



*King's Park
Church of Scotland
Glasgow*

What is the meaning of Baptism?

Baptism is many things to many people. These notes are to help you decide if Baptism is really the commitment you wish to make on behalf of your child at this time.

Baptism is a sacrament, a sign from God. It is a sign which shows us how God saves us from all the mistakes we make in life. Water is used to clean people who are dirty. The early Church saw being washed in water, total immersion in water, as a sign that God had cleansed us from all the dirt in our lives, all the wrong things we wish we hadn't done.

In the time of Jesus rain was a sign of God's blessings. Without the rain, crops would fail and the people would starve, so we sprinkle water on the child's head asking for God's blessings on your child.

God's love and blessings are for all people; no matter their colour, race, sex or age. Just as a child may not know the difference between wrong and right, but still recognises the love of a parent, so your child will recognise God's love. It is like a seed that we hope will grow into an adult who is mature and has a good sense of right and wrong and a purpose in life.

A Profession of Faith

As the parents you are asked to make a public profession of your faith. Children pick up all sorts of habits from their parents, good and bad. We believe that if a child is brought up in a loving, caring environment where they are taught God's care and help, then that child will grow to respect others and to respect themselves because they know, no matter what they face, that they are never alone.

If you do not know of God's love then it is difficult for you to pass that love onto your child. So we ask all parents, or sponsors to profess their faith in God, as the Father who created us, Jesus as the Son who died for our wrongs, and the Holy Spirit as the Comforter who guides us.

Parents who make this profession are saying that they are Christians; putting their trust in God alone and, even though they are not perfect, there will be evidence in their lives of their faith by their commitment to the Church in their attendance and a desire to follow God's way.

Some misconceptions about Baptism

Baptism is not a christening. In times past a child was given its name and was baptised hours after the birth, hence the minister asking what the 'Christian name' of the child would be. Your child will probably have already been registered before you see the minister about Baptism, so he/she already has a name.

What Promises are made at Baptism?

There is a promise to provide a Christian education for your child, to teach your child the wisdom of the Bible and set a Christian example by seeking God's guidance at home and regular church attendance.

There is also the promise made by God parents and by the Congregation to help you to do this. We as a church have our crèche and our Sunday School on at the same time as worship so that you can attend worship and have your children taught or watched over by caring members of the church.

At Baptism your child becomes a member and is welcomed into God's family in King's Park Church where they will always have a home.

If a child is unbaptised no harm will come to the child. In fact it is better for the child to remain unbaptised than for parents to be hypocritical and promise to do something they will not, or cannot do.

What if I am not ready to make the Promises of Baptism?

If for any reason you feel that the vows of baptism are too great a step to take at this stage, then we as a church still want to help you.

You could have a Blessing or Celebration of Thanksgiving for your child, where we give thanks to God for the safe birth of your child and ask for his guidance in your life.

Your Options

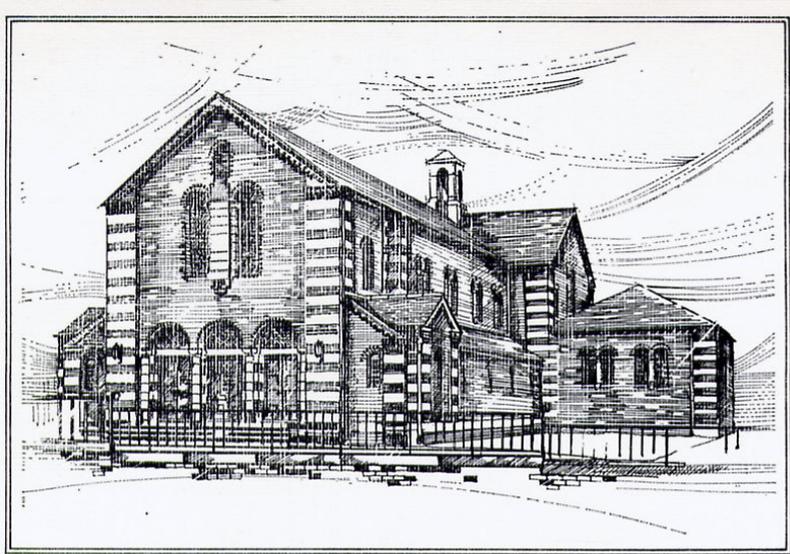
Baptism with one or both parents having Professed their faith

Baptism with a sponsor, e.g. Grandparent having Professed their faith
Blessing or Thanksgiving Service – parents not having Professed their faith with Child receiving a blessing.

If you have any doubts or questions then please do not hesitate to contact me and I will help in any way I can by discussing matters further. All contact details are on the back page.

All we ask is that the best decision is made for you and your child.

Rev Sandra Boyd



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