

What is Baptism?

Baptism is the sign of a covenant

The Bible teaches that the world was created perfect – the Garden of Eden was a paradise and there was no evil. God created the world and His last part of His creation was human beings – their task was to look after everything that had been created. They were also made to have a relationship with their Creator.

Humans were created with free will – the ability to make moral decisions. In the garden was a tree and they were told not to eat of it. Humans were tempted by the fruit of this tree and they ate the fruit of it. Immediately, they knew that they had done wrong and were subsequently put out of the garden.

However, because God loved his creation and He loved the people that He made – He gave them another chance. This chance came through a covenant that He made with a man called Abraham – Abraham entered into a covenant with God. God promised to bless Abraham and make his descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and the sand in the sea shore. Abraham

and his family were called to be faithful to God – a sign of the covenant was that all new born males were circumcised.

Throughout the history of Israel (God`s chosen people) they continually broke the covenant – so God made a new covenant with them and everything that He created. He sent his Son, Jesus Christ, to be an offering for the sin of the world. His death on a cross was a sign that he had bore the sin of the world. His resurrection was a sign that he rose from the dead. The new covenant has been made and it still holds true today. All who have faith in Christ are members of this new covenant. The entry into the covenant is baptism and we are called to be faithful to God. Baptism reflects the death of Christ as he plunged into the water and resurrection is symbolised in baptism by coming out of the water.

We baptise infants as a sign of the covenant – a sign that they have entered into a promise with God. The covenant in God`s side is that God will bless us and give us eternal life – the covenant in the infant`s side is that his or her parents will bring him/her up in the Christian faith by living a Christian lifestyle.

Baptism is the beginning of a journey

At baptism, your child begins his or her spiritual journey – it is a process that will last a lifetime. It is a process of spiritual development and growth – so that your child will come one day to make a profession of faith – then the covenant will be complete.

Through baptism your child becomes a member of the church – and you will be expected to encourage them to attend Church, youth organisations and the Light Zone – the church will do everything within its power to make sure that the child is encouraged in the Christian faith – you will be assigned someone who will be a support to you in this but it needs the support of parents. In baptism, your child becomes a member of the church and there will always be a home for them here.

Baptism is a serious commitment – if you feel that you can't commit to this, then the church offers a blessing upon your child – where the minister will say special prayers for your child within the context of worship. This blessing does

not ask for any commitment from the parents as there is no covenant.

At the end of the day, the choice is yours – whether you want to enter into a covenant with God and commit yourself to bringing up your child in the Christian faith or whether you simply want a blessing upon your child with no further commitments to the church.

WELCOME TO HILLINGTON PARK PARISH CHURCH.

We look forward to having you and your family in church with us this Sunday. We are aware that for many people it may be their first time in a Church service and so we would like to help you by clarifying a few things before Sunday, which we would be grateful, if you could pass on, to your family and friends.

When your guests arrive at the church – they will be greeted by our welcome team and shown to their seats. The welcome team are willing to be of assistance for any of your guests.

Your guest will be given an Order of Service, which will help your guests get a idea of what the procedure is.

Could you ask them to make sure that all mobile phones are switched off for the duration of the service and that video cameras or photography should be refrained from during the service as the service is an act of worship. You are welcome afterwards to take pictures in the chancel area of the church.

The service begins, when the minister, choir and the Church officer carrying the Bible enter the church. We would appreciate if people could be silent during this time, to show respect.

If you are able to stand to sing during the hymns then please do so.

There is an offering taking up during the service – the offering bag will be passed round - there is no obligation whatsoever for anyone to give.

The congregation remain seated during the offering.

After the baptism, if any of your guests want to leave the church, then they are free to do this but if you could let the minister know before the service begins.

The baptism comes early in the service and the service will be an All Age service which means its main focus will be on the children of the church.

After the last hymn we stand for the blessing and three fold Amen.

Your guests are welcome to join us in the large hall for tea and coffee after the service.

We look forward to your guests being with us on Sunday and we hope that they will feel welcomed at Hillington Park Church.

IF YOU WOULD LIKE MORE INFORMATION ON BEING PART OF THE HILLINGTON PARK FAMILY IN THE FUTURE, THEN PLEASE FEEL FREE TO SPEAK TO THE MINISTER FOR MORE INFORMATION.

The Kirk Session of Hillington Park Church