



Baptism at St. David's

A Message from the Dean

Saint David's is a beautiful Cathedral and my staff and I welcome the opportunity to walk with you and your family in this celebration of life and family faith.

Strong stable family life and a faith are wonderful attributes that parents bring to the well being for their children's happiness and future. Research shows that a strong sense of identity, a reasoned faith in God and a sense of both direction and hope prepare us well for adulthood.

The Cathedral clergy and I value this opportunity to share with you on this occasion.

This brochure contains

- practical information
- assistance to prepare for baptism
- ideas to bring God into the day, and
- an invitation to journey with us on the pilgrimage of faith and life.

All of this is to help the baptism service be a meaningful celebration for you as parents and for your family and friends.

Whilst there is much information in the next few pages please not hesitate to ask questions.

In the meantime the Cathedral congregations will be praying for your family and we look forward to you sharing with us.

Be assured of my best wishes and prayer.

Richard Humphrey

Dean of Hobart

What you must do

Confirm arrangements on the 'Your baptism' application form. Please take care with the spelling of the full names as these are used for entry in the baptismal register and preparation of certificates.

Set a date for the baptism – Baptisms are usually on Sunday

- in the 10am service by arrangement. This service is normally a Choral Eucharist with the Cathedral Choir and the service lasts about 75 minutes.
- after the 10am service often around noon. We encourage and welcome as many of your godparents and guests to attend the service immediately before the baptism and join us for refreshments prior to your service.
- at other times by special arrangement with the Dean (especially in extraordinary circumstances: guests, godparents from the Mainland or afar etc.)

Usually you should allow 8 weeks notice for preparation.

Is there a fee? – There is no fee. If you wish to make a thank offering that is up to you. A collection is taken both in the church service and at the baptism. Please inform your guests there is a collection.

Are you baptised? – If you are not baptised or confirmed and would like to personally consider this, please feel free to raise this and talk to the clergy. It is not unusual for one or both parents to seek baptism (and subsequent confirmation) at the same time as their child's baptism.

Choose Godparents – In the Baptism service it says that children being baptised "need encouragement, teaching, and the help of a good example, so that they may learn to worship God, to pray to him, to put their faith and trust in him, and to take their place in the life of the Church" Godparents are those who are willing to help you in giving such help and encouragement. They should be people who can affirm their own Christian commitment in the service with you and who will regularly pray for your child and for you as the parents of their godchild. Godparents are sometimes referred to as sponsors and usually should be over 18.

Is church attendance compulsory? – We encourage you to attend church on at least one occasion before the day. Please introduce yourself when you come and we will look after you. There is more about this later.

Above all – Welcome! We look forward to meeting you and arranging your child's baptism.

What is baptism?

Baptism is a sacrament or sign of God's grace to us in Jesus. The Bible teaches that God in his love and kindness sent his Son, the Lord Jesus Christ to live and die for the sins of the world. Through faith (believing trust) in the Son we receive salvation as a free gift from God. The sacrament of baptism marks the baptised out as Christ's.

Of course a baby has no personal faith but is baptised into the faith of his or her parents (that is why this occasion is an opportunity for us to question, perhaps rediscover, or discover more personally our own faith). Importantly in the service of baptism we, you as parents and your baby's godparents, together with the congregation pray that baby may ***be born again and made an heir of everlasting salvation.***

As a parent you want the very best for your child. We encourage you in this step of baptism because God's gift of eternal life and your child's relationship with God is fundamental for life's preparation, for hope and for personal assurance of the love of God.

What makes a family Christian?

We encourage parents to explore their own faith and their questions about hope, life and God. Faith and hope are two of the important dimensions to a strong and growing family life. Research shows that Christian faith strengthens both your marriage and family life.

It is easy to judge Jesus Christ by his followers. Many Christians, we clergy included, are not always the best examples for the loving God of grace and kindness met in the Bible.

Jesus, the Son of God wants us to know his heavenly Father as God and friend. The gospels portray Jesus as a man of deep compassion and grace and love. He offers life to the full and teaches that eternal life is a hope we can know today and live by day by day. It makes a difference.

So a Christian family is one that has Christ and his example in it. This is a discovery not an imposition.

You may not have a firm understanding of Christian faith or you may not be a practising Anglican. Take this opportunity to re-examine your own commitment and we invite you to join the community of faith at the Cathedral.

We are not here to indoctrinate you but we do invite you to consider –

- Doing a short course with one of the Cathedral staff on the Christian Faith as an opportunity to consider who Jesus is. Such course can be held at a time convenient to you.
- Reading at least one story of Jesus, known as a gospel. We will give you Mark or John (or both if you like) in a modern easy read format.
- Coming to services at the Cathedral to experience Christianity in community. We love having children with us in the service and there are activities for them.

We do want to meet with you!

We will make a time to meet with you as soon as possible after the arrangements have been made. We will deal with some preliminary questions and then explain the meaning of baptism and explore any faith questions you may have. Godparents are welcome to come to these interviews.

We will go through the service and leave you with a copy of the service to both read and show others.

Questions you may ask might include "Why baptism?" "What is Anglican baptism?" "What are the candidates and godparents promising?"

Most of all, we want to help you grow in the faith into which you are baptising your child as we believe this is the greatest blessing we can bring to your family, to know that in Jesus we are part of God's family and that he loves us.

What next?

We look forward to assisting you in the future with growing your child in the faith?

Your baby's (child's) name is now put on the Cradle Roll and will receive an annual card from the Cathedral.

You will be invited to special services such as the children's Christmas service. Or you may want to join the Cathedral family or another Parish church. We can help you with these matters.

From time to time we run family courses or special functions and will advise you of these.

You may receive other promotional material from the Cathedral.

Finally please keep your address, including any email address, current with us (remember to put my email address in your computer address book to keep us updated.)

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