

Q: How do we know we have enough faith?

A: You do not have to be a perfect Christian to want to follow Christ and it would be surprising if you never had any doubts or questions in your mind. The declarations show that you intend to do your best. The whole Church will support you in the making of these promises.

Q: How much does it cost?

Baptism is free. However the Kirk Session must approve your application for baptism before the service may go ahead.

Q: What's the difference between a baptism and a christening?

A: None. They are different names for the same thing.

A prayer for parents

*O God, you have given us a share
in the creation of new life.*

*When things go well, may we be
thankful; when we are in despair,
comfort us; when we have lost hope,
renew our strength; when we are at
peace, cherish us.*

*And at all times, O God,
fill our hearts with love for our
children, each other and for you.
Amen.*

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Strathbrock Parish Church

Understanding your baby's baptism



Some common questions answered

Jesus said :

*Whoever welcomes one of
these little children
in my name welcomes me...*

Q: What is baptism?

A: Christians describe baptism as a sacrament - a visible sign of God's love. At baptism we acknowledge that God loves us and claims us as one of his own.

Q: When did Christian Baptism start?

A: When Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan two thousand years ago, he became aware of God as his Father and felt the special presence and power of the Holy Spirit. This was a turning point in his life. You can find the story at the beginning of Mark's Gospel in the New Testament. Later, after his death and resurrection, Jesus told his followers to make new disciples and baptize them, too. This has been done ever since in Christian churches throughout the world.

Q: Do I have to be a member of the church?

A: Yes, the Church expects at least one parent or other close family member either to be a member of the Church or willing to become a member. This is because baptism does not make sense if you do not have a relationship with the congregation in which your child becomes a member and from whom you receive a promise of commitment.

Q: Who is involved in the baptism service?

A: A parent or another close family member:

- Thanking God for his gift of life.
- Deciding to start your child on the journey of faith and asking for the Church's support.
- Expressing your belief in God and praying for your child.

A: The child:

- Beginning a journey of faith.
- Becoming a member of the local and worldwide Christian family
- Sharing in the death and resurrection of Jesus in a symbolic way

A: The Church

- Providing a worshipping community where everyone can grow in faith
- Promising to welcome, support and pray for you and your child.
- Being reminded of the importance of this baptism for every Christian.

Q: Shouldn't our children make their own decisions?

A: Some people worry that they are imposing views on their children; but from the moment they are born, you make choices on their behalf. You don't wait until they are old enough to ask for milk before you feed them and in the same way it is right to give them spiritual nourishment and teach them about the love of God from an early age. When they are old enough they may choose to be confirmed and make an adult affirmation of faith.

Q: What happens during the Baptism service?

A: Your baby's baptism will take place during the main Sunday service. It is a public celebration with the Church and not just a private ceremony. During the service the minister will show you what to do and explain when to stand up or sit down. When it is time for the baptism itself, the parents or another close family member will be asked to stand to make the following declarations:

The Confession: In presenting your child for baptism, desiring that she/he may be grafted into Christ as a member of his body the church, do you receive the teaching of the Christian faith which we confess in the Apostle's Creed?

The Apostle's Creed: I believe in God, the Father Almighty, the creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he arose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Promise: Do you promise depending on the grace of God, to teach your child the truths and duties of the Christian faith; and by prayer and example to bring her/him up in the life and worship of the church?



The service will also include the following important symbols:

Water: The minister blesses the water, which will be used to baptize your baby. Water is an important sign of life. In the same way that our bodies need water to drink, our spiritual lives need the cleansing and refreshing love of God. This is symbolized in the water of baptism sprinkled on your child's head in the name of God - Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Baptism means accepting Jesus who died and rose again for us, and making this a pattern for our life. It's a vivid way of saying that we are accepting his help to live a generous life and not a self-interested one.

The Sign of the Cross: The minister will make the sign of the cross on your child's forehead. This is like an invisible badge to show that Christians are united with Christ and must not be ashamed to stand up for their faith in him.

The Commitment and Welcome by the Congregation: The congregation will say some formal words of commitment and welcome to acknowledge that your child has joined the church and to show how pleased they are to have you among them.
