to assist them in their ritual practice.*

Sangild, Bodil

2016 *Ding dong - min lillebror skal døbes*, Rydendahl Forlag

Childrens book on baptism, seen from the perspective of an elder sibling. The literal meaning of the title is 'My younger brothers' baptism'.

## 5.2 Finland

Tytti Issakainen & Helena Lindfors

2003 *Atte ja Anna: Kaste kanta*, Lasten keskus

Book about Atte and Anna who are looking forward to their little brother's baptism, they discuss baptism and symbolism of water in a swimming pool.

## 5.2 Iceland

Karl Sigurbjörnsson & Edda Möller

*Til Guðfeðgina*, Skálholtsútgáfan, útgáfufélag Þjóðkirkjunnar

A brochure for the godparents, discussing the baptism, the role of godparents and how they can play a part in bringing up the child as a Christian. Generally given to godparents at baptism.

Karl Sigurbjörnsson & Edda Möller

2002 *Skírnarkveðja*, Skálholtsútgáfan, útgáfufélag Þjóðkirkjunnar

The booklet contains explanations about baptism, what it is, what various things, such as water, the cross and the white colour signify, as well as prayers and words on the the role of the church in supporting parents in raising the child as a baptized member of the church. It is given to the parents at the baptism.

The Bishop's Office, department of education

2020 [skírn.is](http://skírn.is); [skirn.is](http://skirn.is), Þjóðkirkjan

The website has information on baptism, what it is, how it is conducted, it's history and suggestions for hymns. There is a chapter on the various symbols and traditions related to baptism. It also includes a story from young parents who recently baptized their child.

*The positive effect of the website is that it takes the domain for the word baptism, "skírn", and utilizes both the Icelandic spelling (with í) and a spelling without special characters. This increases the likelihood of people finding this site when looking for information on baptism. The domain transfers to the site of ELCI where baptism is introduced and the introduction*

addresses many sides of baptism. The language is easily understood. It has no interactive side.

### 5.3 Norway

Dokka, Trond Skard

2017 "Teologisk og prinsipielt grunnlag for kirkas dåpsopplæring. [Theological and principled basis for the baptismal education of the church]", *Luthersk Kirketidende*, 152/5, 112-119  
The article discusses the necessary connection between baptism and instruction in the Christian faith. In the early church, instruction usually preceded baptism. When infant baptism became the usual practice, instruction had to happen afterwards. An important point in the article is that baptism is valid for one's whole life, and that nothing can be added to baptism. Christian education does therefore not add anything, but rather makes it possible for the baptized to live his or her life in baptism. Christian education means to put into practice that which is given in baptism.

*This paper was an important contribution to the theological basis of the educational reform in its early phase. It still has important insights, and was therefore republished in 2017.*

Det Norske Kirkeråd (Church Council of Norway)

2017 "[Gratulerer med dåpen \[Congratulations with baptism\]](#)", Kirkerådet, Oslo  
This file contains didactic material for children in the age of 10 about baptism

Den Norske Kirke (Church of Norway)

2010 [Gud gir – vi deler: plan for trosopplæring i Den norske kirke. \[God gives – we share: Plan for Christian Education in the Church of Norway\]](#), Church of Norway

This is the plan for Christian education in the Church of Norway. The plan is a basic document for the educational program that was started in 2004. It covers teaching for children and youth between 0 and 18 years. The program is an attempt to take seriously the obligation to teach the children that are baptized.

*The program for Christian education has been very important in the Church of Norway since 2004. This is the basic document for the program.*

Hauglin, Otto, Håkon Lorentzen and Sverre Dag Mogstad (eds.)

2008 *Kunnskap, opplevelse og tilhørighet. Evaluering av forsøksfasen i Den norske kirkes trosopplæringsreform [Knowledge, experience and belonging: Evaluation of the trial phase of the educational reform of the Church of Norway]*, Fagbokforlaget, Bergen

This is the final report from a project evaluating the initial phase of the educational reform in the Church of Norway. It includes articles on the background for the reform, theological and pedagogical aspects of the reform, as well how the reform was organized.

*The reform has been important for the Church of Norway, and has had effects on various aspect of church life, including baptism.*

Den Norske Kirke (Church of Norway)

2021 [Ressursbanken \[The resource bank\]](#)

This is a web site that contains material and links to material related to the educational reform in the Church of Norway. Some material also relates to baptism.

Menighedsfakultet/Diakonhjemmet Høgskole

2020 [\[Web pages with overview over research on the educational reform\]](#)

These are overviews over research related to the educational reform in the Church of Norway. Most reports are available as pdfs online.

## 5.4 Sweden

Emma Tribell

2012 *Intro: Introduction to Baptism – a small book on Christian faith*, Verbum, Stockholm  
This book, a small soft back, is part of the "intro-" series at Verbum (Christian publisher) about the Christian faith, where this one focuses on baptism.

Svenska Kyrkan (Church of Sweden)

2020 [Development of baptismal education](#)

This issue mainly concerns the local parishes, who are the primary actors in this field as well and the best performers of this task as well. On a general level, it could be noted that each parish are supposed to write a manual—a baptism pastoral—on how the work on baptism at the local level should be done, including in what ways the parish work with baptismal education. Furthermore, the programme on teaching and education initiated at the national level in the Church of Sweden will produce material on different issues of Christian theology and faith, including material about baptism (forthcoming).

Diocese of Lund

2006 *Katekumenat (concerning adult baptisms)*, Lund

No written material available.

Lindén, Gunilla & Axelsson, Birgitta (ed.) and Salmén, Matilda

2012 *Sanna och farmor är på dop (Sanna and grandmother goes to baptism)*, Verbum, Stockholm

*Sanna and grandmother goes to baptism* is a children's book in a booklet format, one of six booklets about services in the church. The booklet is aimed at children ages 3-6, but are also appropriate for children who know how to read. It is one of the books in the series about Sanna, who has a lot of questions and a desire to explore, tell and think about church and faith together with her grandmother. In several parishes, the booklet is distributed to preschoolers who attend baptisms or siblings, in preparation for a little sister or brother's baptism

*It would be fruitful to compare how other churches in the Nordic region discusses baptism and educates about baptism in relation to younger children.*

## 6. Social science and empirical theology

### 6.1 Denmark

Andersen, Peter B. & Peter Lüchau

2011 "Individualisering og aftraditionalisering af danskernes værdier", ed. Gundelach, Hans Reitzels Forlag, Copenhagen

Christensen, Kåre Schelde & Jarl Ørskov Christensen

2016 [\*Kritisk Forum for Praktisk Teologi vol. 145/2016\*](#), Anis, Frederiksberg

Theme of this issue of the journal is 'local theology' and the intersection between baptism, theology of religions, interfaith dialogue, and rituals. A number of interesting articles discuss baptism of children in relation to contemporary traditional Nordic religion (asa-tro), baptism of a child with Hindu parents, and baptism of a couple with both Christian and Muslim background.

Enggaard, Nete Helene

2015 *Højmesse set fra kirkebænken*, Center for Kirkeforskning, Teologisk Fakultet, KU

Also published as part of *Tradition og fornyelse*, ed. Enggaard & Nøjgaard - see below.

Enggaard, Nete Helene

2016 *Højmesse og dåb. En sammenlignende undersøgelse af gudstjenestedeltagernes oplevelse af traditionel og nyere liturgisk praksis ved højmesse og dåb i Helsingør Stift*, Center for Kirkeforskning, Teologisk Fakultet, KU, Copenhagen

Also published as part of *Tradition og fornyelse*, ed. Enggaard & Nøjgaard - see below.

Gundelach, Peter, Hans Raun Iversen, Margit Warburg

2008 *I hjertet af Danmark. Institutioner og mentaliteter*, Hans Reitzels Forlag, Copenhagen

Based on a number of interviews, the book presents a description of the mental structures and institutions forming lived life in Denmark. One of the chapters focus on religion as belief and practice. The chapter presents Denmark as a society historically influenced by Christianity and more recently by secularism. The Danish folk church is described as a 'weak monopoly': Weak because Denmark as a society is secularized to a high degree, and monopoly because the status and givenness of the Lutheran church has never been seriously questioned. Baptism as an entrance into the church is part of what it means to be part of Danish society, namely culturally Christian. Baptism and church membership does not mean that individuals' faith or theological understanding is determined by the faith and theology of the Lutheran church; rather, members feel very able to select for themselves what they find relevant in terms of theology as well as in terms of religious practice. The result is a somewhat paradoxical picture: Religious knowledge and interest is low among the population in general as well as members of the church, but mental structures forming view on family, schooling, work, welfare and civil society is strongly shaped by historical Christianity.

Krogsdal, Iben

2012 *De måske kristne*, Anis, Frederiksberg

The monograph presents qualitative interviews with some 40 adult Danes on meaning and meaninglessness, spirituality, faith, religious practice and religious competence. The main thesis is that contemporary Christianity is ambiguous and more in the form of question than answer. Confronted with the grand theories of individualization and secularization,

contemporary religious life is less traditional and less ritualized according to the life stories shared with the author of the monograph. The author distinguishes between three groups of religiously engaged: the 'background Christians', the 'foreground Christians', and the 'Spirituals'. The background Christians are characterized by a loss of active religious life compared to their upbringing, and explanation of life circumstances and experiences tends to be psychological rather than religious. Common for the background Christians is also a positive but distanced view on religion; religion is for situations of crises. Majority of background Christians are from the younger generation. The foreground Christians look more to Christian faith to explain their experiences, and distance themselves from a destiny-perspective on suffering - life crises and suffering has no religious meaning. Furthermore, there is a generational issue where the older generation (+55) does not couple childhood difficulties and personal psychological and spiritual problems whereas the younger generation see a clear correspondence. The younger generation shows a more individualized and interiorized approach to religious life and experience of life crises, and opts for a psychological explanation. The older generation does not see any correspondence and opts for a more traditional and religious worldview. The younger generation looks for meaning in their experiences, whereas the older generation do not ask the question about meaning to the same degree. In contrast to both the background and the foreground Christians, the spiritual Christians emphasize the experiential side of religion and tends to view their life story as a quest.

Leth-Nissen, Karen Marie & Astrid Krabbe Trolle

2015

*Dåb eller ej? Rapport om småbørnsforældres til- og fravalg af dåb*, Center for Kirkeforskning, Det Teologiske Fakultet, KU, Copenhagen

The report describes findings in a number of interviews with parents concerning baptism. In contrast to earlier findings from the start of 1970's, which argued that parents did feel obliged to baptize their children but not obliged to the content of the baptism, the new report argues that parents feel obliged to make an informed choice about baptism for their children, but that this information is difficult to process for the parents. The material for the report consists of interviews with 25 parents in a diverse parish in Copenhagen - diverse in terms of ethnicity, membership of the ELCD, educationally and economically. The qualitative interviews are supplemented by a more quantitative YouGov pol among 1024 randomly chosen Danes. Among those opting for baptism, baptism is reported as a powerful and meaningful rite de passage connecting the child not only with religion but primarily with its family, history and nation. Among those not opting for baptism, the main reasons given include wanting the child to decide for itself (individualism), and not feeling able to accept the confession of faith as parent. It is not surprising that parents who do not view themselves as religious or are not members of the ELCD do not opt for baptism of their children. But it is significant in the quantitative pol that 31% who are members of the ELCD do not opt for baptism of their own children. The reasons given by this group corresponds to the reasons given for not opting for baptism in general, namely individual choice of the child and critique of religious authority in general. Choosing baptism has become less a result of socialization and more a question of negotiation among modern Danish parents.

