

# Baptism and Blessing in Tranent Parish Church



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Here's some helpful information for you...

BAPTISM is about welcoming someone into God's family. It is a sign that we are starting a new life. Christians believe that Jesus died and came back to life and that he lives within us by his Holy Spirit. When Jesus himself was baptised, the Holy Spirit came down and touched him like a gentle dove. That is why baptism pictures often have a dove in them. By being baptised, we are following the example of Jesus.

Within the Church of Scotland, a person can only be baptised once, but this can happen at any age.

Jesus said "Let the little children come to me" and we give parents the option of bringing their children for baptism. In this way, they are welcomed into the church family, just as Jesus himself welcomed little ones.

Baptism is about relationship. We baptise in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit - the perfect relationship of love. That love underpins the vows that are taken at baptism. In the case of a child, the Church expects one parent or other close family member either to be a member of the Church or to be willing to become a member. In the baptismal service, these adults profess their own faith and promise to give the child a Christian upbringing. The reason for this is that baptism is just the start of a journey. Faith needs to be nurtured within a church family.

**VOWS:** Parents of a child being baptised or adults who are being baptised themselves, are asked to confess their faith during a Sunday service by answering a question such as:

"Do you believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and do you confess Christ as your Saviour and Lord?"

In addition, parents are asked:

"Do you promise, depending on the grace of God, to teach your children the truths, duties and joys of the Christian faith and by prayer and example, bring them up in the life & worship of the church?"

If there are Godparents, they may wish to make a simple vow too.

If parents feel that they can't answer "I do" to these questions in good faith, they may wish to consider asking the Minister to perform a blessing for their child instead.

Next page... Blessing

**BLESSING**

A blessing does not replace baptism. If a baby receives a blessing, they can still choose to be baptised later in life. A short blessing and thanksgiving ceremony can be offered to parents who have considered baptism and have decided that they are not ready to state their beliefs or make any commitment. In the first instance, parents should contact the Minister, to have an informal chat about what they desire for their child.

**INVOLVING FAMILY AND FRIENDS:**

Baptism is a big celebration for the whole church, so please do invite all your family, friends and neighbours to share in the day!

**The Minister's Contact details**

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