

Baptisms

Baptisms at Saint Andrew's Church

We are delighted that you are thinking about this important sacrament of the Christian faith. We encourage you, and we also want you to understand the meaning of this service before you proceed.

What is Baptism?

Baptism is a rite in which a person is washed with water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This practice was established by Jesus Christ. He was baptised by John the Baptist in the River Jordan. When Jesus was baptised, he accepted our sins as his own. Following his death for us, and his resurrection, Jesus gave this command to his disciples.

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you”.

Matthew 28:19

Baptism of a child,

Baptism as an adult or teenager.

Bringing a Child for Baptism

If you are seeking baptism for your child, it will indicate three things:

- you are recognising Jesus Christ as the eternal Son of God who has become human to reconcile us to God, and you are accepting him as the centre of your family life and the life of your child.
- you are seeking the help of the Holy Spirit, so that the life of your family will be one where Christ is loved; and
- you will commit to teaching your child the way of Christ as he/she grows, both through your own example and by being part of the life of the Christian Church.

Baptism of a child and membership

Baptism is about becoming a member of the Christian Church. For that reason, it will always happen in a worship service, not at another time or place.

When a child is baptised in the Uniting Church, she/he is listed on the roll of baptised members, and a representative of the Church will visit your family from time to time. If you move somewhere else, we will send a transfer of membership to the Church in that place.

The Promises

In the baptism service, we ask the parents the following questions:

What do you ask of God's Church for (name)?

We ask that he/she be baptised into the faith and family of Jesus Christ.

Will you provide for your child a Christian home of love and trust?

With God's help we will.

Will you set before (name) the example of a Christian life, and will you pray that she/he will learn the way of Christ?

With God's help we will.

Will you encourage your child to grow within the fellowship of the Church, and will you pray that he/she may come to faith in Christ?

With God's help we will.

What baptism is not

Baptism is not just a social or family ceremony to celebrate the birth of a baby. Baptism is about entering the faith and family of Jesus Christ. It is about your decision to try to bring your child up as a Christian. If you simply want to celebrate and give thanks to God for the arrival of your child into the world we can certainly do that in another way.

Baptism is not the label of a particular Church. People often say that they were baptised Anglican/Catholic/Lutheran, etc. But in fact there is only Christian baptism. The baptism certificate is a joint certificate issued by eight major churches, and says that we all accept each other's baptism rites.

Baptism is not needed for a child to attend Sunday School or Church.

How do I arrange for my child's baptism?

Please contact the Church Office (address, phone (07) 3221 2400) and arrange to speak with the

Minister.

The Minister will then visit you to talk with you about baptism and explain the baptism service. You will also meet with an Elder who will have a role in the service.

Baptism as an adult or teenager

Saint Andrew's will normally only agree to baptise adults or teenagers who habitually worship at Saint Andrew's. There needs to be a commitment to take up a Christian life, including the worship of the Church as an integral part of your life-style.

People seeking baptism will be asked to attend a series of classes, which will explain and discuss the major beliefs and practices of the Christian faith, and the life of the Church. Such classes are run each year.

Adult baptism includes confirmation (laying-on of hands with prayer invoking the Holy Spirit). The person affirms their faith in Christ, and commits themselves to a life lived in the teachings and community of the christian faith.

The vows taken in an adult baptism are:

Do you promise to follow Christ in your daily life?

With God's help, I will seek to love and obey Christ, and grow in my relationship with God through prayer and study of the Bible.

Do you promise to be a faithful member of the Christian community?

With God's help, I will share in the worship of the church and support its work with my time, talents and money.

Do you promise to participate in God's mission to the world?

With God's help, I will witness to Christ in word and deed, and look for the coming of the kingdom.

Baptism happens once. The Church cannot consider a second baptism for someone who has been baptised as a child. Instead it offers confirmation and other ways for the person to rejoice that they have been baptised, and to affirm the promises made for them at their baptism.