



ANGLICAN PARISH OF CANNING

Church of St Michael & All Angels

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Welcome!

We are delighted that you are exploring baptism, the foundation Christ's Church.

What is Baptism?

In the course of his ministry, Jesus of Nazareth welcomed women as generously as men, and children as well as adults. At a time when women and children were seen as little more than male property, Jesus valued them, giving them full dignity as daughters and sons of God, created in the divine image and likeness. 'Let the children come to me' he says, 'do not try to stop them, for to such as these belongs the Kingdom of God.'

Practiced from the earliest days of the Christian movement, Baptism (sometimes called Christening) is a sign of new life in Jesus Christ. In this new life all people are joined as one, since we are not baptised into the Anglican church, but into the wholeness of Christ's Church – the one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church, transcending every brand name.

The Anglican Church practices 'open baptism', which means that we welcome with open arms your wish to be baptised or to have your child baptised, trying to place as few hurdles in your way as possible. At the same time we want to help you make this celebration meaningful and memorable, the start of a journey in faith and hope and love within the community and household of faith. Baptism is a powerful sign, focusing many of the great themes of the life of faith. We celebrate God's creative and redemptive work – in creation, bringing cosmos out of chaos; in liberating the Jewish people from slavery in Egypt by parting the waters of the Red Sea; in empowering Jesus with the divine Spirit at his own baptism in the river Jordan; in Jesus' overcoming of death and sin in his crucifixion and resurrection.

Baptism connects the small story of an individual life with this cosmic story, the big picture showing what it means to be a human being in relationship with God. All the baptised participate in this eternal cycle of dying and rising to newness of life by the public vows made when they are brought to the life-giving water.

God's gift of love for the whole creation is revealed in this special way, liberating us from all that denies or denigrates or destroys the dignity of human nature.

Baptism is entry into life lived in company with Christ, meeting him week by week around his table where we are inspired to live Christlike lives, nourished with bread for the journey. Baptism means we belong to a great family, the community of the catholic (from the Greek *katholikos*, meaning universal) Church of the ages, stretching back in time and around the world. Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Mother Theresa of Calcutta become relatives, together with heroes of the past like Francis of Assisi, Mary Mackillop, Pope John XXIII, Martin Luther King Jr, and locals like John Ramsden Wollaston, to name just a few. The Christian family is large and famous and strong, including many who are living and working for justice and peace in today's world.

Although baptism is universal in its embrace, initiating us into the life of the universal Church, we experience the richness of our inheritance by involvement in a local church. As we give ourselves here to one another in love, committing to particular people in all their diversity, the blessedness of who we are and whose we are begins to dawn. Here we experience the mystery of God's patient and passionate love as we live for one another and with one another and from one another.

Sponsors / Godparents

Because baptised life is about replacing independence with inter-dependence, adults as well as children need sponsors. Adults should choose mature Christians who can nurture and guide them in faith. Parents are the primary sponsors of their own children, since it is initially in the home that a child's beliefs and values are formed and shared. This is the primary place where care and growth take place – physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual. The home in isolation, however, is never enough. Well balanced children learn to socialize early, participating in larger communities beyond their parents and siblings. It is customary and wise, therefore, to choose extra sponsors to assist with the special task of encouraging a child to grow in Christian faith and life. It is not necessary to choose your best friends for this role. Choose people who will take an active interest in the spiritual development of your child. There is some flexibility around how many sponsors a person might have, though our Prayer Book commends two Godfathers and one Godmother for boys, and two Godmothers and one Godfather for girls. All Godparents must be baptised, and preferably confirmed.

Cost

No fee is ever charged for baptism, but most people like to make a donation to the ministry and mission of the church.

What Next?

At St Michael & All Angels we baptize adults as well as infants regularly throughout the year, however, in the six weeks of Lent leading up to Easter there are no baptisms. Some other Sundays are also ruled out for practical reasons. To avoid disappointment, you need to discuss dates with the parish priest well in advance.

In addition to in-person discussions about this sacrament with the parish clergy, the best preparation for baptism is simply coming to the Sunday Eucharist, and we ask that you do this for at least a month prior to the baptism date – and, hopefully, happily ever-after as well!

Your presence helps you get to know us and us to know you. It means that you and your family become part of the parish community ahead of the baptism day, so that when the celebration happens your own happiness is shared by everyone present.

Like to Know More?

If you would like to know more, please contact Fr Brett, having filled out the form below and sent it through completed except for the date requested.

NAME OF CHILD IN FULL	
DATE OF CHILD'S BIRTH	
REQUESTED DATE FOR BAPTISM	
NAME OF MOTHER IN FULL	
OCCUPATION	
ARE YOU BAPTISED/CONFIRMED	<i>PLEASE UNDERLINE WHICH APPLIES</i>
NAME OF FATHER IN FULL	
OCCUPATION	
ARE YOU BAPTISED/CONFIRMED	<i>PLEASE UNDERLINE WHICH APPLIES</i>
FAMILY ADDRESS	
CONTACT INFORMATION	T: E:
NAME OF GODPARENT	
ARE YOU BAPTISED / CONFIRMED?	<i>PLEASE UNDERLINE WHICH APPLIES</i>
NAME OF GODPARENT	
ARE YOU BAPTISED / CONFIRMED?	<i>PLEASE UNDERLINE WHICH APPLIES</i>
NAME OF GODPARENT	
ARE YOU BAPTISED / CONFIRMED?	<i>PLEASE UNDERLINE WHICH APPLIES</i>