



After his death, friends and followers of Jesus shared his message of unconditional love, baptising people into the family of God.

“Whoever made a place for this message in their hearts received baptism, and devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching, to sharing community together, to the breaking of bread and prayers.”

Acts 2:42

WELCOME

We are pleased that you have chosen St Michael's Uniting Church for the Baptism of your child. We hope it will be a meaningful and memorable occasion for you.

The Sacrament of Baptism is a special occasion for you and your family and for St Michael's as a Christian community of love and justice.

Through the ritual of Baptism, we join with Christians around the world and throughout time. Baptism is the church's way of celebrating and naming the grace of Divine Presence in every one of God's children. We remember Jesus, whose life was deeply touched by the Spirit, the one in whom Christians believe that God was especially present. We see the Divine Spirit in all people and respect other spiritual paths.

Baptism symbolises the church's welcome for your child as a member of the Church. In baptism, we welcome new members into the life of the universal Christian faith and into the community of St Michael's. At the baptism, parents promise to ensure that their child is brought up with knowledge and experience of Christian faith.

BAPTISM AT ST MICHAEL'S

At St Michael's baptisms are usually celebrated on the second Sunday of the month (subject to change), during the morning service. The service begins at 10.00am. On occasion, more than one child will be baptised.

The Church service has several stages. Baptism occurs in the first section of the service. Our tradition is that people stay for the whole service (usually a little over an hour).

After you have requested baptism for your child, the minister will speak with you about the baptism (in person or via Zoom) before it is confirmed.

WHAT TIME DO WE NEED TO BE THERE?

Before the service the St Michael's Baptism Assistant will meet you in the Family Room of the St Michael's office building. Please arrive no later than 9.40 am. The Family Room is on Level 1 (half-way down the corridor on the left). Access to Level 1 is via the stairs or lift to the left of the glass doors.

The Minister will come to the Family Room at 9.45am. She will welcome you and give you further details of the service.

We appreciate the challenges of getting family and friends together and organised, however 9.40 am is a firm deadline so everyone is seated before in the church by 9:50 am. Arriving early will also help your child feel comfortable in the church environment.

COVID-19

Everyone attending must use the **Services Victoria QR Code** registration or record their first and last name and phone number on the sheets provided at the door.

Depending on the Victorian Government and Uniting Church regulations at the time, masks may be required either for the full service or for singing.

We maintain 1.5 metres between household groups where possible.

Hand sanitising stations are available in the church.

PARKING

Please plan to arrive early to arrange car parking and remind family and friends that parking may take time.

If you park at the Grand Hyatt Car Park (entrance on Russell Street) the Baptism Assistant will get you a voucher that reduces the cost to \$7. Friends and family can also pick up vouchers from the welcomers.

PHOTOGRAPHY

You are welcome to take photographs in the Church before and after the service and at the time of the Baptism, but we ask you to refrain from photography during other parts of the service.

FAMILY AND FRIENDS

There will be reserved seats for family and friends at the front of the Church in the second and third rows. We appreciate that some of your family and friends may come from different religious traditions or have little or no knowledge about religion or the Church. Please let them know that everyone is very welcome at St Michael's.

Please ask family and friends to be present for the whole service, unless they need to leave to take children to the Family Room.

If your child, or children of family and friends, need to be taken out during the service, parents are welcome to use the Family Room. The St Michael's Baptism Assistant, who will sit near you during the service, will accompany anyone who needs to go to the Family Room.

THE BAPTISM

When the time for the Baptism comes, the Minister will invite parents and children (siblings are welcome) to come to the font. Godparents are welcome and may be included in the service.

The minister explains the tradition of baptism, the congregation affirms the Christian faith into which the child will be baptised, and then the minister baptises the child and a blessing is sung.

Parent(s) will be asked to make a commitment to share the Christian faith with their child in response to these questions:

Will you tell your child the stories of Jesus, teach the values of the Christian life, and give him/her opportunities to experience Christian worship?

Will you help your child discover all that God may be in his/her life?

Will you commit yourselves to raising your child in a way that inspires compassion, justice-seeking and spiritual growth?

You will receive an ecumenical baptism certificate along with a Bible story book to share with your child.

During the singing of the baptism hymn, the family return to their seats. The service then proceeds with readings, sermon, prayers and hymns.

After the final hymn and blessing, the organist will play a Postlude. Many people in the congregation remain to hear the music. If you wish to leave after the blessing, please do so quietly so others can enjoy the music.

At the end of the service, the congregation gathers in St Michael's Hall for morning tea (subject to current COVID restrictions). You are welcome to join. However, we understand if you need to get away to a family celebration.

GODPARENTS

You are welcome to choose one or two godparents for your child, but this is not a requirement. The godparents will stand with you during the baptism. In recognition of the commitment they are making, they will be asked to respond to two questions. Please check that the godparents you have chosen are willing to make these promises.

Will you commit yourself to being a guide and support to Name on his/her spiritual journey, wherever that may take her/him?

Will you be available to Name as he/she grows, sharing in her/his nurture and encouraging him/her in life?

THE WEEK PRECEDING THE SERVICE

The week prior to the Sunday of the Baptism, a member of St Michael's will contact you to discuss the proceedings and ask how many people will be attending.

The week of the Baptism we will send you an outline of the Order of Baptism.

If you have not heard from someone by the Wednesday before the Baptism, contact the Church office, to make sure everything is in order.

DONATIONS

There is no fee for Baptism which is a sacrament of the Church. Families may wish to make a donation to the church to celebrate the Baptism, but it is voluntary. Family and friends are also able to make a donation which can be placed in one of the offering boxes near the church doors. There are two Pay Point machines in the church. Information about electronic donations can be found on our website or by contacting the Church Office.

FLOWER DONATION

In celebration of your child's Baptism, you are welcome to donate flowers for this special day. The cost is \$150 for one arrangement or \$250 for two arrangements. Please speak to the office staff for further details. This is entirely optional.

FURTHER QUESTIONS

If you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact us before the Sunday of the Service. The Church office phone is staffed Monday to Friday, 9:30am to 5:00pm. Telephone 9654 5120 or email: reception@stmichaels.org.au

FURTHER CONTACT

We hope that you will value the contact you have made with St Michael's on this occasion and continue to offer opportunities for your child to participate in a church community. St Michael's does not currently have a children's program, but children are always welcome at worship. We also offer a range of programs and activities and encourage you to join them whenever you wish.

FINDING YOUR WAY AROUND



