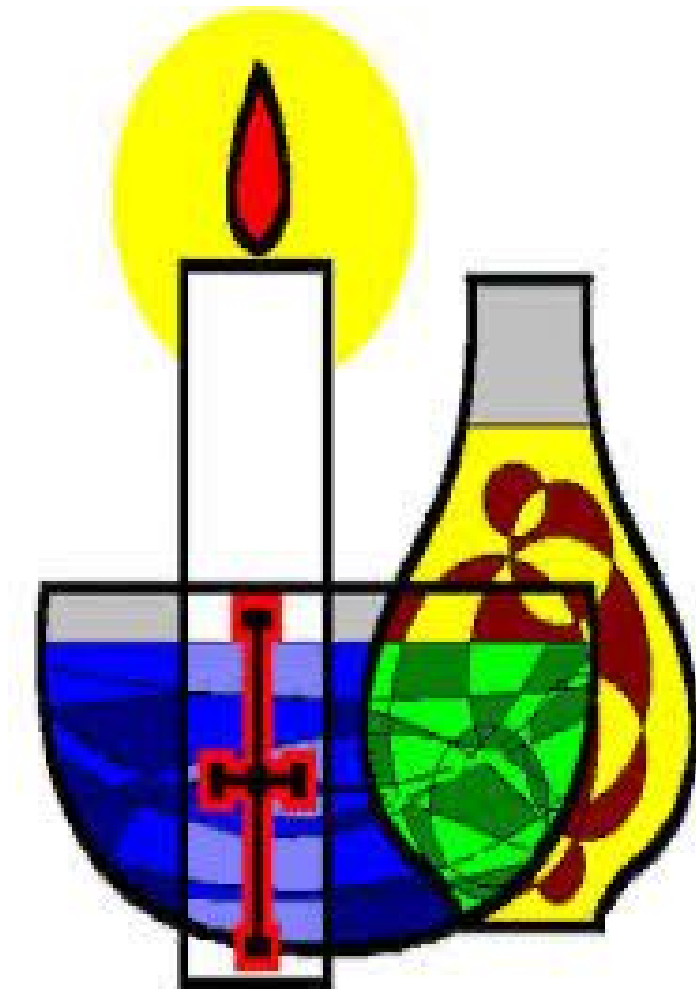


Baptism

Information for families



Saint Paul's Church
in the heart of Ipswich since 1848

Welcome

Thank you for thinking about having your child baptised at St Paul's Church, Ipswich.

St Paul's Church is part of the Ipswich Anglican Community, together with St Thomas' Church, North Ipswich. We work together as one faith community across the two sites.

We welcome families and their children who are seeking Baptism.

Jesus encouraged parents to bring their children to him, and as disciples of Jesus we do the same.

We are committed to helping parents build strong families, and Baptism is one of the key milestones in that process.

The information in this Baptism guide will assist you with the preparations. The Baptism Information Form allows the parish to collect the information we need for the service and also to stay in touch with you afterwards.

Once you have read through this guide, please contact the Parish office on (07) 3812 0377 to begin the process of preparing for your child's Baptism.

Your Church, Your Faith Community

We are glad to recognise you and your family as members of our faith community at Saint Paul's Church in Ipswich, and we look forward to sharing the adventure of intentional Christian life with you in the coming years.

OUR VISION

An inclusive Anglican presence in the heart of the Ipswich community.

OUR COMMUNITY

We are a faith community within Ipswich and beyond that strives to build relationships with our family and friends, and help each other show our love for the Lord and for one another through worship, prayer, reading of the scriptures, learning together, and community service.

WHAT WE DO

Our doors are open to everyone, and to all who are seeking to know more about Jesus Christ and welcoming him into their hearts, to grow as one of his disciples. We welcome all who are seeking God's love, and invite you to open your heart and allow his grace to come into your life.

Choosing to have your child baptised

Baptism celebrates the beginning of a lifelong journey as a follower of Jesus. It is the moment when a person becomes a Christian.