Leth-Nissen, Karen Marie & Berit Weigang Berg

2020

[\*Dåb i dag\*](#), Center for Kirkeforskning, Det Teologiske Fakultet, KU, Copenhagen

The report describes findings from a development project based on 'action research' methodology, that is, research focused on answering the question 'what do we do about

this?'. The project focuses on parishes offering specialized activities for parents, flexible baptisms, baptism jubilees, etc., indicating that special attention was given to baptism in these parishes. In more details, eight parishes were selected for intervention, and through qualitative interviews it was demonstrated that parents opting for baptism do so because of tradition, including family traditions, clothing, etc., while parents not opting for baptism do so because of individualism (the child's right to choose for itself) and their own lack of faith in the Christian confession. For both groups, baptism is viewed as something preliminary, to be confirmed or not by the child at a later stage.

Lüchau, Peter  
2012

"Seks teser om danskernes medlemskab af folkekirken", *Fremtidens danske religionsmodel*, Lisbeth Christoffersen, Anis, Frederiksberg

The article investigates motifs for membership among Danes in the Danish folk church. The article argues that membership is a) mainly determined by demographics; b) there is a good fit between post modern spirituality and folk church; c) the strongest factor behind membership is religious engagement; d) strongest push factor for members leaving church is lack of religious engagement; e) that changes in membership is generational. All in all, the article concludes that membership of the folk church is relatively immune to political change as well as initiatives from the church itself. Concerning demographic change - the main factor in changes in membership - the development from 1980 to 2011 shows that membership of ethnic Danes remained exactly the same in absolute numbers but fell in relative numbers with 8%. However, because ethnic minorities grew with more than 250% in the same period, the relative membership fell more in relation to the absolute number of people in Denmark. In the same period - 1980-2011 - the frequency of members seldomly attending church has grown from 70% to 59%, meaning that the marginal members use the church more. However, views on baptism show that while 69% answered that 'baptism is important' in 1990, the number has fallen to 59% in 2008. The author views individualization as explanation for this, that is, the importance of rituals is the meaning you as an individual attach to them.

Lüchau, Peter  
2014

["Indmeldelse og dåb i den danske folkekirke"](#), *Tal om kirken. Undersøgelser af folkekirkens aktivitets- og deltagerstatistik*, Det Teologiske Fakultet, KU, Copenhagen

Membership in ELCD is through baptism which in practice means infant baptism. Numbers of baptisms relative to number of infants have declined since mid 1970s, and whereas the 2007 number was 73% the 2012 number had declined to 66%. There is a correlation between infant baptism, level of education, higher age of mother, and higher church taxes. Thus, in contrast to classical secularization theory where higher education and higher income would lead to higher degree of secularization this is not the case when it comes to infant baptism. There does, however, seem to be a relation between urbanization, young age of mother, and lower levels of infant baptism. These statistical findings modify our understanding of secularization as an elite phenomenon, connected with education and income. Rather than education and income leading to secularization, it seems to have the opposite effect on infant baptism, leading to a higher probability for choosing infant baptism.

Rasmussen, Steen Marquard

2014a *Udvikling i dåbstillene siden 1990*, Landsforeningen af Menighedsråd, Sabro

The report focuses on statistical development in the period 1990-1999 and 2000-2012 broken down on level of dioceses. Overall, there is an accelerating negative development in the two periods. In the latter period the drop in levels of baptism was almost 4 times the drop in levels in the first period. Looking at membership rates for 0-4 years old, there is a correlation between levels of urbanization and lower membership rates, most significant in larger cities where e.g., larger capital area shows a 15,1% negative compared to median (numbers cleaned for migrants and descendants).

Rasmussen, Steen Marquard

2014b *Den relevante folkekirke – et sociologisk grundlag for målsætningsarbejde, aktivitetsstatistik og brugerundersøgelse*, Det Teologiske Fakultet, KU, Copenhagen

This monograph offers a sociological basis for local church development, activities, and goal setting in relation to demographic profile. Fundamental premise is to become and remain relevant the Folkekirke must appeal equally to various segments of population. Part of the monograph therefore carefully introduces segment and life style analysis models on the theoretical basis of sociologist such as Tönnis and Weber as well as Peter Berger. Distinguishing between ideal and real types, Rasmussen argues the Sinus analytical model gives a helpful view into how socio-cultural changes and value changes forms new life patterns and expectations, and how the church might relate to these changing life forms in its attempt to reach out to all parts of population. On the basis of fine-grained micro analysis of socio-cultural plurality, Rasmussen proposes a number of 'religious prime colors', indicating the preferences and plurality of members and non-members of the church in the population as a whole.

*The monographs develop dimensions and indicators for presence of the church in all relevant subcultures, as well as indicators for individuals increased grounding in the Christian tradition and faith. The argument is much broader than baptism but also relevant for baptism in so far as the activities of the church in relation to its members forms the basis for the argument.*

*The basic argument is that for the Folkekirken to become and remain relevant, it must have a double focus: it is not enough to have and maintain a national and local presence, but it must also have and maintain a presence toward all subcultural groups.*

Rigtrup, Diana

2013 *Ritual og mening. En religionsfilosofisk og ritualteoretisk undersøgelse af ritualets betydning i krisesituationer med udgangspunkt i case-studier af Ritual og mening. En religionsfilosofisk og ritualteoretisk undersøgelse af ritualets betydning i krisesituationer med udgangspunkt i case-studier af nøddåb*, Det Teologiske Fakultet, KU, Copenhagen

The thesis focus on religion as a perspective on life with an effect of how life is given meaning and performed, making it possible to live with the uncontrollable and meaninglessness. Religious ritual in times of crises is made sense of as a way through which perspective can be transformed in situations of crises. Rather than focusing on baptism as a ritual of reenactment, the thesis focus on the function of rituals after traumatic experiences as a way of creating systems of meaning and orientation in critical life situations. The main part of the research is 2 semi-structured interviews with 25 couples who have sick children and choose to baptized their child at the university hospital in Copenhagen, Rigshospitalet. The thesis presents the answers from the parents how they cope with the experience of loss of meaning and the role a religious ritual can play in this situation.

Rosen, Ina

2009 *I'm a believer – but I'll be damned if I'm religious. Belief and Religion in the Greater Copenhagen Area*, Lunds Universitet, Lund

The thesis does not focus directly on baptism but baptism does play a role in the interviews concerning the relationship between being 'spiritual', 'believer', and 'religious'. In the interviews, baptism is related to being a 'believer' (a positive category) but not to being 'religious' (a negative category). Religious understandings are seldom well formulated among modern Danes, but interviews gives rise to reflections which draws heavily on religious Christian culture when it comes to ethics, love for one's neighbor, etc.

## 6.2 Finland

Soumen Ev. Luth. Kirkko (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland)

2020 [Four-year-report of the Lutheran Church in Finland](#), Church Research Institute

## 6.2 Iceland

Anna Katrín Guðmundsdóttir

2012 [Skírn og trú? Viðhorf foreldra í námi á hugvísindasviði vorið 2012. \(Baptism and faith? Perspectives of parents \(studying\) in the departement of Humanities, spring 2012\)](#)

The researcher interviewed couples in the department of religion and of philosophy respectively to see if there was a measurable difference in attitude towards baptism. The conclusion from a very small sample is that there is no marked difference.

*Included as there are no MA or PhD thesis written this century on the subject of baptism. The study discusses the alternative to baptism, such as name-giving ceremonies, and the link between faith and baptism, membership in the church and baptism and traditions and baptism. Sample is very small.*

Dagmar Bragadóttir

2011 ["Ég skíri þig í nafni Guðs föður..." Hlutverk og þróun skírnar í íslensku samfélagi \("I baptize you in the name of God, father..." The role and development of baptism in Icelandic community.](#)

A BA thesis in department of Anthropology, looking at the meaning people attach to baptism. Among conclusions is that the baptism has significance for participants both as a religious and a family event and the baptismal event makes the symbols of baptism (e.g. water, candle, dress) holy.

*Included as there are no MA or PhD thesis written this century on the subject of baptism. The study lifts up the question of meaning of baptism.*

Björnsson, B. & Pétursson, P.

1990 "Trúarlíf Íslendinga (The Religious Life of Icelanders)", *Studia Theologica Islandica / Ritróð Guðfræðistofnunar*, 3, p. 3-244, Gíslason, Jónas, University of Iceland, Reykjavik

A survey on Religion in Iceland, done by the Theological Institute in Iceland, published in 1990. The survey was comprehensive and included questions on baptism. Based on replies regarding their belief in God and in the resurrection, app. 80% confessed some kind of belief, either what was called a "private faith", or "confessed the Christian faith". Some fell under the category of "faith in the Resurrection".

The question was: Which of the following statements is closest to your opinion on holy communion and baptism (reply was for each sacrament).

Results for baptism (n=731) were that 30% felt it was a ceremony that had a lot of meaning for them (b) and 40% that it was only one of the church's traditions but had a certain meaning for them (c).

There was no marked difference in replies between age groups (p. 144-145)

Analyzing the answers with reference to previous statements on faith, those who confess the Christian faith or are defined as having faith in resurrection have similar answers regarding baptism. On average 49.5% of them opt for (b) and 29% for (c). Those with a slightly less defined faith (private faith) still agreed with those statements, 31% with (b) and 54% with (c) and even 35% of agnostics agreed with (c).

*The survey was groundbreaking in its detailed descriptions of religious life and attitudes of Icelanders. However, it was done in 1988 and the society has changed dramatically. Many of the questions were repeated in a survey in 2004, but questions on baptism were not part of the questionnaire. The report from 1990 gives a certain starting point for comparison but can no longer be used to describe the present situation. It does however show that in 1988, baptism was strong as a tradition.*

## 6.4 Norway

Austnaberg, Hans

2018

["Utfordringer for prester og undervisningsmedarbeiderar i dåpsarbeidet i Den norske kyrkja. \[Challenges for pastors and catechists related to baptism in the Church of Norway\]"](#), *Scandinavian Journal for Leadership and Theology*, 5

The purpose of the article is to explore the different emphases among leaders in dioceses and pastors/catechists in local congregations concerning challenges related to baptism in the Church of Norway. Findings in annual reports from two dioceses are compared with an empirical material consisting mainly of interviews with pastors and catechists in six congregations in these two dioceses. The article gives an empirical contribution by describing and exploring how different challenges come to the fore at the diocesan level and in the practical baptismal work in congregations. The main finding is that while the decreasing number of baptisms in the Church of Norway and how to deal with this is the focus in the annual reports from the dioceses, this theme is almost totally absent among pastors and catechists. Relational aspects, how to deal with the parents' lack of follow-up after baptism, and the desire of being open to all church members irrespective of their engagement in church activities are among the main concerns at the local congregational level. In a concluding reflection, the concepts of the church as a folk church and as a religious community serve as a theoretical perspective to enlighten the tension between diocesan and local congregational level.

