

Anglican Parish of St Thomas Tāmaki



Baptism

"Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you." – Matthew 28:19-20

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Anglican Church in Aotearoa New Zealand and Polynesia 2023

Dear Parent(s)

St Thomas Tāmaki congratulates you on the birth of your child and welcomes your request to make your child a member of this Christian community through the Sacrament of Baptism. This is a special time of joy and celebration of the gift of new life. It is a time of great hopes and dreams for the many years of life you look forward to sharing with your child and the other members of your family.

The Parish has its hopes and dreams for each child it welcomes in Baptism – that the child will grow to:

appreciate God our Father's love for everyone,
know about Jesus and come to love Him,
be aware of the Spirit that gives people the power to live in Christ
and
want to take part in the life of the Church in this Parish.

We look forward to supporting you and your child in the journey of Christian commitment and hope we are all strengthened by prayer, love and service to each other in daily life.

The sacrament of baptism marks the beginning of our life of faith. In baptism we are welcomed into God's family and begin the journey of getting to know and understand the meaning of God's love.

Baptism of a Child

For a baby to be baptised there needs to be 'a well-founded hope' that the child will be nourished in the knowledge and practice of the faith. Parents might ask themselves about the 'dream' they have for their children and how faith is going to be nurtured in their child's life.

At St Thomas Tāmaki the baptismal preparation programme for a child is in two parts:

1. Participation in a **Baptism Preparation Programme**. Please contact the Priest-in-Charge to book into the preparation course. **This is essential.**

2. Presentation of your child to the Christian community of St Thomas Tāmaki and celebration of **Baptism** at one of the Sunday services in St Thomas Tāmaki.

If St Thomas Tāmaki is not your usual place of worship, we recommend you contact your local parish. Baptism is an important way of making a connection with your local parish and priest and the future support your local community offers. This is especially important if you will be looking to send your child to a local Christian school.

Baptism of an Adult

The majority of Christians are baptised into membership of the Church as a baby or child and grow up in an environment where the Church is always part of their lives.

Some people however, are moved by the Holy Spirit to consciously and freely seek baptism later in their life journey.

During the first centuries, the growth of the Church grew largely through the baptism of adults. In recent years, the Church has returned to many of these first century ceremonies for welcoming adults who seek baptism into the life of Christ.

Who may be baptised?

Adults who believe God is calling them into the Christian way of life are invited to become baptised. As well, a parent who has been baptised and wishes his or her children to participate in God's creative activity may bring a child forward to receive this sacrament. If there is a second parent who is not baptised, it is customary for that parent to consent to the baptism of the child. A grandparent may present a child for baptism with the consent of a parent, unless they themselves are a guardian of the child and able to consent on behalf of the child.

May an unmarried parent present a child for baptism?

Any baptised adult may present a child for baptism. In the community of God's people both the child and the single parent will find a church family committed to their support and nurture.

Who are sponsors or godparents?

Sponsors can be baptised adult members of any Christian community. They are witnesses to the baptism and accept responsibility for supporting the child's spiritual development. When a child is baptised, the sponsors, popularly called godparents, present the child and join with the parents in making the baptismal promises on behalf of the child.

When does a baptism take place?

Because baptism is the way a person becomes part of the church community, the witness and welcome of the congregation is an essential part of the service. Normally baptism is administered on Sunday or other major feast days of the church when the congregation is assembled for worship. Members of the congregation commit themselves to support and care for the newly baptised persons and to help them grow in faith. Baptism of unbaptised persons in danger of death, especially infants, is also available.

How much notice is required for baptism?

Time is needed for the baptism preparation. It is wise to contact the priest several months in advance.

Is there a fee for baptism?

Baptism is a sacrament, and as such is a gift of God to us. There is no fee for baptism.

How does baptism differ from confirmation?

Those who were baptised as children often wish to make a mature affirmation of the baptismal promises made on their behalf by their parents and sponsors. This affirmation is done through the sacrament of confirmation in the presence of a bishop.

What if I want to become an Anglican but am already baptised?

Baptism in any Christian church or denomination is acknowledged as valid within the Anglican Church. Any baptised person may become a member of the Anglican parish and contributing to its life and ministry. Some

parishes and individuals will want to acknowledge this publicly, such as through services of confirmation or reception by the Bishop.

How is baptism celebrated?

The service of baptism includes the reading of scripture and preaching of a sermon, the presentation of the candidates and the affirmation of beliefs by the candidates, or in the case of children, those who represent them. In the Anglican Church water is poured onto the head of the candidate for baptism with the words, "I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit". The sign of the cross is then traced with water on the candidate's forehead to show that baptism brings the gift of the Holy Spirit. The candidates are given a candle to represent the light of Christ and are received into the church community. Normally the service continues with the celebration of Holy Communion.

The Baptism service

Gathering

Those who are being baptised, their families, friends and the church community gather together.

Welcome

Words of welcome are exchanged. The names that have been chosen for Baptism are announced and the parent's desire to have their child baptised is expressed.

The Word

Everyone present listens to the Word of God (readings from Sacred Scripture)

Oil of Catechumens

To prepare for baptism, the candidate is anointed with the Oil of Catechumens as a sign of Christ's protective power.

Vows

All present renew their own baptismal vows. Therefore, all godparents need to be Christian with at least one of them baptised, practising Anglicans.

Water

The baptism takes place as the priest pours holy water three times over the forehead as he says the words of baptism.

Oil of Chrism

The newly baptised are then anointed with Sacred Chrism as a sign of sealing with the gifts of the Holy Spirit. Like Christ, the one baptised is now an “anointed one”.

White clothing

As a sign of being a new creation clothed in Christ, the one who has been baptised is now covered with a white cloth. This usually is represented by the white clothing customary for a baptised person.

Candle

As a sign of the light of Christ now present in the newly baptised, a candle is usually presented and lit from the paschal or Easter candle.

Blessing

Final prayers and a blessing are given so that all present may love and serve the Lord in peace and goodwill.

A prayer

Grant, O Lord, that all who are baptised into the death of Jesus Christ your Son may live in the power of his resurrection and look for him to come again in Glory; who lives and reigns now and forever. Amen.