

In baptism we are reminded...

You were created by God and for God.

God knows you and loves you.

Baptism signifies God's approval of you,

and your approval of God.

You are baptised into Jesus Christ

His story, his life and his love are now yours.

You are baptised into Christ's Church, His family

The are the newest member, beloved and precious.

God is always pleased with you, no matter what.

God forgives all,

God waits patiently for you,

His love never ends.

You life is a tapestry, God is the weaver.

Each thread has it's place, each story adds to the whole,

God is still working on you,

Making you beautiful

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Presenting your child for Baptism

Cadzow Parish Church

Christian Baptism

*“Go therefore to all nations and make them my disciples;
baptise them in the name of the Father
and the Son and the Holy Spirit...”*

Matthew 28: 19

Baptism Arrangements for Children

When a new baby comes it can bring a lot of happiness and joy into an already happy family. It can also make you more aware of the wonder of God and His love for us. In the church we are happy to share in this with you. I hope that this leaflet will help you understand the meaning of Christian Baptism. If you have further questions after reading it, please contact me and I will be happy to discuss these with you.

W. John Carswell
Minister

A Celebration for God's Family

Baptism always takes place within a service of worship in the church (unless there are exceptional circumstances). It is important that baptism is seen as part of the life of the church. The promises you make as parents are made before God in a church congregation who promise to support you and your child. Because baptism is part of the church's life, *Private Baptisms* outside the church or outwith a normal Sunday service are not available.

Baptism is not something that should be sought by parents 'just to keep the grandparents happy', nor 'because it is tradition and what has always happened in our family.' Baptism is a holy sacrament of the church and should not be undertaken lightly. The promises you make as a parent are made before God in church.

other being the Lord's Supper, or communion). It is the way people are introduced and welcomed into a Christian church family.

It is the hope of the church that children baptised as infants will later make their own profession of faith as young people or adults. This is called confirmation.



What does baptism mean?

The symbol of water can be used to describe different things:

- **Cleansing:** Water cleanses, so baptism is seen as a way to make someone clean and pure in body and spirit. It signifies forgiveness of sins and newness of life. Preparing for baptism is an opportunity to turn away from past bad things in life and take on the new challenge to become a disciple of Christ.
- **Participation:** We are participating in something that Jesus did himself (Mark 1: 9). While we are joined to his whole life, in baptism we share in Jesus' death and resurrection: we are 'drowned' and then 'raised up from the water'. Of course, this happens symbolically in Christian baptism, but the idea of new life, and new beginnings is important.
- **Gift of the Holy Spirit:** From early on (Acts 8: 14-25) the Holy Spirit was closely associated with baptism, bringing new light and understanding into the life of the baptised person. In baptism your child will receive the gift of the Spirit as an inheritance to be claimed as s/he comes to faith later in life.
- **Welcoming:** In baptism we are shown that a person belongs to God. It is the way for the church family to welcome a new member into their company. It is not an end in itself, but the first step of a lifetime's journey of faith in God through His Son Jesus Christ.

Guests

You are encouraged to invite family and friends to come and share in worship on this special occasion. They can be assured of a warm welcome and if they make themselves known to those welcoming them at the door will be shown to a seat near the rest of your family and friends.

Photographs

As your child grows it's important that you tell them about their baptism and its meaning, so we encourage friends and families to take pictures and/or video during the service. There is no better way to remember and reflect upon the event of baptism than by seeing it again and again.

The Meaning of Baptism

Baptism is an outward sign of a spiritual reality. That sounds complicated! It just means that as we are baptised or as our child is baptised with water, we are celebrating God's love and goodness to us and to our child. Baptism speaks of what God does for us through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. God offers his gracious love to us to make us new and we recognise that he does that with the symbol of baptism. It is also a sign of welcome into the Family of God (see page 7 for more details).

As the church is the family of God, the gift of baptism is open to all who believe that Jesus is Lord and to their children.