*The study shows the gap between the national level and the local level in the understanding of what is important and problematic regarding baptism. While the dropping numbers of baptisms is focused on the national level, other questions are regarded more important locally. A question that is not answered in the study, is whether this just is a time lag, or whether this difference in perspective is based in more basic differences.*

Høeg, Ida Marie

2001

"Dåp som overgangsrite. En analyse av dåpens offentlige og private riter. [Baptism as a Rite of Passage. An Analysis of the Public and Private Rites of Baptism]", *Prismet*, 52/2, 54-62

The article looks at the various ritual actions associated with infant baptism and baptism as a rite of passage. The entire course of actions from the first contact with the church until everyday life after the party in the home has ended emphasize the unique nature of the transition to a new phase of life. The study of baptism as a rite of passage argues that it is necessary to include more ritual acts in the baptismal ritual than just the baptismal service. The article discusses that the private and public ritual actions before and after the baptismal service must be included. The baptismal parents' meeting with the church before the child is baptized and the party after the service raises the questions of what characterizes and defines a rite, the relationship between the sacred and the profane, the relationship between religious and secular rites and between public and private religion. The theoretical perspective on the extensive ritual repertoire for baptism is taken from the classic of ritual studies, the ethnologist and historian of religion Arnold van Gennep's. Using van Gennep's rite theory, it is argued for the baptismal party as sacred by introducing an understanding of the sacred as movable and situational and not related to specific actions or localities.

*The article puts the baptismal service within a wider context of other ritual actions that are connected to the service. It is thus a help of understanding the role of baptism in a wider ritual framework.*

Høeg, Ida Marie

2002

"Barnedåp – en sterk tradisjon i et moderne samfunn. [Child Baptism – a Strong Tradition in a Modern Society]", *Nytt norsk kirkeblad*, 30/6, p. 10-17

The paper examines attitude toward baptism from the survey (Folkekirke 2000) conducted among affiliated to The Church of Norway. Tradition and individuality are the most prominent motives for choosing infant baptism. Eight out of ten are of the opinion that tradition is an important reason for choosing baptism and seven out of ten that baptism is an opportunity to give the child options to make a choice later in life. Among half of the parents have religious motives for infant baptism. The paper discusses the seemingly contradictory motives for infant baptism – tradition and individualization and assesses them in relations to the religious motives for choosing baptism. The paper argues that social memory and loyalty to the collective become important when parents face changes in the life course. The emphasis on choice later in life seems to be a way to provide the individual with cultural resources. As baptized, the child will be able to make a more informed choice when it comes to religion and worldview. Then the child could decide whether or not being supportive of a culture influenced by Christianity.

*The article draws on a survey among members in the Church of Norway from 2000. The empirical material is 20 years old, but might still be of relevance, even if the steep decline in numbers of baptisms has happened after the survey was done.*

Høeg, Ida Marie

2004

"I Baptise You in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.", *Contemporary religion and church. A Nordic perspective*, p. 123-142, Winsnes, Ole Gunnar, Tapir akademisk forlag, Trondheim

This article examines the baptismal tradition as a bodily phenomenon. I argue that the cultural meaning of baptism lies in its actual implementation – the embodiment of the ritual. Using Paul Connerton's habit memory theory and Pierre Bourdieu's social practice theory I interpret the baptismal parents' emphasis on tradition as a social memory and the loyalty to the collective not just as a habit, but as a source of cultural meaning and belonging. At key

points in life, parents reach back to their common history in order to mark the coming of their child and the changed status of the family. The social memory that the ritual implicitly maintains and preserves by means of its physical actions and performative language can be understood as material from a memory bank which parents choose to employ for positive reasons. The fact that a large proportion of parents in Norway still chooses to christen their child creates a large collective of baptized individuals. Further, I interpret the emphasis on tradition as a declaration of solidarity with Norwegian society and as a desire to involve the child in a common culture by participating in the christening service.  
*The article provides social scientific theoretical perspectives on baptism as ritual.*

Høeg, Ida Marie

2011 ["Kjønn og folkelig dåpsteologi. \[Gender and Popular Baptismal Theology\]"](#), *Din. Tidsskrift for religion og kultur*, No. 1-2, 65-80

The article discusses the ritual performance of infant baptism in the context of an increasingly multicultural, religiously pluralized and individualizing society. It argues that it is necessary to explore baptismal practice from the actors' point of view. Considering theoretical perspectives from gender and everyday religion, the paper examines the baptismal parents' approach to baptism. The paper starts to present data from a survey conducted in 2000, which shows that far more women than men in the Church of Norway believe that the child is under God's protection when the baby is baptized. In-depth interviews with parents who have christening their child accompany the dataset. In the interview, the ritual actions had a religious significance for some of the parents. For the mothers who have a religious approach to baptism the feeling of uncertainty about the future and the child's upbringing is vital. They believe that the christening had a transformative effect on the child. The metaphor "life belt" is used to describe their strategy – a strategy that are intended to equip the child for encountering the future and life's challenges. The hope is that the child, through words and water, will be granted God's protection or fellowship with Jesus Christ. Characteristic of mothers' baptismal theology is that it is based on their own emotional experiences and reflections on christening their child, it is contextual in addition to its relational dimension. For fathers, the distance to the ritual context is more obviously. For those of the fathers who have religious experiences with baptism, theology is not grown out of direct experiences with the baptism. For those fathers who give baptism a religious content, protection is not a central aspect either. The paper argues for using the term popular baptismal theology to explain parent's understanding of what happens in baptism and their benefit from baptism.

*The article explores how baptism is understood by parents. It is an important empirical and social scientific study, with links to theology.*

Høeg, Ida Marie

2013 "Dåpsliturgi og aktørers erfaringer med dåp [Baptismal liturgy and actors' experiences with baptism]", *Nytt norsk kirkeblad*, 41/4, 33-37

In 2011, The Church of Norway's synod adopted a new baptismal liturgy. The forming of a new theology has highlighted the interaction between baptismal theology and liturgic development, but first and foremost revealed how different professional baptismal theology is from popular baptismal theology. The article takes the perspective of the actors' respective relations to the christening liturgy and examine the liturgy from a ritual perspective. This means that the study assumes that ritual is actions, where bodies are

moving, thinking, feeling, dreaming, sensing and memorizing. The ritual perspective of the christening service reveals what the christening parents consider as valuable actions and objects, and what they attach meaning to. The study shows that baptism has important symbolic, social and cultural aspects. Baptism is related to birth, family formation and kinship relation. The baptismal ritual is not only actions taking place there and then but relates to other times and spaces where infant baptism has been performed. Baptism has, therefore, a vital memory aspect for the actors themselves. It is within these cultural conditions and social institutions that the parents who are taking part in the christening services experience and assess baptism. The study is based on in-depth interviews with baptismal parents.

*The article comments on the relation between the official baptismal theology expressed in the liturgy and how it is understood by parents.*

Høeg, Ida Marie

2015

"Hvorfor de valgte bort dåpen: samtaler med sju småbarnsforeldre som er medlemmer av Den norske kirke, men som ikke har døpt sine barn", *Luthersk Kirketidnde*, 150/18, p.430-434, Kirkerådet

The author interviewed parents of 2- and 3-year-old children, who were members of the Church of Norway and who had chosen not to baptize their child. This was a qualitative study with four couples represented. Most of the parents understood themselves as atheists and agnostics. The understood morality to be the most important task of the church. The idea that baptism should make a difference between baptized and non-baptized seemed to be in contradiction to an idea of equality. They did not want to convey a faith that they did not have themselves to their children. Instead they would let the child make the choice themselves when he/she grows up. The autonomy of the parents was important to the parents. Even if they did not baptize their child, they themselves chose to keep their membership. For some, the possibility to have one's funeral in the church was a reason for keeping the membership.

*The study is a small, qualitative study, and not built on a representative sample. The informants seem to be rather well educated and rather reflected. Still, the study gives valuable information on reasons some church members might have for not baptizing their children. An interesting aspect of the study is the way the informants give reasons for keeping their own church membership.*

Høeg, Ida Marie

2009

"Velkommen til oss». *Ritualisering av livets begynnelse. Avhandling for graden philosophiae doctor (PhD). ["Welcome to us." Ritualization of the Beginning of Life. Thesis for the Degree Philosophiae Doctor (PhD)], University of Bergen, Bergen*

"Welcome to us" is Ida Marie Høeg's doctoral thesis in the discipline of Sociology of religion that illuminates the pluralization of Norwegian culture, with a point of departure in traditional and more recent ritualization of the beginning of life. It is the analysis of the actors themselves as opposed to the ritual structures that constitutes the contribution to an understanding of the traditional christening service and more recent naming ceremonies. The analytical focus is on the parents' arrangement and developing of the ritual actions, their experiences from carrying out the actions, and the parents' understanding of what a ritual is and what the actions religiously or philosophically convey. In the study of the actors' respective relations to the christening service and the naming ceremony, a practice-oriented and embodied perspective is chosen. As a means of stressing that the focus is on the actors,

the study employs the concept ritualisation instead of ritual. The term ritualisation has been developed on the basis of the social anthropologists Caroline Humphrey and James Laidlaw's views on what constitutes a ritual action, and the sociologist and anthropologist Pierre Bourdieu's philosophy of action which takes account of agents' dispositions as well as the structured. The intention behind this combination of a structural approach (Bourdieu) and actor-based approach (Humphrey & Laidlaw) is to illustrate that ritualisation is a part of society's social and cultural structures and that ritualisation has a mind-body side. The approach to the christening and naming ceremonies is that of in-depth interviews with nine sets of parents who have christened their child, four sets of parents who had a Humanist naming ceremony under the auspices of the Norwegian Humanist Association for children, three sets of parents who have created naming ceremonies in the alternative religion community and three sets of parents who have created private naming ceremonies. A comparative perspective on these welcoming rituals has made it possible to describe a pattern of differences and similarities in experiences of performing and perceptions on ritualization. The study reveals that there is an internal principle for thought and action in connection with birth and naming, which organizes the ritual actions and experiences. This is culturally determined actions that appear to be stored in the body and that find expression with some similarities and differences from religious field to worldview field. Common features are particularly the case with regard to the tradition of godparents and the child's attire. Furthermore, the study shows that christening and naming ceremonies have network and nest building functions for the children and parents. The term nest building refers to the social processes that contribute to the establishment of family relationships and friendships, and the social processes behind the formation of couples and nuclear families. The parents' practices and experiences indicate that christenings and naming ceremonies are also kinship events. There are strong defining and consolidating functions with regard to kinship structures. The norms that determining who have the right to be "consecrated" on this day are remarkably similar in all fields. Emotions play a crucial role in the parents' description of baptism and naming ceremonies and in the parents' attitudes to what constitutes a ritual. Given the large emotional involvement in the ritual actions, it would appear that christenings and naming ceremonies bear features of defined emotional spheres where feelings operate according to a specific logic. The attitude to the ritualization appears to be predefined on the whole as a positive nature. Many of the parents operate on the basis of a rigidly defined view of what qualifies as a ritual and what is required to create a good ritual. Their understanding of what defines a ritual is focused on celebration, meaningful contents and a strict orchestration of the ritual itself. The value attributed to the three ritual dimensions varies from field to field. Christenings and naming ceremonies also have important identity-forming aspects. The decision to have a welcome ritual for the child is vital for the parents' self-understanding as a responsible and conscious.

*This is a rich empirical study which positions Christian baptism within a wider field of rituals, as it also investigates non-religious naming ceremonies.*

Høeg, Ida Marie & Ann Kristin Gresaker

2015

[Når det rokkes ved tradisjon og tilhørighet: Nedgang i oppslutning om dåp i Oslo bispedømme \[When tradition and belonging is destabilized: Decline in support for baptism in the Oslo diocese\], KIFO Rapport, 2015:2, KIFO, Oslo](#)

This report is a comprehensive text of 134 pages and answers the following questions: What are the characteristics of parents who have opted out of baptism? How do they differ from those who baptize in a social and religious sense, and in attitudes and affiliations with the

church? What reasons do the parents give for opting out of baptism, how have the mother and father come to the decision, and how do they think about the choice and upbringing of the child? The report responds to this based on relevant religious sociological theory and is based on analyzes of church statistics, survey data and interviews with nine parents who have chosen different rites (such as “navnefest”) instead of baptism. The report shows that parents not baptizing their children lives in urban areas and have higher education. They are critical towards the church, many have no religious belief, and they feel less affiliation to the church than those who baptize their children. For parents that have chosen baptism, tradition is identified as the most important motive, and they appreciate the ceremonial framework for baptism provided by the church.

