

# St. Andrew's Church

## Baptism and Thanksgiving Information



## **Baptism and thanksgiving services**

We are delighted that you have decided to ask for God's blessing through baptism. St Andrew's offers baptism for both adults and children. This leaflet explains what we are able to offer.

There are two different services provided by the Church of England, baptism and thanksgiving. A baptism is a service of Christian commitment. Promises are made either by parents and godparents on behalf of a child, or by the person themselves if they are an adult or older child. A thanksgiving is a service to give thanks to God for the birth of a child, no promises are made and no godparents are needed. Both baptism and thanksgiving services are a celebration of new life and offer the opportunity for family celebration.

### **Baptism**

In a baptism (sometimes also known as a Christening) a person is baptised using a small amount of water over the head, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This marks a commitment of Christian faith. Parents and godparents make promises and pray on behalf of children. When an adult is baptised, they make those promises for themselves and are supported in prayer by sponsors rather than godparents.

Baptism is the beginning of a spiritual journey in the church. The hope is that a baptised child will be nurtured in their faith and eventually come to faith themselves, when they can be confirmed. Confirmation is a special service where those who have been baptised reaffirm their faith and take the baptismal vows made by their godparents for themselves. Adults being baptised are expected to work towards confirmation as soon as practicable after their baptism.

The promises made at a baptism service either by the candidate or by the parents and godparents on their behalf are as follows:

- To turn to Christ, renounce sins and repent of evil.
- To pray and care for the baptised child or regularly pray themselves.
- To draw the child by example into the community of faith or become part of the community themselves.
- To help them take their place in the life and worship of the church or be part of that themselves.
- To walk in the way of Christ.

The parents and godparents or the candidate will say that they believe and trust in:

God the Father, source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist.

God the Son, who took our human nature, died for us and rose again.

God the Holy Spirit who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known in the world.

### *Preparation*

Because the promises being made are significant it's important that everyone making them understands them. Because of this it is expected that parents and if possible, godparents attend the baptism preparation session run in church. In addition to this we encourage people to attend at least three services before baptism, to get to know the church and better understand the faith. Adults presenting for baptism will undergo a separate preparation of several sessions.

### *Requirements*

A child to be baptised must have three baptised godparents, (these could include the child's parents) and they should include two people of the same gender as the child where possible. An adult to be baptised should have baptised adult sponsors who can support them in their journey of faith. If there are other people who would like to support the baptism candidates but are not themselves baptised they can stand with the family as supporters. They will not be expected to make any promises during the service.

### *Misunderstandings around baptism*

Sometimes it is thought that baptism is a naming ceremony, its not, a child is named at the registration of their birth.

Godparents are not intended to be adoptive parents in the event of the death of the child's parents. Godparents are there to support and pray for the child and their family and to encourage them as they grow in faith.

## **Thanksgivings**

A thanksgiving service is a celebration to mark the birth of a child. We give thanks for the life of the child and commit you and your child to God, asking for God's help and blessing for the years to come. Its open to anyone who believes in God. Poems, readings and songs can be part of the service.

A thanksgiving service is different to a baptism. In a thanksgiving service there is no sprinkling with water and unlike baptism there is no requirement for anyone to make promises of Christian commitment, declarations of faith or to encourage the child to attend church in future.

There are no godparents in a thanksgiving service, but if you want to invite friends or family members to stand with you at the front during the service as supporters you are welcome to do so. There are no requirements for supporters to be baptised. There is no requirement to attend preparation, but a member of the thanksgiving team will visit to help you plan the service.

A child can be baptised at a later date following a thanksgiving service or in time, if they are old enough to make the promises themselves.

## **Next steps**

If you would like help deciding whether a baptism service or a thanksgiving suits you best, or to find out more do discuss it with us.

Contact Rev Jo Joyce (Vicar) on 07588 576351 or [revjoannajoyce@outlook.com](mailto:revjoannajoyce@outlook.com)

A date can be booked for your service and arrangements can be made for a member of the baptism and thanksgiving team to visit by contacting our administrator.

Contact Julie Crow on 07756 918847 or [administrator@standrews-eg.org.uk](mailto:administrator@standrews-eg.org.uk) Monday, Wednesday and Friday mornings.

## Planning the service

You might like to personalise your baptism or thanksgiving service by adding in songs and readings, a selection of ideas are below.

Popular songs and hymns below, or choose from our hymn books:

- One more step along the world I go
- Give me joy in my heart keep me singing
- He's got the whole world in his hands
- All things bright and beautiful
- I danced in the morning
- Shine, Jesus, Shine
- Morning has broken
- Our God is a great big God
- If I were a butterfly

There will be a bible reading as part of the service, you might like to choose one of the popular readings below, or one of your own.

- Matthew 18:1-5 Jesus commends the faith of a child
- Matthew 28:16-20 Jesus tells his disciples to baptise all nations
- Mark 10:13-16 Jesus welcomes little children
- John 6:5-14 A young boy helps Jesus feed the 5,000

Have a think about whether you would like to ask someone to do the reading. You can also include poems or other readings of your own.

We are very happy to pray for any situations you would like us to as part of the service, this might be friends or family members who are unwell or remembering a loved one who has died, do let us know if this would be helpful.

Further ideas to help with planning the service and what to expect can be found at [www.churchofengland.org/life-events/christanings](http://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/christanings)

## Practicalities

Please arrive promptly for the service and encourage guests to do the same. Parking is limited so it pays to allow time to park and walk. A small amount of blue badge parking is available and a ramp for wheelchair access to the church, if you think you might need either of these, please discuss at the preparation session.

Children are very welcome to join us for the service and allowed to move around, or play with toys if needed. We just ask that you remain with them to ensure they are safe. A baby change can be found in the toilet off the side room.

There will be time for photos at the end of the service, if you would like to video the service please discuss this at the preparation.

If you would like a photo of your child on the screen during the service please email it to our administrator [administrator@standrews-eg.org.uk](mailto:administrator@standrews-eg.org.uk) at least two weeks before the service.

If you are having hymns or songs the cost of the organist is £30 payable in cash on the day.

We don't charge for baptism services, but we do provide a certificate for the person baptised and the godparents this costs £5.

All services will have a donation plate for the church to help us cover our costs. Alternatively, if you wish to give online you can do so via our website or by following this QR code.



## Services

We encourage everyone having baptism or thanksgiving services to get involved in the life of the church. Details of all our services and special events are on our website <https://standrewseg.co.uk> and Facebook pages. Our regular services are as follows:

Regular services:

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month 8am, a said Holy Communion

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month 10am, Worship for Everyone, a family friendly informal service.

Other Sundays Parish Communion at 10am, a communion service with hymns

3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of the month at 4pm Encounter, a short all-age creative service with crafts, Lego and chat

Wednesdays 10am, a said Holy Communion