*"For the promise is to you and to your children
and to all that are far off,
everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him."*

Acts 2: 39

Baptism is not just a nice ceremony and excuse for a party, an insurance policy for the future, or a 'Lucky Charm'! Neither is there anything magical about baptism.

Baptism is a sign of entry into the church, and a sign that God takes us just as we are, whether we are old or young, and it challenges us to follow Jesus and become Christians.

Baptism is usually the first Sacrament people experience in church (the

Godparents

While in the Church of Scotland there is no 'official' role for godparents, we recognise the symbolic importance of godparents to many families and invite the godparents to be with you and your family during the baptism.



Your Promises

At a child's baptism what promises do I make as a parent?

You are asked the following two questions which must be answered with sincerity, please think about the questions and answer carefully.

1. In presenting this child for baptism, desiring that s/he may be joined to Christ as a member of his body, the Church, do you receive the teaching of the Christian faith which we confess in the Apostle's Creed? **We do.**
2. Do you promise, with God's help, to teach your child the truths and duties of the Christian faith; and by prayer and example to bring him/her up in the life and worship of the church? **We do.**

The following question is then put to the entire congregation of Cadzow Parish Church:

3. Do you, the representatives here of Christ's Church...welcome this child as one of your own and will you recommit yourselves to living in such a way that the love of Jesus Christ will be visible to him/her through your word and deed? **We do.**

These promises are to encourage you to make a commitment to your child and to Jesus that we pray will blossom into a full commitment to Jesus' Church. By making these promises you are committing yourselves to show your child what Christianity looks like every day. The promises ought to be taken sincerely. You are your child's best teacher and if you desire to see them grow as Christians, the best thing to do is to deepen *your own* faith.

What if I am not ready to make these promises?

If you are not ready to make these promises there are several options to consider.

Wait: If neither parent is baptised and do not wish to be then it would be more appropriate to leave baptism for a later time when you as a family are ready to make a commitment of faith.

Sponsor: A child can be sponsored by someone from your family who is a member of the church and is willing to make a commitment of faith on your behalf. This person(s) would stand with you on the day of the baptism.

Thanksgiving/Blessing: Another option would be what the church calls a Thanksgiving and Blessing service. This is different from a baptism and allows a family to express their thanks for God for the gift of their child and to seek God's blessing on their family. In this service parents commit to providing a loving and supportive home for their child.

Eligibility

Baptism is offered both to adults who profess faith in Christ *and* to the children of church members. If neither parent is a member of the Church we will also encourage one, and preferably both parents to think about what it means to be a Christian and to be a part of God's Family,



and to consider joining the Church. Speak to the minister to learn more about what it means to become a Christian.

A big part of growing in faith for you and your child is participating in the life of the church. Therefore, we will expect you to attend church services regularly before the baptism. The congregation is also taking an active interest in you and your family, so it's important they have the chance to get to know you before the baptism. Baptism is a celebration of the whole church and not about strangers coming for a "one-off" service.

Please remember that baptism is not a right, it is a privilege, and it is up to parents to enable the church to baptise. The minister and Kirk Session want to help you as much as we can, but where there is no connection to the church and no desire for such a connection the Kirk Session and minister have the right to decline to baptise a child. This is something we would rarely do, because we want to build a connection to you and your family, but we need you to work to build such a connection too.

Some Practical Details

At the Service

Before the service starts we ask you as a family to meet with the minister in the vestry. You will be shown to your seats at the front of the church for the start of the service.

If bringing your child to be baptised we encourage you to stay with your child for the rest of the service. We love the sound of children in worship, but sometimes it is simply easier to bring your little one(s) to the Crèche. Sunday school is available for school-aged children and all are welcome.

Belonging to God's Church Family

Baptism marks the beginning of a new family for you or your child. We hope that you and your family will always feel welcome at Cadzow Parish Church and that you and your family will grow in your connection to our shared life in Christ. There are many opportunities for you and your child(ren) to find a place here.