*The report is an important empirical contribution to the understanding of why parents choose or do not choose baptism for their children. Even if the report focuses on one diocese, it is relevant for the understanding of the development on a national level. The report draws on survey data and other types of data that may be analyzed further.*

Rafoss, Tore Witsø

2013

[\*Et religiøst landskap i endring: oppslutning om dåp på Østre Romerike \[A religious landscape in change: support for baptism in Østre Romerike\]\*](#), KIFO Rapport, 2016:2, KIFO, Oslo

The focus of the report is on baptism in in the deanery of Østre Romerike, but the situation in Østre Romerike is continuously compared with national figures, so the report also provides a national overview of baptism and reasons to baptize and not to baptize. The most important reasons for choosing baptism in Østre Romerike are what we can call tradition-based reasons, while religious reasons are less important. For those who choose not to baptize, however, religious reasons are more important, in the sense that the fact that one does not feel connected to the church and the fact that one does not have one's own faith are important reasons.

*Even if the report focuses on one deanery, it is relevant for the understanding of the development on a national level. The report draws on survey data and other types of data that may be analyzed further.*

## 6.5 Sweden

Jarnqvist, Karin

2018

“ch. 1 Reflektioner över dop, vigsel och begravning (Reflections on baptism, wedding and funeral);”, *Nyckeln till Svenska kyrkan*, 2018, Ineko/Svenska kyrkan, Uppsala

Karin Jarnqvist discusses the relationship between the role of the church in society, individualism and the various rituals that a person participates in during her life. Jarnqvist's primary example concerns weddings, but some parts of the discussion are devoted to baptism and funerals. The conclusions drawn are applicable to several of these rites. Jarnqvist begins by examining “ritualization”, or, the practical aspects of the rite, and how people engage in ritualization, regardless of whether the ceremony is religious or non-religious. She has interviewed individuals who have planned and taken part in name-giving ceremonies, for example, and found that they in several instances have taken up specific practices from the baptism liturgy and applied another meaning to it, “ritualized” these practices in a different setting. This means that the focus on the child replaces the focus on

God and the focus on the family replaces the role of the church. Thus, the new meanings emphasize the individualistic nature of these ceremonies even further. Another aspect of this is that the rite and the ceremony are viewed as an experience and event and those planning it becomes consumers, who need different services in order to complete the event. *The article is interesting, even though it falls outside the scope of the project because its main emphasis on wedding. Nevertheless, the author makes several conclusions that would be interesting to analyze in comparison to similar phenomena in the other Nordic churches, such as the use of religious and liturgical practices in non-religious ceremonies and the role of the church in a consumer- and service based society.*

Sandberg, Andreas

2018 "ch. 3 Dopföräldrar (concerning Parents)", *Nyckeln till Svenska kyrkan*, 2018, p. 37-51, Ineko/Svenska kyrkan, Uppsala

This article concerns the background of parents to newborn children in Sweden, comparing data from 2005 and 2015. Variables taken into account are educational background, income and geographical location. The author explains how the basis for recruiting new members is decreasing, partly because the generation about to become parents for the first time do not have a strong relation to the church compared to earlier generations and partly due to immigration, where it is common that the parents do not have a relationship with the Church of Sweden. Geographical location of the parents is a key factor as well, and tendencies can be analysed according to how strong the custom of attending Sunday services is, at least in part. For example, in smaller towns and regions, every other child is baptised, compared to larger cities, where one in four children are baptised. The level of education is also discussed, and the data shows that parents with lower education have their children baptised to a lesser degree than those with a higher education. Here, it is interesting to note that those with a three year gymnasium ("high school") are those most likely to have their children baptised, but if the parents have less or more than that, the parents are not as likely to have their children baptised. Income also plays a role in this, with parents with a lower income not as likely to baptise than those with a medium or high income.

*It is fruitful to take part of data about the background of parents to newborn children, in order to understand how that affects baptism statistics. Such data is also valuable for comparative reasons between the Nordic countries to see whether similar trends exist independent of country. Furthermore, it would be interesting to investigate how this data—concerning baptism—compares to numbers on other types of services, such as the main Sunday service or funerals.*

The Dept. for Analysis and Research, Svenska Kyrkan

2011 "ch. 4 Familjerna och dopet (Families and the Baptism)", *Nyckeln till Svenska kyrkan*, 2011, p. 43-49, Ineko/Svenska kyrkan, Uppsala

In this article, different family constellations and their effect on baptism data are discussed. Some tendencies are drawn from the data, such as the notion that married parents baptise their children to a lesser extent than parents who co-habit together. The group least likely to baptise their children consists of single- parents, among whom women are in the majority. Much of the data is older and not specifically collected in order to answer the questions posed, which the author notifies the reader.

*Every study that contains empirical data is of value for the project. Several of the conclusions drawn in this article, however, are more fully discussed and analysed in Dop i förändring (The*

*Ever-changing Baptism), such as socio-economic factors or the how families are constituted in contemporary Sweden and its impact on baptism.*

Ganebo Skantz, Josephine; Sandberg, Andreas & Ingegerd Sjölin  
2019 *Dop i förändring (The Everchanging Baptism),* Åtta45, Stockholm

This report aims at investigating socioeconomic and geographical patterns in the attitudes towards baptism and the decision to have your child baptised. The material for analysis is made up of statistics, surveys, and interviews. The authors conclude that the context of baptism has changed; earlier it was an indisputable custom whereas now baptism is an expression of the active choice of the individual. The service of baptism as traditional ritual counts as the most common reason for having your child baptised. To allow one's child to be raised as a Christian is less common in Sweden, compared to other Nordic countries. The reasons for this are discussed in the report. The importance of income and level of education among parents, whether they are married or single parents, and their geographic location play vital roles. Among the answers given, the authors find that families consisting of two parents with a three-year long high school education are most likely to have their children baptised. The least likely are single mothers in larger cities. A baptism occurs to a higher degree in families where a female relative has been allowed to influence the choice, such as the mother or grandmother. Furthermore, the authors examine how baptism as custom and ritual has changed over the centuries and reach the conclusion that the present form of having a special service of baptism, separate from the main Sunday service, is a rather late phenomenon. Lastly, the study examines the way that baptism is communicated and performed in the parish setting, using two parishes as case studies, which stresses the importance of conscious strategy for baptism.

*This study is the most important document in the Swedish material. It consists of material significant to all various typologies. The authors also compare their results to other Nordic countries. What is lacking in the report, which the LWF project can contribute to, and thereby contributing to the national discussion on baptism in the Church of Sweden is the theological implications of the results, primarily ecclesiological and social. The class perspective – although not named as such in the report – as well as the results concerning ethnic identity and to a lesser degree gender are all important factors in the self-understanding of the identity of the church.*

Persenius, Ingrid och Åkerman, Kristina, diocese of Uppsala  
2013 [\*På spaning efter hinder för dop för att kunna fira dopets gåva \(In Search of Obstacles for Baptism in order to Celebrate the Gift of Baptism\)\*](#), 2013, Uppsala stift, Svenska kyrkan, Uppsala

Between the years 2012–2014, a project in the diocese of Uppsala took place, more specifically in the parishes in the city of Uppsala. These parishes encompass a wide variety of socio-economic groups and parishes with a high degree of the local population as members as well as parishes with a lesser percentage of the local population being members in the church. The experiences and initiatives that were part of the project were gathered in a report; “På spaning efter hinder för dop för att kunna fira dopets gåva (In Search of Obstacles for Baptism in order to Celebrate the Gift of Baptism)” (Persenius, Ingrid och Åkerman, Kristina, diocese of Uppsala 2013). The report focuses on the different practices that occur in the different contributing parishes, such as how the music contributes to the baptism service, how activities for children and youths can contribute to the work

surrounding baptism and to what extent the local church can make it easier for parents to book times for baptism and facilities for gatherings after the service. As background for the local conditions posed, relevant statistics are presented as well. A short section discusses the theological dimensions of baptism. Included are also a discussion on how to make attire for baptism accessible to more people, such as baptismal gowns in larger sizes and baptismal wear for adults. Furthermore, an agenda for the work ahead is appended and recommendations for further reading.

*This project contributes to the LWF project in several ways. First, it gives a clear presentation of the everyday work of the local church concerning baptism, including the different practices that are important to reflect on, such as music, gatherings after the ceremony, or attire. Second, in the report, issues such as statistics and theological reflections are connected to the corresponding local conditions, which enables comparison with other projects.*

## 7. Theological studies

### 7.1 Denmark

Bidstrup, Ulla Morre

2013      *"Dåben – et kasualie midt i blandt os", En gudstjeneste – mange perspektiver, Johansen & Rønkilde, Anis, Frederiksberg*

The Sunday service is still the main element in contemporary Danish Christianity, and the place where church becomes church for its members. The book is an anthology of contributions from researchers from Aarhus University, focusing on topics such as baptism, sermon, hymns, and Lords Supper. In her contribution, Ulla Morre Bidstrup argues that baptism as a ritual is both rite de passage and ritual of orientation. Baptism marks change in life in a way that allows participants to reorient themselves in the larger framework of religious faith. In its rituals, Christianity always connects to the lived life of individuals. The author argues that the church should include more rituals and other rituals supplementing the rites of passage.

Bidstrup, Ulla Morre

2011      *Fordi der skal prædiket på lørdag: Kasualierne som orienteringsritualer belyst med udgangspunkt i nyere tysk kasualteori, Aarhus University, Aarhus*

The dissertation concerns not only baptism but rituals more generally as well. The author contrasts rituals of orientation with rituals of passage. Furthermore, the author distinguishes between three dimensions of the ritual: a) sociologically (family and church); b) theory of religion (primary experience of religion and secondary experience of religion); c) theory of ritual (self-referential and canonic). According to the first of the three different dimensions, the author concludes that family and church might have different interests and that the interest of the family is more dominating today. According to the second perspective, the primary experience of religion is said not to be surpassed by the secondary experience, but that the two coexist. The primary experience of religion and the ritual is closely related. According to the third perspective, self referential elements in the ritual is active only if they

at the same time refers to canon, an overarching interpretation of reality. The overall point is that the three dimensions of rituals point to the tension between lived life and Christian proclamation as two interdependent poles in a ritual.

*The dissertation aims to bring to the center of the practical theological academic discussion casual rituals. While acknowledging that rituals are rituals of passage, the author argues that rituals are also rituals of orientation. The secondary experience of religion, reflected in the Christian service, preaching and canon, is activated in the casual rituals, leading to acting. Among the achievements of this dissertation is its interdisciplinary focus on rituals (sociologically, theory of religion, homiletically) and its aim to inspire a practice which does not separate the personal and experienced (life as lived) from the salvation history and remembrance of the tradition (canon).*

Bidstrup, Ulla Morre

2018 ["Dåb i og uden for højmesse – et casual- og religionsteoretisk blik på dåben"](#), *Tradition og fornyelse*, Enggaard & Nøjgaard, Eksistensen, Frederiksberg

The article describes baptism as a ritual with a special reference. Baptism takes place in the tension between church, christian instruction and canon on the one side and lived life, family and situatedness on the other. Drawing on the distinction between primary and secondary experience of religion. The author points to the potential theological challenge in contemporary practice where baptism becomes an active, individual choice whereas the lutheran understanding of baptism underscores its passive character of grace. The author argues that baptism in this situation must be balanced with perspectives from homiletics, instruction, and liturgy to ensure that center of religious life is not the individual but Christ.

