



PARISH OFFICE:

Located in Dendy House (rear of St. Margaret's Church)
Hours: 10:00am-2:00pm Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday
79-81 Pitt St, ELTHAM, 3095

Tel: (03) 9439 9238

Fax: (03) 9439 5123

Email: parishoffice@stmargaretsetham.org.au
or visit our web site at: www.stmargaretsetham.org.au

APPLICATION FOR THANKSGIVING FOR A CHILD
OR BAPTISM

What Preparation occurs?

St Margaret's have a policy that all baptism parents meet with the priest conducting the service at a mutually convenient time usually in the family home. Then a member of the congregation will also visit who will discuss with them such issues as Jesus' teaching about God, commitment and discipleship and the nature of Christian baptism. Godparents are most welcome to attend the meetings. The visits provide the opportunity to raise any questions or issues you may have about baptism.

Even if you have participated in a baptism in the past, you will still be contacted personally, as plans and formats change regularly

The rehearsal at the church is usually held the day before (except at Easter, see enclosed schedule) the service and God parents are encouraged to attend as well.

We suggest that families seeking baptism begin to worship with us regularly on a Sunday morning at the 10 am All-Age-Eucharist. This allows the congregation and the baptism families to get to know each other before the baptism and allows families to become familiar with the service. The 10am service has a special children focus every Sunday.

What about refreshments after the service?

We have a celebratory morning tea, following the service and invite you to join us with your family and friends.

What do I do next?

When you have looked carefully at the information in this letter, please complete the details on the form provided and return it to the parish office at the address below or hand it to the Vicar at church. The Vicar will then contact you and arrange to meet you.

The priest will initially meet with the family preferably within two weeks of receiving your application.

We look forward to hearing from you and to welcoming you in church

With best wishes

Libby Delbridge

**Libby Delbridge
Priest-in-Charge**

Dear

Thank you for your recent inquiry about baptism. We look forward to hearing from you when you have read this brochure.

There are two kinds of services available to you. You may choose both or either one of them.

Thanksgiving For A Child

This service is designed to be a family celebration to thank God for the gift of your child. It can be used to celebrate the birth or adoption of a child.

The opportunity is given for you, your family and friends to name your child in a significant way.

Thanksgiving services can be held at any time that is convenient to you and the priest.

The service of Thanksgiving for a Child is designed to enable families to seek God's blessing for their child, to ask for God's protection and to thank God for the child's life.

The service is not Christian baptism. It welcomes into the human family a new member and gives them their own name and place. Christian baptism means something more than celebrating that a baby has been born. We would be glad to help prepare for baptism if you choose.

Baptism

Baptism is a significant moment in the life of the person being baptised, for the family and for the congregation.

What is baptism?

Baptism is a sacrament of admission or initiation into the Christian church.

Baptism is the way a person is made a member of the Christian church worldwide, not just a particular denomination.

Baptism marks the beginning of a person's Christian life.

Baptism follows a person's declaration of faith in Jesus Christ. In the case of babies, this declaration is made by their parents and godparents/ sponsors on their behalf.

Baptism allows children of a suitable age determined by the parent and the priest to become communicant members of the church following a time of preparation.

Sometimes parents who are asking for baptism for their child are not themselves worshipping members of the Christian church. This means they are asking that their baby be made a member of the church when their own membership is inactive or nominal. Parents need to think about this and may wish to discuss it when the Vicar visits.

The following questions, which are asked of sponsors during the service, outline the seriousness of the commitment being made:

Do you turn to Christ?

I turn to Christ.

Do you repent of your sins?

I repent of my sins.

Do you reject selfish living and all that is false and unjust?

I reject them all.

Do you renounce Satan and all evil?

I renounce all that is evil.

Will you each, by God's grace, strive to live as a disciple of Christ, loving God with your whole heart and your neighbour as yourself, until you life's end?

I will with God's help.

Perhaps if neither parent is able to make these affirmations it may be best to postpone baptism for the time being. Thanksgiving for a child does not ask for these commitments. But please discuss this with the Vicar.

When can I or my child be baptised?

Baptism services are usually held during the Sunday morning Eucharist at 10.00am. They can be held at the Saturday 6pm service as well. The service on baptism days is a special celebration for the whole community and, like all our major festivals can take place in St Margaret's wonderful mud-brick hall.

How long is the baptism service.

Normally the service takes about 75 minutes.

When should the family arrive?

We suggest people arrive at least 10 minutes before the service so that when they arrive we can direct them to their seats.

Who can be a godparent/sponsor?

Godparents/sponsors need to be baptised people but do not need to be Anglican. Godparents/sponsors have an important part to play in the Christian life of a candidate for baptism, whether that person is a child or adult. They stand with the candidate at baptism as a support and witness. In the case of children, they answer on behalf of the child and share responsibility with the parents for the progress in Christian growth of the child baptised.

What if a godparent cannot be present at the service?

People can act as a stand-in for the godparents but we ask that you let us know their names prior to the baptism.

What about photographs?

Taking photographs during worship can be a distraction. While we ask that photographs not be taken during the service we welcome them afterwards and make the opportunity available for family groups to pose at the font.

What if children are restless during the service?

We provide an activity for children during the service, under their parents supervision. If the service is in the Church there is an area at the rear of the Church with toys which parents can also supervise.

How much will the service cost?

There is no charge for baptism. This is not a commercial transaction but a gift of God. However, many families offer a donation toward the ministry of the church as an expression of thanksgiving to God for their child. Donations are usually given during the collection in an envelope marked "Thanksgiving Gift".

Do I have to say anything during the service?

Everything that is to be said will be explained at the baptism preparation meetings and the rehearsal and is written in the order of service.