Baptism is a ritual with symbols that express and describe what it means to become a follower of Jesus.

Water – represents refreshment, cleansing and a fresh start

Oil – represents being called by God and anointed for a life of service

Candle – represents shining as light in the darkness of everyday life

When we come for Baptism we are saying “yes” to God’s love and claiming our place within the community of God’s people.

For families, Baptism can also be a time to acknowledge the mystery of a new life coming to birth among us and the immense privilege—as well as the awesome responsibilities—we have as parents.

When we baptise our children we are promising to be role models for them: examples of faith, but also examples of hope, and love, and compassion.

***IDEA:** Write a letter to your child explaining why you are choosing to have them baptised. As they become a little older you can read that letter to them, perhaps on the anniversary of their Baptism or maybe at their birthday. When they are older again, they may ask you questions about what is in the letter, or whether you think that your hopes and prayers for them are coming true.*

When you are ready to start planning for your child's Baptism, please contact the parish office so we can work with you to make the necessary arrangements.

***IDEA:** If one or both of the parents have not been baptised, we can arrange for that to happen at the same time as your child.*

Choosing godparents for your child

Asking someone to be a godparent for your child is a special moment. They will appreciate your trust in them as key figures in the life of your child.

Godparents have an important role as they assist and support you in the spiritual nurture of the child.

Godparents do not need to be Anglicans, but they must be baptised themselves, and they should be people who take their own Christian practice very seriously.

It is best not to choose someone as a godparent just because they can be at the service. It is much better to have someone else stand in as a proxy for an absent godparent, if the absent person will be better in the longer term as a special mentor in the life of your child.

Traditionally a child has three godparents: including two godfathers for a boy, and two godmothers for a girl.

The number of people is not all that important, but the quality of the godparent is a key consideration. Will each of these people be positive and healthy influences on your child as they grow?

The Baptism service

Baptisms can happen at any time in the event of special circumstances, but the usual arrangement is for us to celebrate Baptism during the church service that the family would normally attend.

There are also some special days during the year with a special link to Baptism: such as Baptism of the Lord Jesus, Easter Eve, Pentecost, and All Saints.

Who is involved?

Most often, the candidate for Baptism is an infant or young child, but we also baptise older children, teenagers, and adults.

Every candidate has a number of sponsors, and in the case of children not old enough to speak for themselves these include the parents and godparents as well as someone from the church community.

- **Parents** bear the main responsibility for a child's well-being. In the Baptism service you will be asked whether you are willing to accept the responsibilities of Christian parenthood. You will be asked to make a commitment of faith in Jesus Christ.
- **Godparents** can also have an important role as they assist and support the parents in the spiritual nurture of the child. Godparents do not need to be Anglicans, but they must be baptised themselves, and they should be people who take their own Christian practice very seriously.
- **The Church** is the community of faith to which the baptised persons belong. This community helps parents and godparents with the responsibilities of raising their children as active members of the church and nurtures all candidates by prayer and fellowship as they grow in their faith.

Personalising your child's Baptism service

There are many ways that we can personalise your child's Baptism service, and we will discuss these with you when we meet to plan the service.

Some ideas to consider, depending on the age of your child, include:

- Family heirlooms, including special Christening gowns and shawls.
- A new outfit purchased for the occasion (for older children).
- Make and/or decorate your own Baptism candle.
- Write a prayer to be used in the service, expressing your hopes for your child as they grow up.

After the Baptism

As a family you will have endless opportunities to help your child grow into the confident Christian person that we prayed for them to become at the time of their Baptism. Every special moment that you treasure with them is a step in your child's development, and every time you share your own faith and your own personal values with your child you take another step in this lifelong journey of faithful living as people of Christ.

Godparents will have an important role as your child grows, and perhaps especially when the children reach adolescence. By then the trusted adults you chose to be the godparents to your child will have cultivated a place in the child's life so they can serve as a personal mentor when your children most need their guidance. In the meantime, help the process along by making a habit of referring to these people as "your godmother" or "your godfather" even if they are also uncles, aunts or cousins. Plant a seed and watch it grow when the time comes.