*Drawing on the same theoretical framework as in her dissertation and other articles, Ulla Morre Bidstrup argues that a danger of the contemporary baptismal practice is that it actively downplays a central lutheran theological point, namely salvation by grace.*

Bidstrup, Ulla Morre

2018 [Dåben klæder dig](#), Eksistensen, Frederiksberg

Each year more than 40.000 baptisms take place in the national Lutheran Evangelical Church of Denmark. That means that more than 40.000 conversations about baptisms must have taken place as well. What is said in these conversations? The authors reflect on four core questions in each baptismal conversations: a) what happens in baptism? Is it appropriate to speak about a 'before' and 'after' in baptism? b) how do you speak about baptism for someone not deciding for baptism or confronting you with your own choice for baptism? c) Do phrases and words in the ritual communicate what is happening in a meaningful way? What does 'sin', 'death', and 'salvation' mean for ordinary church members? d) As a pastor what do you learn from your conversations with parents to children wanting baptism?

*The book makes an interesting contribution to reflection on four core questions concerning baptism from a pastoral point of view. At the same time, the book makes it clear that there is no one theology of baptism even if the ritual and the wording is common. Each of the contributors has their own interpretation of baptism while drawing on the common scriptural and theological tradition. There is no observation on the questions about ecclesiology and unity, that is, whether different views on baptism is a matter of legitimate plurality or if the question is divisive.*

Iversen, Hans Raun

2000 *Dåb og medlemskab i folkekirken. Seksten forelæsninger ved Københavns Universitet*, Anis, Frederiksberg  
Collection of articles dealing with baptism and membership in broader terms.

Jørgensen, Jonas Adelin & Hans Raun Iversen

2016 "Den kristne dåb og den kulturelle mangfoldighed", *Præsteforeningens Blad* 3/2016, p. 44-52, Præsteforeningen, Copenhagen

The article consists of several thesis, developed through a course at University of Copenhagen, on baptism and conversion. The article introduces biblical theological reflections, historical developments, systematic theology, and pastoral theology in its attempt to formulate a scriptural and contemporary theology of baptism. In the concluding paragraphs, the article argues that the current situation compels the churches to accept both the 'covenant-aspect' childrens baptism as well as 'confession-aspect' emphasising conversion and instruction as equal in contemporary Christian practice.

Larsen, Kurt Ettrup

2018 "[Livet stammer fra dåben. Dåbens sakramentale indhold udtrykt i dansk liturgi og praksis siden Luther](#)", *Dansk Tidsskrift for Teologi og Kirke*, Vol. 45, No. 2, Menighedsfakultet, Aarhus

The article presents a historical view on the development of the baptismal liturgy in the Danish evangelical Lutheran church. The main argument is that liturgically the lutheran understanding of baptism as a cleansing and liberating ritual is maintained. Exorcism is incorporated in the Danish liturgy in form of the question 'Do you denounce the Devil?'. During the 18th century attempts to modernize the ritual and to leave out this historic relic was protested against by members of the church, not by the pastors or bishops. Only with the revision in 1912 did the theologically negative background - inherited sin and damnation - for baptism disappear and was replaced by reading of Matt 28 and Mark 10, on baptism and children.

*Somewhat in contrast to other authors, the author does not see the same shift from baptism as a 'ritual of salvation' to a 'ritual of belonging' in the Danish history.*

Thodberg, Christian

2017 *Dåben og dåbsritualets historie*, Fønix, Frederiksberg

Historical introduction and overview of baptismal theology and liturgy from the times of the New Testament to contemporary Danish Lutheran Christianity. Special focus is given to rituals formed in response to Luther's theology of baptism at time of reformation, and the current Danish baptismal ritual from 1992.

## 7.2 Finland

Hytönen, Maarit

2005 *Kirkollisten toimitusten teologia (Theology of Occasional Offices and other Divine Services)*, 310, Kirkon tutkimuskeskus, Tampere,

The book describes the theological renewal principles of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland in the latest handbook of occasional offices and other divine services (2003). The reform of occasional offices was strongly based on the reform of the Book of Worship (2000). The theological principles of renewal were the same in both: trinitarianism, understanding the sacraments as a visible word and expression of God's presence, deaconism and mission, content-based liturgy, and the intelligibility of theology and liturgical language. The reform of occasional offices with the principles of worship reform, on the one hand, enriched ecclesiastical ordinances, but, on the other hand, impoverished the theology of individual occasional office. The theology of individual occasional office (e.g. baptism) was somewhat fragmented not only because of the principles of reform but also because of many alternative sections. Because the renewed occasional offices consist of different themes and theological accents, much remains to be held by priests who administer of occasional offices and other divine services. It is up to them what kind of theology the occasional office will eventually represent.

*Feedback collected from the members of the congregations how they understand occasional offices was scarce. In general, members' experience of occasional offices and other divine services and their theology should be studied in more detail. The theological characteristics of individual occasional office should also be further examined in the following manual reforms and their realization and transmission in the regenerated occasional offices.*

Hytönen, Maarit

2020

[Maailman tärkein tapahtuma. Suomalaisten käsityksiä kasteesta ja kummiudesta.](#) Kirkon tutkimuskeskus, Tampere

Jankko, Eriikka

2019

*Lapsi Suomen evankelisluterilaisessa kirkossa. ("Child theology" in the Lutheran church of Finland),* Unigrafia, Helsinki

The aim of the study was to examine what it is to be a child and to be like a child and how to become like children according to the normative texts that direct the faith and the actions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland (ELCF). The lexical analysis of the term "child" showed that the concept of "child" is twofold. First, being a child is an age- and development-based concept, that is, it is related to the stage of life called childhood. Secondly, the concept of childhood refers to a relation-based idea of being a child. The English term "childship" refers to the relation of being a child, but the term is seldom used. By means of the conceptual analysis was identified the varieties of children's "goodness" that are aimed at and how the value of the child is justified through using different child- and childhood-related conceptual systems of the normative texts. There is a rich store of child-related concepts, though underutilized. There are tensions between the different conceptions of children and different ideals of their agency. Being a child is a theological core identity in the Church. The theological child-related concepts can strengthen the value of being a child and the interdependence between human beings. They enrich the societal discussion on being a child. The theological metaphors and the ideals of agency related to being a child have an impact on the recognition of children. Therefore, the risks of irresponsible, narrow or totalitarian use of child-related concepts must be recognized and corrected. The nuanced store of child-related conceptions in the normative texts that direct the confession of the Church is an underutilized resource in the Church. The exemplarity of being a child could be used to represent both an ideal of lifelong learning and our ontological

dependence on other human beings, creation and God. The language of being a child enriches the Church's conceptions of God and human beings. Being a child is a social and theological basic relation of human beings. The ideal of being a child leads us towards other people, since every human being shares being a child and therefore the mutual relation-based idea of childhood.

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Jolkkonen Jari  
2004

"Rippikoulu ja konfirmaatio luterilaisen kasteteologian näkökulmasta (Confirmation school and confirmation in the context of Lutheran baptism theology)", *Rippikoulun käsikirja*, p. 9-23, Heli Aaltonen, Lassi Pruuki & Pekka Saarainen, Kirjapaja, Helsinki

This article is published in a handbook on confirmation school. For this reason, it starts with an introduction to the Lutheran understanding of baptism emphasizing that baptism provides the starting point for confirmation school. The theology of baptism in the article is based on Luther's understanding of baptism with a tint of the Finnish School of Luther studies. Doctrine, ethics and prayer are closely related with each other, and the author makes a statement that prayer is eventually the most significant of these in the context of confirmation school. The author ends with some theological examination of confirmation which is not a sacrament for Lutheran but aims at strengthening the faith of an individual. *Being just an introduction to the theme in a highly pragmatic handbook context, the scholarly informed article does not provide any specific significance for academic purposes.*

Jolkkonen, Jari  
2000

"Luterilainen kasteteologia ja sen liturgiset seuraukset. (Lutheran baptism theology and its consequences on liturgy)", *Teologinen Aikakauskirja*, 105 (4/2000)

The article examines how the Lutheran theology of baptism is reflected in the baptismal liturgy of Finnish Evangelical-Lutheran Church. Motivation for the research article was the revision of the Handbook that was taking place during the time of writing. In his conclusion, the author takes critical stance towards liturgical prayers claiming that these are neglecting the spiritual gifts of baptism. According to his interpretation, this vital dimension in the Lutheran understanding of baptism is glossed over with psychological and theologically vague phrasing.

The article is very much tied to the context of its writing, as it analyzes the baptism service of 1984 which was effective during the time of writing and the proposal of 2000 for its revision.

Jolkkonen, Jari

2009 "Kaste teologisena ja kirkko-oikeudellisena kysymyksenä", *Oppi ja maailmankuva. Professori Eeva Martikaisen juhlakirja*, Soumalainen teologinen kirjallisuusseura

In 2008, it became evident that some pastors of "The Luther Foundation Finland" who had their ordination in "Missionsprovinzen" in Sweden were baptizing children of families belonging to the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Finland. However, these illegitimate pastors did not fill out the official form that registers the child to the church membership because signing the official documents could entail a punishable act of deceit according to Finnish criminal code. This resulted that even the Bishops' Conference was obliged to give guidelines for initiating the baptized child into the membership of Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Finland by using the liturgy of initiation into the church membership. The article summarizes the arguments which were taken into account in the deliberations of the Bishops' Conference.

The article provides some insights into the Lutheran understanding of baptism as well as into the implications of the Church Order in case of baptism and the church membership. It argues that the visible and invisible Church belong together which means that there cannot be any baptism without proper parochial setting.

Juntunen, Sammeli & Vainio, Olli-Pekka

2002 "Kaste- kääntymys -pyhitys. Luterilaisen vanhurskauttamisopin kipupisteet. (Baptism – Conversion – Sanctification)", *Teologinen Aikakauskirja*, 4, p. 359-367

The authors have meticulous dialogue with Friederike Nüssel's book "Allein aus Glauben. Zur Entwicklung der Rechtfertigungslehre in der konkordistischen und frühen nachkonkordistischen Theologie" (2000) from the perspective of Finnish Lutheran Studies. In this context, they try to trace some points of conflict (e.g. between justification and sanctification) in the early Lutheran dogmatics as Melanchthon's influence steered Lutheran thinking away from Martin Luther's robustly "ontological" thinking. They also try to give some clues how these tensions ensuing from the reformation era still influence our thinking today. The authors pursue to promote theological interpretation that gives Baptism its due meaning as the foundation of soteriology.

*The article provides some important, but very erudite information on early doctrinal development in the Lutheran tradition and thus helps us to see its legacy for instance in the revival movements in Finland.*

Kaisa Aitlahti, Jenni Kahenviirta, Sini Mäkelä & Kimmo Reinikainen

2020 *Kaste*, Kirjapaja, Helsinki

The book provides a practical reading which aims at giving inspiration for Lutheran parishes to develop processes related to child baptisms. It includes also reflections on special campaigns in some urban parishes.

Brings together regulations and theological principles regarding baptism in very practical way and very miscellaneous fashion.

