

SERVICE OF THANKSIVING

Alternatively, if you need more time to think about baptism, to get used to what happens in a church, or to think about your own relationship with God, you may like to consider a thanksgiving service.

This takes place after a Sunday service. We thank God for the birth of your child and we pray that God will bless you both.

It is a 'no strings' service. There are no promises to be made and no role for godparents, although we encourage you to bring your family and friends to share in the thanksgiving.

A thanksgiving service may be the appropriate choice for you now and may become a step to-wards baptism, but it is in no way a substitute for baptism, nor does baptism automatically follow.

MORE INFORMATION

If you would like more information on baptism or generally what it means to follow Jesus please email me, my contact details are below and you may also like to take a look in Koorong Book Store, which has a wealth of Christian books, CDs, bibles for adults and children, café and play area for children to enjoy. Koorong, 42 Lord St, Mt Lawley, <https://www.koorong.com/> Phone 9427 9777.

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BAPTISM

ST MATTHEW'S ANGLICAN CHURCH GUILDFORD



Lord Jesus, we bring our children for you to touch and bless. help us to help them and encourage them, that they may grow up rooted in love, strong in faith and courageous in life. Amen

Being a parent is a great responsibility — sharing in the creation and care of a new life and it is important that you guide your children wisely.

Just as you care for the physical welfare of your children by feeding them, clothing them and looking after their health, so you have decided to look after their spiritual welfare by having them baptised, praying with them, reading Bible stories to them and taking them to church.

Your children rely chiefly on you for all they need to grow. That is why, in the service of baptism, sponsors (parents and godparents) promise to give their child the help and encouragement needed to grow in the Christian life.

As children learn by example, you might consider:

- ✓ Attending church with them where they can be part of KidZone (*Sunday School*)
- ✓ Praying with them, and
- ✓ Reading Bible stories to them.



BAPTISM - THE FIRST STEP

The word 'baptise' comes from a Greek word which means 'to dip' in water or to have water poured or sprinkled on a person. Water has many uses. It is cleansing, refreshing and life-giving. In baptism, it is a symbol of being made new, of receiving the new life of God, of being cleansed.

In the early Church, and in some churches today, when people were baptised their whole body was plunged into the water. They were, so to speak, 'cleansed' and then raised to begin a new life in Christ.

After the baptism, the sign of the cross will be made on the child's forehead to show that they are marked as Christ's own forever. A lighted candle may then be given to them as a sign that they now belong to Christ, who is the light of the world. You may choose to purchase one yourself or we will provide one on the day.

Baptism is a very important part of your child's journey and you may like to mark it by having a party, sharing a special cake and taking photographs. We encourage families to come back into the hall for morning tea after the service as part of the celebration. Some families light the candle on the anniversary of the child's baptism as a special reminder of the vows the family have made on behalf of the child.

The Prayer Book reminds us that children are baptised in response to God's all-embracing love. Parents and godparents (sponsors) who have responded to that love bring their children for baptism.

Sponsors are asked:

- ✓ to accept the responsibilities placed upon them in bringing the child for baptism,
- ✓ to answer on behalf of the child, and
- ✓ to encourage the child in the life and faith of the Christian community by their prayers and example, their friendship and love.

Sponsors promise on behalf of the child:

- ✓ to turn to Christ,
- ✓ to repent of their sins,
- ✓ to reject all that is false and unjust, and
- ✓ to renounce evil.

They also declare their own faith in God and their intention to strive to live as disciple of Christ, loving God with all their heart and their neighbours as themselves, as long as they live and it is a requirement of the Anglican Church that sponsors have been baptised.

CHRISTENING

The word 'christening' is sometimes used instead of baptism. This is an old English word, which means 'making a person a Christian'.

In the days before official government records were kept, a baby's Christian name was given at the baptism. Now, of course, babies are given their names officially when they are registered with the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages.

Your baby's name will be important to you and your family, and you have probably spent a great deal of time choosing it. But of central importance at this service is that your child is welcomed into God's family, so for this reason, the word 'baptism' is preferred.