The church is here to help you and your godparents in the nurture of your children. We will be in touch from time to time to offer suggestions, share ideas and maybe invite you to a seminar that may help you as Christian parents. When you are in town make a point of pointing out St Paul's Church to your children and occasionally bring them into the church to see where they were baptised, to light a candle and to say a little prayer together.

In addition, please bookmark our [faith@HOME](#) page on the parish website so you can easily find it when looking for ideas.

Spiritual milestones

The sacraments of the Church are special rituals in which we claim God's blessing for ourselves or—in the case of Baptism—for our children.

There are seven traditional sacraments and at least four of them are especially relevant to families:

- Baptism
- Confirmation
- Eucharist
- Marriage
- Confession
- Holy Unction (anointing with holy oil for healing)
- Ordination (Deacons, Priests and Bishops)

Children who have already been baptised can be prepared for their First Communion around 7 years of age.

Confirmation is usually when the child is around 16 years old.

The Christian spiritual tradition includes many other sacred rituals including Bible reading, meditation, prayer, icons, candles, incense, fasting, and 'body prayers' such as the labyrinth.

On the parish website we offer information about intentional engagement with our personal spiritual journeys, and the faith@HOME section has a special focus on those sacraments which are especially relevant to families and children.

Funding your local faith community

Whether or not you are able to be church every Sunday we need your help to fund this beautiful church and maintain its ministry at the heart of Ipswich.

The Ipswich Anglican Community needs around \$10,000 each week to continue our vital ministry as an inclusive faith community in the heart of Ipswich.

We receive no grants from the Government or from any charitable foundations.

Some former parishioners have left money for the church in their wills, and these gifts are mostly used to maintain the heritage-listed buildings in the historic St Paul's precinct. Some of those projects are eligible for matching grants from the Queensland Heritage Commission.

Staffing costs are the largest single item among our expenses, and account for more than half our total budget.

Our income comes from offerings and other gifts, fees for funerals and weddings, proceeds from the St Paul's OpShop, and fees for the hiring of the parish facilities.

Our most important source of income is offerings and gifts.

You can use this QR code to make a once-off gift or create a recurring donation.



Engaging with your local faith community

There is a lot more than Sunday worship happening at St Paul's Church.

Mums and Bubs group offers an online network for mutual support and assistance, with the occasional gatherings in kid-friendly coffee shops or in a local park. To claim your place in this network of local mothers, request to join the private Facebook group or send us an [email](#) with your names, email address and mobile number.

St Paul's OpShop offers quality pre-loved items at the best prices around town, and has a great reputation among savvy OpShoppers. It is a great way to meet people and give back to the local community as a volunteer.

Anglican Food Ministry offers conversation, healthy food and other personal support services every Sunday afternoon. We have five teams of people who prepare and serve the food on site one Sunday each month. Why not get involved in this faith with sleeves rolled up project?

The **Little Church Garden** is a community garden in the grounds of the old St John's Church, at Blackall Street, Basin Pocket. Food from the garden assists with the Anglican Food Ministry with surplus food being available for purchase.

St Paul's Choir is a great way for people who love singing to develop their skills and perform at occasional services and other special events.

Other ways to engage include the monthly **Men's Breakfast**, the **Mothers Union** that supports family and marriage, weekly **Bible study** groups (in person and online) and even a class learning to **read the New Testament in ancient Greek!**

Our contact details

St Paul's Church 124 Brisbane Road, Ipswich

St Thomas' Church 15 Lawrence Street, North Ipswich

Parish Office (07) 3812 0377

Email: ipswich@anglicanchurchsq.org.au

Website www.ipswichanglicans.org

Sunday worship 7.00am St Paul's Church
8.30am St Paul's Church
8.30am St Thomas' Church
5.30pm St Paul's Church