



ST CLEMENT'S
CHURCH MANCHESTER

Baptism and Thanksgivings

Introduction

Thank you for your interest in baptisms and thanksgivings at St Clement's. Baptisms and thanksgivings are joyful occasions where we give thanks to God for what He has done and look forward in faith to what He will do. Below is an explanation of baptisms and thanksgivings at St Clement's.

What baptism is

Baptism is a sign of two things:

1. Baptism is a sign of conversion. It is a sign of being made clean through Jesus' death on the cross. And it is a sign of becoming a new person through the Holy Spirit.

When adults are baptised we assume that God has converted them. When children are baptised we look expectantly to God for this to happen as the child is brought up in an environment where the Bible is taught and lived.

2. Baptism is a sign of being included into the church family.

What baptism is not

Baptism itself does not save a person. There is no magic that happens at baptism. In order to be saved a person must repent and believe in Jesus Christ. The seeds of faith may or may not be present in a child when they are baptised. A child's baptism takes full effect in their lives only when they themselves personally and actively turn away from their sin (repent) and trust in Jesus Christ (believe).

Who do we baptise?

As a Church of England church it is the regular practice at St Clement's to baptise two groups of people:

The first group consists of men, women, and children who haven't been baptised as infants and who demonstrate both a genuine faith in Jesus Christ and a desire to join the church family (this is often called 'believer's baptism').

The second group consists of the infants and children of church members. The service for infant baptism assumes that one or both of the parents are practicing Christians and members of St Clement's Church. For the service to have any meaning for the church and family we therefore expect parents to be attending St Clement's regularly before we explore the possibility of baptising their child. This gives them an opportunity to decide whether to join our church family so that together we can help their child grow to know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour. The promises that parents have to make in baptism are very serious. Our desire is to help parents see the seriousness of these promises. For parents who are not sure about this important step, we run Alpha and Christianity Explored courses which give parents an opportunity to think through exactly what they do believe about God. We are keen that parents are able to stand and answer the questions at the baptism of their child with integrity.

What is thanksgiving?

For some people, there is something inside them that wants to say 'thank you' to God for the safe arrival of their child. But they do not yet feel able to make the promises contained in the baptism service.

For other people there is a desire to dedicate their child, and raise them up in the fear and instruction of the Lord. But they do not think their child should be baptised until they are old enough to profess faith for themselves.

For both groups of people we have a thanksgiving service where we give thanks for the children and pray for God's blessing on their lives

When do we do baptisms and thanksgivings?

Baptisms and thanksgivings take place during the Sunday morning service. This enables the Church family at a baptism to share in the promises made with the parents and godparents to bring the child up within the Christian faith. And at a thanksgiving it enables the church family to join the parents in thanking God and in praying for the child.

What do I do next?

We encourage people who would like a baptism to come on an Alpha or Christianity Explored course. For dates of our next course please see the website, or contact the church office.

If, having read all of the above, you feel that you would like to explore baptism or thanksgiving, please contact the church office.

St Clement's Church Office

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