Laulaja, Jorma

2003 "Kaste (Baptism)", *Spiritualiteetin käsikirja*, p. 211-219, Seppo Häyrynen, Heikki Kotila & Osmo Vatanen, Kirjapaja, Helsinki

The Lutheran theology of baptism is depicted from four perspectives: Baptism is based on God's word and it delivers us from Satan's bondage, forgives our trespasses and generates faith in our hearts. It also initiates us into the Christian community.

*In this article, a bishop is expounding the basic tenets of Lutheran baptismal theology for wider audience. The simple article provides just a brief "summary" of Lutheran theology in the context of a book on spirituality. It does not even aim at providing any surprises or ground-breaking theological ideas.*

Salomäki, Hanna

2019 [Kastekysely. Perinteet ja kummien saaminen tärkeimpiä syitä kastaa lapsi. Raportti kastekyselystä 13.3.2019. \(Report of the baptism survey\).](#)

Report is based in survey done by Church Research Institute. Purpose of the research was to analyse what are the reasons to baptise or to not baptise a child. Survey was sent to parents who have recently done decisions about baptism (children 0-6 years old).

According to the report the main reasons for baptising a child are the child becoming part of a tradition, wanting the child to have godparents and wanting to organise a ceremony. About half of the respondents also reported that they wanted their child to grow up as a Christian. The main reasons for not baptising a child were the parents' superficial relationship to the Church, the spouse's reluctance, and the desire to let the child decide whether or not he or she wants to be baptised.

One of the most important findings in the survey was the fact that most people make their decision about baptism before pregnancy. More than forty percent of respondents (even 48 % of women) told they have done their decision about baptism even before they had family. Only one tenth made the decision after baby was born.

*This short report gives useful information about the decision-making process in families. For example: in Finland quite common understanding in the parishes is that people don't baptise their children because they do not find godparents (who are members in the Lutheran church). When we asked that from parents, only 6 % said that was the reason.*

*The survey also brings up meaning of connection with young adults after the confirmation school. If parish takes contact to family after the baby has born, it is too late. Decision about baptising has been done years earlier.*

Saarinen, Risto

2009 "Kaste ja kirkon jäsenyys (Baptism and membership in the church)", *Oppi ja maailmankuva. Professori Eeva Martikaisen juhlakirja, 261*, Tomi Karttunen, Suomen teologinen kirjallisuusseura

In 2008, it became evident that some pastors of "The Luther Foundation Finland" who had their ordination in "Missionsprovinsen" in Sweden were baptizing children of families belonging to the Evangelical-Lutheran Church in Finland. However, they did not fill out the official form that registers the child to the church membership because signing the official documents could entail a punishable act of deceit according to Finnish criminal code. This erudite article is part of the theological debate that resulted from these illegitimate baptisms, and the author argues that a proper act of baptism requires that the baptizer has right intention and this is indicated by signing the official documents.

The article has some very interesting theological arguments bringing forth clearly that baptism should always include intention to initiate one into a Church. On the other hand, it also argues that baptisms in the name of Trinitarian God even taken place outside any Church are valid and one should not rebaptize persons thus baptized when they are entering to a Church.

Karttunen, Tomi

2015 "Kaste ekumeenisena lahjana ja tehtävänä", *Reseptio*, 2/2015, p. 17-23

Lecture on a local ecumenical gathering introducing some basic tenets of "classical" baptismal theology, BEM (1982) and also newer document *One Baptism: Towards mutual recognition* (201).

*Brings together some ecumenical information with very doctrinal approach.*

Vappula, Katri

2018 "Kasteesta kasvuun – Kirkon kasvatus vuonna 2030. Kristillisen uskon välittymisen haasteita ja mahdollisuuksia. (Transmitting of Christian faith - Challenges and possibilities)", *Kirkon tulevaisuusselonteko 2018*, 74, p. 25-35, Kirkkohallitus, Helsinki

In this article, the author asks: 'how does the church react in situation where less and less families are baptising their children?'. One question is if it's possible to bless the child if parents don't want baptise their child. Some leaders in the church for example deny priests to take part to (non-religious) name-giving ritual.

The author supposes that the language used in the church is not familiar to modern people and that's why young people can't even understand the texts in church rites. For example Finnish baptism prayer says "release [name of the baby] from the power of darkness". Instead of this positive meaning of baptism could be told; for example "God releases you to love, joy and life".

*Article introduces the idea of so-called 'path of growth' model to strengthen the Christian identity of children of all ages in Church education. The goal is for parishes to offer systematic and consistent support in living as a Christian and nurturing a Christian identity for parishioners aged 0–22. Inspiration for this comes from Norwegian "trosopplæring".*

## 7.4 Norway

Alfsvåg, Knut

2019 ["Er dåpen nødvendig til frelse? Om forholdet mellom dåpsforståelse og samtidskontekst \[Is baptism necessary for salvation? On the relation between the understanding of baptism and the contemporary context\]"](#), *Teologisk tidsskrift*, 8, p. 172-182

According to the confessional documents of the Church of Norway, baptism is necessary for salvation. Interviews among those who are responsible for education in the congregations have shown that this is commonly accepted in the sense that the Baptist rejection of children's baptism has no support. However, the gift of God in baptism is understood more in a confirming than a creative sense. The article discusses this finding in relation to some newer explorations of the theology of baptism, the most important of which are two contributions from the Scandinavian context (Anna Karin Hammar, *Skapelsens mysterium, skapelsens sakrament: Dopteologi i mötet mellan tradition och situation* from 2009 and Bård

Eirik Hallesby Norheim, *Practicing Baptism: Christian Practices and the Presence of Christ* (2014). The article's conclusion is that a lack of understanding of the relationship between the understanding of sin and baptism may not necessarily be an advantage as far as relevance in the contemporary context is concerned.

*The article is an attempt to relate official doctrinal theology to the lived theology among church workers. As such, it is interesting both methodologically and theologically. The results from the study are quite tentative, which shows that this obviously is an area for further research.*

Graff-Kallevåg, Kristin

2009 "United with Christ in Baptism", *Theological Practices that Matter*, Bloomquist, Karen L.

In one of the proposals for a new liturgy of baptism in Norway, there was a striking absence of the topic of the forgiveness of sins. This article suggests that current difficulties with the notion of forgiveness may be seen as related to the dominance of a forensic notion of justification in Lutheran tradition. This argument is developed through a reading and discussion of new Luther research. Since the mid-1970s, the so-called "new Finnish school," founded by Prof. Tuomo Mannermaa of the University of Helsinki, has contributed a pioneering interpretation of Luther's teaching on justification to Luther studies. This interpretation critiques the traditional Lutheran focus on the forensic aspect of justification. This article demonstrates how this interpretation offers new possibilities for articulating a theology of forgiveness in baptism and for communicating the relevance of the topic of forgiveness in contemporary contexts.

*The study is an example of theological analysis of baptismal liturgy, focusing on the understanding of baptism as forgiveness of sin. It is an example of a constructive theology, that mobilizes theological resources for improved articulation and communication of a central baptismal motive.*

Graff-Kallevåg, Kristin

2011 "Dåp og trosopplæring [Baptism and Religious Education]", *Kirke Nå: Den norske kirke som evangelisk-luthersk kirke*, p. 97-113, Dietrich, Stephanie, Trond Skard Dokka & Harald Hegstad, Tapir akademisk forlag, Trondheim

What is the relationship between baptism and Christian religious education? Based on a study evaluating the reform of Christian education in the Church of Norway, the article first presents three different contemporary models for a theological understanding of the relationship between baptism and Christian religious education. Firstly, the aim of Christian religious education can be understood as confirming baptism and what is already given in baptism. Another strategy, associated with Christian revival spiritualities, is to understand personal confession as the aim of Christian religious education, an aim in the extension of baptism. Thirdly, the aim of Christian religious education can be understood as sanctification, where baptism is understood as initiating this process. Analyzing contributions to the so-called "new Finnish Luther interpretation", associated with professor Mannermaa and his colleagues at the University of Helsinki, the article displays how there are resources in Luther's theology to hold the first and the third of these two models together. Christian religious education is then about confirming and unfolding the gift of baptism.

*The article is an important contribution to the theology of baptism as it is related to baptismal education. This is an important theme for churches practicing infant baptism,*

*when baptismal education has to happen after baptism. The article argues for an integrated understanding of the event of baptism and the process of education.*

Graff-Kallevåg, Kristin

"Baptism in a Secular Age", *Dialog*, 56/3, p. 251-259

In the Western world, the cultural conditions for interpreting and practicing baptism have changed radically in recent decades. An increasing level of religious plurality is one cultural trend that the theology of baptism must take seriously. One option for responding to this challenge is to interpret baptism as a rite of drastic communal transition whereby one enters into the church and leaves the world—with all its plurality—behind. Another option is to view baptism as a rite that, by bringing humans into the church's fellowship with God in Christ, draws them into communion with all living creatures and calls upon us to engage in openness toward others. In this article, Graff-Kallevåg explores these two options through a cultural analysis of two theologies of baptism. She uses the philosopher Charles Taylor's theory about secularity in *A Secular Age* (2008), to analyze and discuss the baptismal theology of Robert W. Jenson and Catherine M. LaCugna.

*The article gives a contribution to the understanding of the communal aspect of baptism, arguing that inclusion in the fellowship of the church, also represents communion with creation. It is thus a contribution to the themes of baptism and ecclesiology and to baptism and creation theology.*

Hegertun, Terje

2013

"Bridge over Troubled Waters?", *Pneuma Vol. 35:2*, Brill, p. 235-252

This article reflects on questions related to the issue of rebaptism within Nordic Christianity. Because infant baptism is not recognized as valid within the Pentecostal tradition, new members are asked to undergo rebaptism. Many of those coming from a Lutheran tradition, however, seem to have a "ritualized remembrance" of their infant baptism, thus indicating the ability to build bridges between now and then by being in touch with a spiritual reality across time and place, tied to an overarching interpersonal theological discourse. In moving from the Lutheran to the Pentecostal tradition, how important is the amount of water if compatible theological reflections are present? And conversely, to what extent can we talk about a sacramental potential in Pentecostalism? When considering such questions, the goal of expressing a "common understanding" and admitting "a mutual recognition" does not mean complete agreement in all details.

*The author is an influential theologian in the Pentecostal movement in Norway. The engagement by him and others has recently led to a decision by the largest Pentecostal church in Norway, Filadelfiakirken in Oslo, to no longer require rebaptism of members who wish to become formal members of the church. This change of their rules was made by the church in the spring of 2020.*

Hegstad, Harald

2017

["Dåpen som hendelse og prosess. \[Baptism as event and process\]"](#), *Teologisk tidsskrift*, 5/3, p. 176-194

As a sacramental sign, baptism points towards God's work in the act of baptism (baptism as event) and towards God's continuing work in the life of the baptized until the final fulfilment in the coming Kingdom of God (baptism as process). In the critique of a Baptist understanding of baptism, Lutheran theology has often one-sidedly emphasized the first dimension. A renewed understanding of baptism as sign has, in recent ecumenical development, brought churches closer to each other by increasingly holding the two

dimensions of baptism together. Such an understanding of the connection between baptism as event and baptism as process also finds support in the baptismal theology of Martin Luther.

