

## Frequently Asked Questions

### *What is the process for baptism?*

The first step is to have a conversation with the Minister of Athelstone Uniting Church. Together you will decide on a suitable path of spiritual formation and preparation for church membership (if needed) and baptism. The Church Council enters the conversation once a request for baptism is made and a date will be set for the special day.

### *What is the process for a service of thanksgiving and blessing?*

As with baptism, the first step is to have a conversation with the Minister of Athelstone Uniting. After getting to know your family, the special day is scheduled and preparations for the service begin.

### *Do I/we have to believe something special for baptism or a service of thanksgiving and blessing?*

Baptism is a sacrament of the church. Therefore all baptisms include a profession of faith that you and the Congregation say together. This profession affirms our shared belief in God, Jesus, and the Spirit. You as parents will also be asked to affirm your belief in the transforming and reconciling love of God, revealed in Jesus. At least one parent will be asked to respond.

The service of thanksgiving and blessing also includes prayers and readings but, since it is not a sacrament, there is more flexibility as to its content.

### *What is the Uniting Church?*

Athelstone is part of the Uniting Church in Australia. We are a community of people following Jesus and God's call to live with love, grace and hope in the world.

The Uniting Church in Australia is a uniquely Australian church. The Uniting Church was formed in June 1977 as a union of three churches: the Congregational Union of Australia, the Methodist Church of Australasia and the Presbyterian Church of Australia.

We encourage our members to live out a joyful Christian faith – to follow Jesus, to read the Bible, to learn more about and grow with God, to care for each other and to serve their local community.

To learn more, go to [uniting.church](http://uniting.church)



# **Baptism and Thanksgiving & Blessing of a Child**

Welcoming a new child is a special time filled with a mixture of emotions. Babies bring many changes to our world, many of which we cannot plan for or imagine.



Thankfully we are not alone.

Along the way we are held by family and friends, midwives and nurses, neighbours and others.

Athelstone Uniting Church are here to be another place of support for you.

In particular we would love to be able to support you as a family in nurturing your child in the Christian faith.

*Here are the two options we can offer you to celebrate the gift of your new child.*

### **Sacrament of Baptism**

Baptism is the church's way of celebrating and naming the grace of God living in every one of God's children. It is the way we bring new members into the life of the universal Christian community. Baptism marks the entry point into the life-time journey of following Christ and of sharing in ministry in the world. It is a spiritual and symbolic act, that Jesus himself participated in. In baptism we are claimed as God's own and live within the transforming and healing presence of God.



The parents of children brought for baptism are asked to dedicate their child's life to God and to commit themselves publicly to nurturing their child in a Christian home and environment.

The Uniting Church believes that the baptism of children, is an act of God's grace. Therefore, the congregation makes promises to support you in nurturing your child in the faith of Christ as part of our church family.

The celebration of baptism always occurs within a normal service of worship. If you do not already, we invite you to participate in worship so you and the community can get to know one another.



### **Service of Thanksgiving and Blessing**

We believe that God is intimately involved in every part of our lives and it is good to both celebrate and ask for God's blessing.

A Service of Thanksgiving for and Blessing of a Child may be a more suitable option for you at this important moment in your family's life.

This service is a wonderful way of celebrating your child's birth and the journey of life you are on as a family. The Minister offers a prayer of thanksgiving and a special blessing is given that includes making the sign of the cross on the forehead of your child.

You as parents make a promise to love and care for your child and the Congregation celebrates in your joy. It is our hope that at some time in your child's life, he or she will choose to be baptised.

Thanksgiving and Blessing usually occurs within a normal service of worship. While there is no expectation of membership, the gathered community of faith represents the enfolding of God's love for all people.

### **Beginning the Conversation**

We would like to get to know you and give you the opportunity to ask questions.

Please phone or send an email with the following information so we can make contact with you:

Parents' Names: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Child's Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



Athelstone Uniting Church

33 Fox Ave, Athelstone SA 5076

(08) 8336 9905

office@athelstonechurch.org.au

Minister: Rev. Linda Driver

M: 0458 500 656

*We have a heart for connecting:  
with God, our community, our world and each other.*