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BAPTISM

@ ST. PAUL'S STONEHOUSE

We're delighted that you're considering baptism either for yourself or your child. It's a really simple Christian ceremony that involves prayers and the pouring of water over the head.

This booklet is here to help you think about what baptism is all about, and to decide if it is the right option for you or your child, not least because it's a very important "once in a lifetime" event.

WHAT IS BAPTISM?

Baptism is all about new life

In baptism we celebrate new life, giving thanks for it as a gift from God. The pouring of water symbolises nurture and growth, and we pray that we might grow into the people that God wants us to be.



Baptism is all about forgiveness

We use water to make ourselves clean. In baptism we acknowledge that we have “all sinned” (Romans 3:23), and need God’s forgiveness and help to live rightly.

Baptism connects us with Jesus

Baptism is a sign that, by faith, our lives are connected to Jesus in a special way that can never be broken. This is symbolised by making the sign of the cross on the forehead to remember his death and resurrection.



Baptism connects us to the Church

Baptism not only connects us with Jesus as individuals, it makes us part of a new family with everyone else who’s been baptised. That’s what the Church really is. We might be very different from each

other, but we are all united by the bond we have in Jesus, and because we are loved and created by God.

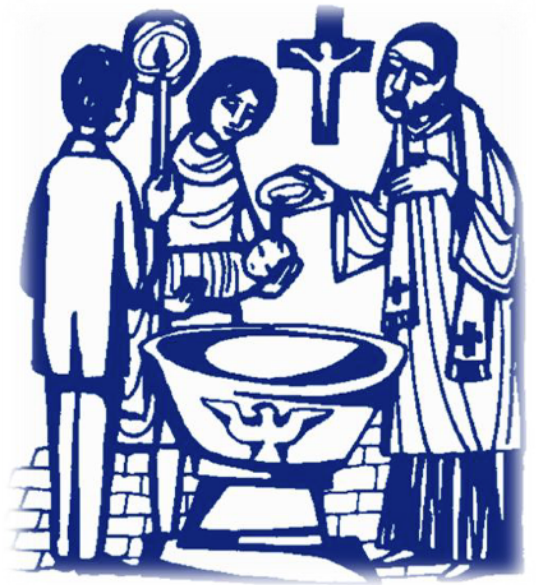
QUESTIONS?

Who can be baptised?

You can't be too young or too old, and it's never too late to be baptised!

However, if you have been baptised before, you cannot be re-baptised, and might want to explore Confirmation instead.

Or if you're a parent who has not been baptised, you might want to consider being baptised with your child.



Do I need to be a church member?

We believe that baptism is the starting point of a walk with Jesus, and being a member of a local church is vital to this life. This is why expressing an active commitment to the church is part of the baptism service.

So if you're not a regular member of a church, we encourage you have a taste of church with us for 6 months as you consider whether you want to make a longer commitment. During this time, we'd also love to help you explore the Christian faith further and to think through the promises you will have to make (for yourself and your child) during a baptism service.

What about Godparents?

When a baby or child is baptised, Godparents also join in making promises on behalf of the children to follow Jesus and be part of the Church. The role of the Godparent is to pray for the child and to nurture them in the faith of Jesus Christ. Because of this role, all Godparents must have been baptised themselves.

How much does it cost?

There is absolutely no fee at all for a baptism.

BAPTISM IS FOR LIFE

Baptism is more than a family or social event. All of the things that baptism is about – thanksgiving, nurture, growth and forgiveness – should mark our whole lives. Baptism marks the “official” beginning of a lifelong journey in following Jesus and being part of the Church. However, here are some things that you and your children can already begin to do together even before baptism.



Be part of Church

As mentioned, it's really important to remain connected to church. Our **11am Sunday Service** is the main place where we get together as a Christian community of all ages to worship God, pray, and learn from Jesus.

We also aim to stay connected with each other during the week through various groups and activities. Please do ask for more information.

Tell your children Bible stories

It's important for children to get to know Jesus from the Bible at home together with parents. There are some fantastic, affordable children's Bibles available. If you haven't got one, we'd love to give you one or help you choose something suitable.

Either way, please speak to Leon (Vicar) or JP (Children's Worker).



Teach your children to pray

Prayer, talking to God, is at the very heart of the Christian life, and should feel natural. Try praying with your children as soon as they can talk. Teach them to say, 'Thank you', 'Sorry', and 'Please' prayers. Or say a grace before dinner. And of course, teach them the Lord's Prayer as well.



Here are some simple prayers you might like to use:

A Prayer of Thanksgiving: Thank you Father for all your goodness. Help me to remember you always.

A Prayer for Forgiveness: Lord Jesus, please forgive me and have mercy on me, a sinner.

A Prayer of Praise: I praise you Lord, because your love for me is great, and your faithfulness endures forever. In Jesus' name. Amen.

A Prayer before a Meal: Father, we know that all things come from you and so we give you thanks for this food. May we always remember your kindness to us with thanksgiving. In Jesus name, Amen.

Lord's Prayer

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name; your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and for ever. Amen.



Contact details

Church Tel. No.: 01752 221241

Church Office Email: stpaulsstonehouse@gmail.com

Leon Sim (Vicar): leon.sim@hotmail.com

JP (Children's Worker): stpaulschildren@hotmail.com