

Baptism and blessing

For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well. My frame was not hidden from you when I was made in the secret place. When I was woven together in the depths of the earth, your eyes saw my unformed body. All the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be. (Psalm 139:13-16)

Each new life unique, known, because

1. God is the Author of Life...

2. Dedication and blessing children to God follows a Biblical Pattern.

Hannah prayed for a child after years of infertility and God granted her prayer

"I prayed for this child and the Lord granted me what I asked of him. So now I give him to the Lord. For his whole life he shall be given over to the Lord..." (1 Samuel 27-28) She is so thankful that she gives her child back.

3. Jesus is serious about the spiritual life of children!

Then little children were brought to Jesus for him to place his hands on them and pray for them. But the disciples rebuked those who brought them. 14 Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these." (Matthew 19:13-14)

At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a little child and had him stand among them. And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. "And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea. ...

In the same way your Father in heaven is not willing that any of these little ones should be lost. (Matthew 18:1-6, 14)

Jesus wanted the children to have the same belief as the adults. Today we promised as a church that there will always be a place for children here – because we believe that they are as much of a church of today than the church of tomorrow. God is no respecter of age, and He uses children to speak visions to and asked old people in the bible to risk and journey and do extraordinary things they were not expecting. Jesus wants to bless children, because they are loved.

4. **Baptism is our identification with Christ**

Baptism is a public statement of identity.
In his baptism Jesus identifies with us.

“When all the people who were being baptised, Jesus was baptised too. And as he was praying, heaven was opened and the Holy Spirit descended on him in bodily form like a dove. And a voice came from heaven: “You are my Son, whom I love; with you I am well pleased!” (Luke 3: 21)

5. **Baptism is central to our faith**, it’s what happens when people become Christians and identify their lives with Christ because he has transformed their everyday living.

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, (Matthew 28:19) it’s what we do, it’s an outward sign of what God is doing in our lives. An outward sign of God’s grace acting within us.

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. (Romans 6: 1-4)

Baptism is about the new life, being born again. Life and death in the symbolism of baptism. What that means for us here and now.

Today we celebrate new beginnings, are you due a new beginning? Let Christ make the difference in your life today!