*The article is an attempt to unite perspectives that has been understood as contradictory. It is thus a contribution to an ecumenical understanding of baptism. The perspective in the article is also used as a main perspective in the author's book on baptism from 2019.*

Norheim, Bård Eirik Hallesby

2010 "Practicing baptism: the church as *communio* and *congregatio sanctorum* : rethinking ecclesiology in the context of Nordic youth ministry", *Journal of Youth and Theology*, 9/1, 37-55,

The article is an analysis and discussion of baptismal ecclesiology in the light of the Christian practices-paradigm and the Nordic folk church (youth ministry) context.

*The article shows the relevance of baptismal theology for ecclesiology and youth ministry.*

Norheim, Bård Eirik Hallesby

2012 ["Det som skjer i dåpen og det som skjer etter dåpen. Menneskesynet i dåpsliturgien \(2011\) og Plan for trusopplæring \(2010\) for Den norske kyrkja. \[What happens in baptism and what happens after baptism. Anthropology in the baptismal liturgy and the plan for Christian education in the Church of Norway\]"](#), *Teologisk tidsskrift*, 1/4, p. 358-376

The article analyses and discusses the (baptismal) anthropology of the new baptismal liturgy of the Church of Norway (2011) and the Plan for Christian Education (2010) in detail. Further, the article uses this analysis to discuss and critique Swedish Theologian Anna Karin Hammar's plea for a renewed (Lutheran) baptismal anthropology, where it is suggested that original sin could be interpreted as "inherited responsibility."

*The article integrates perspectives from liturgy, Christian education, and baptismal liturgy. It engages in a dialogue with contributions from Swedish theology.*

Norheim, Bård Eirik Hallesby

2014 "Ministry as womb and tomb: Baptism as a paradigm for ministry", *Dialog*, 53/2,p. 101-109

The article elaborates on the interpretation and meaning of baptism in an era of heightened personal autonomy: How should Christian life and ministry emerging from sacramental baptism be interpreted when the ideal of free choice seems to prevail? The contemporary call for authenticity and autonomy (freedom of choice) and its relationship to baptismal theology and practice challenges to more fully rethink sacramental baptism (life and ministry) in an era of heightened personal autonomy.

The article focuses on the relevance of baptism for people in a postmodern cultural context. It is thus a contribution to the contextual meaning and relevance of baptism today.

Hegstad, Harald

2019 ["Dåpen: En nådens kilde \[Baptism: Fountain of Grace\]."](#), *Verbum*, Oslo

The book is offering a comprehensive theology of baptism. It positions itself in a Lutheran tradition, at the same time understanding baptism and baptism theology in an ecumenical perspective. A key is the understanding of baptism as a (sacramental) sign. As such, it gives part in that which it signifies, at the same time pointing beyond itself to a reality that still has to be fulfilled – in the life of the baptized and in the resurrection of the dead. This also means that baptism has to be understood both as event and as process. Starting from these

perspectives, the book explores themes like baptism and salvation, baptism and faith, infant baptism, baptism and church, as well as baptismal liturgy.

*The book is the first monograph in Norwegian on baptism since 1979. It was financed with a contribution from the National Church Council, and a copy was sent to all congregations in the Church of Norway.*

Bispemøtet [Bishops, Conference, Church of Norway]

2020

[\*Livstegnet: Et hefte om dåpen \[Sign of Life: A Booklet about Baptism\]\*](#), Den norske kirke Bispemøtet, Oslo

The booklet consists of two parts: (1) A short letter (1 page, title: "Dåpens gave" – Gift of baptism) on the meaning of baptism from November 2019, that was meant to be read in the churches in January 2020. The letter is a reminder of the importance of baptism and an introduction to 2020 as a year of baptism in the Church of Norway. (2) A longer document (9 pages of text, plus illustrations) on the theological meaning of baptism. The document takes its starting point in an understanding of baptism as sacramental sign. As such, baptism is an instrument for God's gifts of salvation. It is a sign that gives part in that what it signifies. At the same time, the sign is a promise of what God will be doing, in the life of the baptized and in the eschatological fulfillment. The bishops underline the necessity of Christian education for those who are baptized as infants, so that they may be preserved in the faith they were baptized into. The bishops recommend church members to baptize their children, at the same time respecting those choosing differently, and invites also unbaptized to advocates the practice of infant baptism, at the same time welcoming unbaptized to youth work and Christian education.

*As a statement from the Bishops' conference, this text represents an official position from the Church of Norway in the question of baptismal theology. Even if it tries to unite and reconcile different perspectives on baptism, it has a certain profile through its use of the concept of sign. The use of the concept 'sign' might give it a certain ecumenical potential.*

Graff-Kallevåg, Kristin

2015

*The Triune God and Baptism: An Analysis and Discussion of the Relationship between the Trinity and Baptism in the Theology of Robert W. Jenson and Catherine M. LaCugna*, MF Norwegian School of Theology, Oslo

The last half century there has been a revival of interest in the doctrine of the Trinity in theology. Two of the main contributors to this revival are Robert W. Jenson and Catherine M. LaCugna. The thesis explores their trinitarian theologies, focusing on implications of their interpretations of the Trinity for their interpretations of baptism. Jenson and LaCugna write their theologies in what can be labeled contemporary Western postmodern cultural context. The thesis argues that they offer two different options for interpreting God in this cultural context, and that these different strategies for god-talk lead them to different interpretations of baptism. Against the backdrop of this analysis, the thesis makes some constructive considerations about what could be an adequate Lutheran interpretation of baptism in a contemporary cultural context. This discussion aims at relating to current religious and cultural situation in the Norwegian context. The thesis argues that a hermeneutics of hospitality may prove constructive for rethinking baptism in the contemporary cultural context.

*This doctoral thesis positions the theology of baptism in a wider theological landscape in trinitarian theology. It provides resources for the development of baptismal theology in today's cultural context. The idea of "a hermeneutics of hospitality" serves as a key for the author in her own proposal.*

Norheim, Bård Eirik Hallesby

- 2014 *Practicing baptism: Christian practices and the presence of Christ.*, Pickwick, Eugene, OR.  
The book investigates the shape of Christian life and ministry in a post-Christendom context in the light of practice theory, focusing on how Lutheran baptismal theology and Christology may serve as a critical response to the current engagement in Christian practices. The book (based on a Ph.D.-dissertation) makes use of Martin Luther's reflection's on the three modes of Christ's presence (developed in Vom Abendmahl 1528) and Lutheran baptismal theology to offer a rich, theological concept – practicing baptism – as a framework for interpreting Christian life and ministry.  
*This doctoral thesis is a rich analysis of the understanding of Christian practice and how baptismal theology may be used as a key to the understanding of Christian life.*

Veiteberg, Kari

- 2006 *Kunsten å framføre gudstjenester: dåp i Den norske kyrkja. [The art of performing services: Baptism in the Church of Norway]*, University of Oslo, Oslo  
The study is based on observation of various baptismal ceremonies in the Church of Norway. They are analyzed from a dramaturgical and liturgical perspective. The study draws on insights from the theatre, thus understanding baptism as a sort of performance. The study finds that services are often not well performed and they might be dull. The study thus argues that there is a potential for improvement in the way baptisms are performed.  
*This study combines theological and dramaturgical perspectives on baptism that is a contribution to improve baptismal liturgical practice.*

Norheim, Bård Eirik Hallesby

- 2015 "Dåpen som paradigme for kristent ungdomsarbeid i Noreg? Ein analyse og drøfting av dåpen og dåpsteologien si rolle i måldokumenta til kristne barne- og ungdomsorganisasjonar knytt til Den norske kyrkja. [Baptism as paradigm for Christian youth work. An analysis of baptism and baptismal theology in documents from Christian organisations for children and youth related to the Church of Norway]", *Trinitarisk tro og tenkning. Festskrift til Svein Rise*, Innerdal, Gunnar & Knut Willy Sæther, Portal forlag, Kristiansand  
  
This book chapter analyses the statutes, bylaws and foundational documents of Norwegian youth ministry organizations within or related to the Church of Norway. The chapter starts by identifying how a theology of sacramental baptism in a folk church context relates more easily to children's ministry than to youth ministry. Following the analysis of the documents, the book chapter concludes with a constructive response, suggesting models for youth ministry in a Norwegian and Scandinavian setting rooted in baptismal theology.  
  
*This is a contribution to the development of the theological basis of youth ministry as a practice and as an academic subject. The contribution is relevant because of its anchoring in baptismal theology.*

## 7.5 Sweden

Hammar, Anna Karin

- 2009 *Skapelsens mysterium, Skapelsens sakrament: Dopteologi i mötet mellan tradition och situation (The Mystery of Creation, The Sacrament of Creation: Baptismal Theology in the Encounter between Tradition and Situation)*, Uppsala universitet, Teologiska fakulteten.

The aim of the thesis is to investigate theological understandings relating to, primarily, the baptism of children and to develop these reflections into plausible suggestions in the contemporary context of Church of Sweden. The hermeneutical framework of the dissertation consists of the correlation between interpretation of “situation” and interpretation of “tradition”. Three problem areas are identified that are present in the Swedish context of baptizing children in Church of Sweden. A) The first problem area concerns the theological interpretation of the relationship between those baptized and those not in a pluralistic society. B) Theological interpretation of “destruction” and what the theological tradition names original sin. How can a trustworthy baptismal theology be developed that takes suffering, oppression, the ecological crisis, seriously in the present situation and at the same time handle or solve the problems related to the theological tradition of original sin? C) How can a trustworthy baptismal theology solve or handle the problems related to a dichotomous construct of the relationship between God and the world? Four types of material are analyzed: sociological and statistical material, ecumenical theological resources for interpreting baptism, two different baptismal liturgies in use in the Church of Sweden, and oriental Orthodox traditions concerning the baptism of Jesus. The author concludes that the baptismal tradition as connected to the baptism of Jesus needs to be more emphasised. This in turn should be understood in relation to a trinitarian theology of creation. Thus, baptism can be explained as an expression of the mystery and sacrament of creation. The author suggests seeing baptism as a first step in the liberation of creation: it would then be a rite of thanksgiving for the infant as a fruit of creation, an act of blessing and of prayer. Further, she wishes to replace the idea of inherited sin with the idea of an inherited responsibility for the common human situation.

*The conclusions of this thesis has gained wide attention in the Church of Sweden, for example they are visible in the discussion on baptism from the revision committee of the service handbook. The main areas of contention concerns the role of Jesus' baptism as role model for all baptisms and the issue of baptism as inclusive or exclusive and excluding. What answers have been given to these questions in the other Nordic churches?*

O'Reilly, Bim  
2017

*Baptism and Death: A Study of Mark and Romans*, Uppsala universitet, Teologiska fakulteten.

The purpose of this thesis is to examine the presentation of, and the relationship between, baptism and death in Mark and Romans, and to compare the associations of baptism and death in the two texts. As a theoretical point of departure, the author incorporates an overarching holistic and inner-textual approach. Additional approaches are used for the respective texts: a narrative approach for Mark and an argumentative approach for Romans. In each of the analyses of Mark and Romans, the macrostructures of the texts form a framework for interpreting key passages for understanding the relationship between baptism and death. The results of these analyses are then brought together by the author in a comparative analysis, where similarities and differences between Mark and Romans are weighed.

The author concludes that the ways of associating of baptism and death in Mark 10:38–39 and Rom 6:3–4 are different. Nonetheless, the associations are part of similar contexts, where baptism seems to have a function of helping to establish, or confirm, an identity based on, and modelled by, the crucified Christ, and that call for action in some way. According to the author, a point of contact should therefore not be sought on the basis of the associations of baptism and death in Mark 10:38–39 and Rom 6:3–4, but in the broad

ways the texts reflect on the significance of Christ's death for those who want to follow Jesus or to be "in Christ".

