

# What is baptism?

Baptism is a ceremony where a person has water sprinkled over their forehead or is completely immersed in water. Baptism has been a central practice of the Christian Church since it began.

## Why do we baptise?

The Christian Church baptises because Jesus commanded it. *'Go and make disciples of all nations baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always'* (Matthew 28:19-20)

We also baptise to receive God's promised blessings that are ours through Jesus.

# Adult Baptism



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# What blessings does God promise in baptism?

## Forgiveness of sins

In the waters of baptism, God washes away all our sins; the sins we have committed and the sins we will commit.

*Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins.*  
(Acts 2:38)

## New life

In our baptism God births new life in us by joining us to the work of Jesus on the cross.

*Don't you know that all of us who were baptised into Christ Jesus were baptised into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father we too may have new life.*  
(Romans 6:3-4)

## Membership in God's family

We become members of God's family through baptism.

*So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptised in Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.*  
(Galatians 3:26-27)

## Eternal life

In addition to the new life we receive in baptism, we also receive the promise of eternal life after we die.

*If we have been united with him (Jesus) like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection.* (Romans 6:5)

## The Holy Spirit

*Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*  
(Acts 2:38)

The Holy Spirit given in baptism is the living presence of Jesus in us - enabling us to grow as his followers and empowering us to live new lives.

## How do I know if I am ready to be baptised?

If you have received Jesus as your Saviour and Lord you are ready to be baptised.

Baptism is for sinners who acknowledge their need of forgiveness, and trust Jesus for God's forgiveness. You do not have to get every area of your life into shape before you can be baptised. We come as we are to God, with open hands and hearts ready to receive all he wants to give us through Jesus.

While we do not have to change to be baptised, baptism will change us.

## I was baptised as a baby but never believed, do I need to be rebaptised now that I believe?

God is at work in baptism. In Christian baptism, God has already chosen you, put his name on you, claimed you as his precious child and promised to be with you. God only needs to do this once for it to be effective in our lives. We might waver in our commitment to God, but God never wavers in his commitment to us.

Our unbelief does not invalidate God's work for us in baptism. The offer of God's gift always remains and can be received and claimed at any point in our lives by trusting in Jesus.

Therefore you do not need to be rebaptised. We have another ceremony called 'Confirmation' where you can publicly affirm your faith and claim all that God gave you in your baptism.

# What do I need to do to be baptised?

If you would like to be baptised at Good Shepherd, please make an appointment with one of our pastors - Rolly Stahl or Reid Matthias - by calling 8263 5087. They will listen to your story of how you've come to know Jesus and explore appropriate steps towards preparation for Baptism.

If you are still very new to the Christian faith you will be encouraged to complete an appropriate course such as *Alpha* or *Beginnings* to give you a healthy foundation in the Christian faith.

You will also be encouraged to attend a *Discovery* course. This will help you understand who we are as a church and where God is calling us as a faith community. Information on *Discovery* is available from the brochure rack in the foyer.