

Behaving: Believing the gospel or good news is important, but our baptism also symbolizes that in deciding to follow Jesus we turn away from sin and live for Him.

Belonging - Coming to Church: We encourage you to attend our gatherings at St Andrew's. This is to enable you to familiarise yourself with our church meetings, but also to let us to get to know you and your family. This is important because part of baptism is asking the church family to help you raise your child in the Christian faith.

What are your questions?

About baptism?

About Christianity, Jesus, the Bible?

About the Church?

About Sponsors or Godparents?

St Andrew's, Kinson

Sunday services @ 9.30am

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St Andrew's Church Centre

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Christ brings light and peace

 **st andrewskinson**

A Celebration of Christian Initiation
The Sacrament of Baptism



What is baptism? Baptism has several applications in the New Testament. The most commonly known is water baptism. However, the most important is when a person is baptised with the Holy Spirit.

John the Baptist said 'I baptise you with water' but only Jesus can 'baptise you with the Holy Spirit'. (Mark 1:8) It's the gift of God's Holy Spirit which is the true mark of a Christian whose sins have been forgiven. (Romans 8: 9-16). People receive the gift of the Holy Spirit when they (i) repent by turning back to God and (ii) put their trust in Jesus as their Lord and Saviour. (Acts 2: 38, Eph 1: 13).

This is essential to understand because it is possible to be a Christian and never have been baptised with water, and it is possible to be baptised with water and never become a Christian!

What is water baptism? Water baptism is a symbolic washing with water. The washing with water is an outward sign of the inward reality that occurs when we repent and believe. That is, it demonstrates a person's sins have been washed away. The symbolic washing of baptism points to what God does on our behalf by providing for the forgiveness of our sins through Jesus' death and resurrection. It's meant to remind us and assure us that God has forgiven us and given us the gift of eternal life.

Water baptism is also a good way for a person to *publicly acknowledge* repentance from sin and intent to trust in and follow Jesus as Lord and Saviour. (Acts 2: 38 & 16:31).

Baptism is therefore a *sign*. It's not a naming ceremony, or the way people become Christian, or the way people are forgiven; nor is it a guarantee of getting to heaven (Acts 8:13-24).

Who should be baptised? Any person who has expressed repentance and faith in Jesus as Lord and Saviour and children of believing parents who intend to raise their children to trust in and follow Jesus.

Why baptise children?

In the Bible, the blessing of knowing God and his promises were often shared by the entire family. In the New Testament for example, when the Apostle Paul and Silas were asked by a man "what must I do to be saved?" they replied "believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved...*you and your household.*" When he was baptised, so was 'all his family'. (Acts 16;;30-33).

Also, children are welcomed and considered part of God's people. (Matt.19:14, Eph.6:1-3 & Col. 3:20). They enjoy the blessing of being raised under the encouragement and teaching of their believing parents. (Deut. 11:18-21 & 1 Cor.7:14).

Therefore, water baptism of children is a simple sign of God's *offer* of forgiveness to that child and is given on the understanding that they will be raised by their parents to accept it in due time. Of course such signs are meaningless without genuine faith in Jesus on the part of the parents.

How do we prepare for Baptism?

Baptism is ultimately about the three B's: *believing, behaving and belonging.*

Believing: Two Ways to Live

Because the baptism of a child (or adult) is special, we like to prepare each family beforehand. During the baptism of your child, you as parents are asked to promise that *you, personally,* are a follower of Jesus Christ and that you will take responsibility for your child's Christian upbringing.

We therefore ask all prospective parents to attend a half day Christianity Course called Two Ways to Live, prior to the Baptism Service. Dates for this short course are set during the year and are available on application.