*This thesis proves an important point in the discussion on baptism, concerning the nature of the relationship of baptism and death in two of the most important documents for baptismal theology; Mark 10 and Romans 6. To what extent should the investigations of the New Testament understandings of baptism impact on the theological reflections of the praxis of baptism in churches today? To focus on the text in the way that this author does, and thus the results she presents, are not primarily discussed in the Church of Sweden. Even though Romans holds an unchallenged position in the liturgy and in the teachings and reflections on baptism, I would suggest that it is more as a stepping stone to understand Luther than in its own right.*

Kjell Pettersson

2012

*Född av vatten och Ande*, Artos och Norma bokförlag, Lund

Questions about baptism and its significance have come to the fore. Some want the idea of inherited sin to be removed, others want to tone down the view of baptism as newborn and purification. Baptism should be seen as a confirmation of the birth and a celebration of the child who came into the world. In this book, Kjell Pettersson describes the roots of Christian baptism in the New Testament and in the early church. He highlights the main motifs in baptism, both in content and in the way of celebrating baptism. He highlights in particular what the churches have in common in their view of baptism. Baptism, it is newborn in water and the Holy Spirit and an admission into the Christian church, it is the portal to a life that reaches its consummation on the other side of the limit of death. Suggestions are given on how different elements in the baptismal order can be formulated. Difficult words such as exorcism and abrenunciation, anamnesis and epiclesis are explained.

*Does the combination of theological and historical in-depth study combined with suggestions for prayers and baptismal liturgies exist in the other countries?*

Biskopsmötet (the Bishop's Conference)

2011

[\*Leva i dopet \(Living Baptism\)\*](#), Ineko, Central Church Office, Uppsala

This letter from the bishops concerns baptism and is dispositioned in a way similar to other bishop's letters; a theological discussion, a discussion on practical issues and a section containing common questions asked by both parishioners and church employees. First, the baptismal liturgy is discussed. In this section, the authors also discuss the nature of the conversation that takes place before the baptism, between minister and parent(s). Second, various theological aspects of baptism are debated, the existential elements of living and dying with Christ, of having your sins pardoned, of living in and through grace, of taking off your old self and putting on your new self and to have a mission in the church—being a member of the universal priesthood (priesthood of all believers). The third chapter consists of a discussion on the role of baptism in relation to contemporary society. As part of this various questions related to both ecclesiological, social and psychological aspects of baptism are raised, e.g. ecumenical aspects, interreligious issues indicative of a more diverse society, secularization and individualism, and the status and function of the Church of Sweden among the population at large. Some of the main theological issues surrounding baptism are also explained in the letter, such as the doctrine of original sin, the relationship between baptism and eucharist and more political issues that baptism raise, such as freedom of religion, the child's right to spiritual and existential growth. These issues are debated depending on how they relate to the everyday life of the parishes and parents.

*Given that this is a document from the bishops to the ministers in the Church of Sweden, the text has a normative status as doctrinal document, even though it is not formerly referred to as such. Because of its status, it has bearings on other documents on baptism that are produced, and it would be a fruitful task to use the letter in a comparative manner, in the analysis of other sources.*

Biskopsmötet (the Bishop's Conference)

2019 (2012) [De kyrkliga handlingarna i en mångreligiös kontext \(The occasional services in a multicultural context\)](#), Ineko, Central Church Office, Uppsala

This Bishop's letter concerns the services baptism, confirmation, weddings and funerals in a multicultural context. In the present survey, focus will only be paid to the sections on baptism. The letter focuses on theological aspects and practical pastoral applications. Concerning baptism, three main areas are highlighted. The first is the issue of baptism that takes place in families with different religious backgrounds and traditions. The main criterion in this issue is that both parents—in cases where a child has two caregivers—must agree to baptism taking place. The other criterion concerns the age of the child; if the child is older than 12, s/he must accept on her/his own behalf. The second issue concerns families with various Christian backgrounds. The text warns against proselytism, but nevertheless acknowledge that in some cases, a person wishes to get baptised in the Church of Sweden, or parents wish to have their children baptised in the Church of Sweden. A large portion of the section on baptism describes the issue of conversion and baptism among immigrants, asylum seekers and undocumented persons. The bishops stress the need for pastoral care in this regard, the value of correct information, and time. It is important, therefore, that priests that engage in baptismal education and preparation for conversion are informed of legal and societal issues concerning migration politics and rulings.

*Given that this is a document from the bishops to the ministers in the Church of Sweden, the text has a normative status as doctrinal document, even though it is not formerly referred to as such. Because of its status, it has bearings on other documents on baptism that are produced, and it would be a fruitful task to use the letter in a comparative manner, in the analysis of other sources.*

Holte, Ragnar

2011 ["Det kristna dopet – och finns det någon arvsynd? \(Christian Baptism – and is there any Original Sin?\)"](#), *Svenskt Gudstjänstliv: Dop*, Årgång 86, pp. 11-32, Borgehammar, Stephan, Artos och Norma bokförlag, Lund

The point of departure for the author of this article is the traditional doctrine of original sin as currently debated in the Church of Sweden, together with reflections of this doctrine in the baptismal liturgy. The author discusses the doctrines of baptism, from an examination of baptism in the New Testament and the early church, to Augustine and Luther. The main discussion concerns the relationship between the idea of an adult being baptised after repentance and the confessing of sins to the idea of the original sin as manifested in the infant. The author clearly abhors this idea and makes his case in the article. He suggests that theology was adapted to fit the ritual: baptism was said to be needed in order to free the infant from the guilt of original sin. The author continues to say that no thought of inherited sin or guilt can be traced in the teaching of Jesus. The author argues that we need to distinguish between inherited sin, inherited guilt and an inherited propensity to commit sin.

Throughout history, humans have shown a double tendency: a social, constructive one that at times deserves to be called love of neighbour, and an asocial, destructive one. Infant baptism should be seen as a means of furthering the infant's positive development.

*In several of the posts, the theological grounds for baptism are highlighted, primarily the doctrine of original sin and how it manifests itself in the Church's own reflection on baptism and to what extent it is visible in the liturgy. To what extent is this question, in relation to dogmatics, ecclesiology, and liturgy visible in the other Nordic countries?*

Selander, Sven-Åke

2011 ["Doppsalmer i Svenska kyrkan \(Baptismal Hymns in the Church of Sweden. On Faith, Children and Parents\)"](#), *Svenskt Gudstjänstliv: Dop*, Årgång 86, pp. 81-114, Borgehammar, Stephan, Artos och Norma bokförlag, Lund

The article focuses mainly on hymns that are found in the main Swedish Hymnal from 1986, but takes into account the amendment to the Hymnal from 2002, and Psalmer i 2000-talet (Hymns in the 21st century), primarily because some of the most popular songs stem from these latter two collections of hymns and songs. It seems that some of the selection of hymns discussed are dependant on geographical location of the parishes. Such a conclusion is beneficiary for the present project in the sense of analyzing trends that differ throughout the country and how it relates to neighbouring countries (e.g. whether there are similarities between the south of Sweden and parts of Denmark, where the north of Sweden might show differences).

Torin, Kristina

2011 ["Dopets innebörd i Svenska kyrkan: En studie av förhållandet mellan lärodokument och aktuellt informationsmaterial \(The Meaning of Baptism in the Church of Sweden. A study of the relation between doctrinal documents and current popular information\)"](#), *Svenskt Gudstjänstliv: Dop*, 2011, pp. 33-56, Artos & Norma, Lund

This study investigates how the Church of Sweden justifies that people should be baptised. The survey begins with the texts that constitute the foundation of the faith, confession and doctrine of the Church of Sweden. The survey then continues with an analysis of popular texts on baptism used in the thirteen cathedral parishes of the Church of Sweden. From the thirteen cathedral parishes, the material consists of letters of invitation to parents as well as the web sites of the various parishes. The author concludes that the divergence between official documents and praxis in the parish is quite vast. One of the main reasons for baptism seems to be baptism as an occasion for giving thanks or for welcoming the child. Something that is also highlighted in the parish texts is God's promise to be present in the baptised person's life. Though this promise is closely connected to Jesus' words in Matt 28, the parish texts seldom bring out the central role of Jesus in baptism; they prefer to speak about "God". The author poses the question whether this silence about Jesus and about the traditional effects of baptism depends on a fear, or cautiousness, within the Church of Sweden when talking about essential aspects of Christianity.

*The author poses an important question that would be fruitful to discuss in the larger setting of all Nordic Lutheran churches; is there a bigger focus on God, rather than Jesus? What are the reasons for this, a focus on creation theology, a weaker focus on Jesus' own baptism?*

Diocese of Uppsala

2008 *Dopet i vår tid – Bidrag till en nutida dopteologi (Baptism in Our Time—contributions to a contemporary baptismal theology)*

The first article concerns the important of place in the life of a Christian, the places we inhabit in our everyday lives, such as the workplace, our homes, schools et cetera and the places in which we worship. The author also discusses the different artefacts in those places, primarily in relation to baptism, such as the baptismal font and the difference in placing at the gate of the church or deep within the church. The article focuses on the city and the need for a baptismal theology of the city, of the specific kind of community that exists in the city as well as the loneliness. Other parts of the anthology contains different theological perspectives on baptism, such as new motives for baptism that strives to get away from the strong focus on original sin as basis for baptism. Furthermore, the anthology contains suggestions for baptismal liturgies, prayers and new hymns.

*The articles are intended to form a point of departure for discussion rather than presenting results and as such is meant to be a material for conversation in different parishes in their discussion on baptism.*

Diocese of Växjö

2013 *Kyrkan och dopet idag – om dop i 2010-talet (the Church and the Baptism today—on Baptisms in the 2010's), Växjö*

This anthology is the result of a project on baptism in the diocese of Växjö. The project focused on how the parishes could learn more about baptism and whether the diocese should produce general guidelines on baptism, and how they should be outlined. The anthology contains articles that are the written transcripts of the talks held during three days at the diocese main office. The talks focused on both practical experiences and theological in-depth analysis. In the first category, representatives from the diocese of Lund shared their experiences and findings based on their own projects. In this category, there is also an article about the Alingsås liturgy containing both prayers and Bible passages that can be used by parishes and theological reflections. In the second category, we find theological analyses of issues that concerns baptism, such as the issue of belonging and exclusion, or the importance of the name, and how to interpret the doctrine of original sin. The anthology also contains articles on ecumenical matters, such as the relationship between baptism and the blessing of children, or how to live in accordance with BEM in the life of the parish.

*To what extent does the regional level communicate their results of campaigns in this way, as an anthology where the contributions more focus on theological and liturgical aspects rather than strictly practical elements of baptism at the parish level?*

Hartman, Lars

2010 "Usages - Some Notes on the Baptismal Name-Formulae", *Ablution, Initiation, and Baptism: Late Antiquity, Early Judaism, and Early Christianity*, pp. 397-414, D. Hellholm, T. Vegge, Ø. Norderval, Chr. Hellholm, De Gruyter, Berlin

This article gives a semantic background to how we can understand baptism as a communicative act and that the language used about this rite separates the Christ-believers and early church in their surrounding society. Given that the article does not elaborate on exegetical meaning of the passages where the formulae appear, there is not much to grasp

concerning the meaning of baptism in the early church, rather we get an insight into language usage and phrases that still appear today. The name formula “in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit” is both performative and normative in the Church today, in that a baptism occurs through the formula and is legitimized through it (cf. BEM, a baptism must be performed in the name of the Trinity).