



# Baptism

Arena Church believes in and practices Baptism exactly as it is described in the Bible. We read in the New Testament that as people turned to God and professed Jesus Christ as their Saviour, one of the first expressions of their new-found faith was Baptism. Acts chapter 2 verses 37-41 (NLT) shows this:

*<sup>37</sup> Peter's words pierced their hearts, and they said to him and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?"*

*<sup>38</sup> Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup> This promise is to you, to your children, and to those far away - all who have been called by the Lord our God." <sup>40</sup> Then Peter continued preaching for a long time, strongly urging all his listeners, "Save yourselves from this crooked generation!"*

*<sup>41</sup> Those who believed what Peter said were baptised and added to the church that day - about 3,000 in all.*

In verse 37, the people **realised** something needed to be done, and **reacted** by asking, "What should we do?" - they were told to **repent** in verse 38, and those who **received** the message were baptised that day.

At Arena Church, we hold Baptismal Services on a regular basis, and they always prove to be times of joy and celebration. Everybody has a story, and baptism is a time for us all to hear and support people as they tell stories of the good news of Jesus changing lives of people of all ages and backgrounds.

## What is Baptism?

Here at Arena Church, we affirm **believer's baptism**. This is baptism by 'full immersion' in water and not a 'sprinkling'. We also only baptise people who have come to their own commitment of faith and made a decision, and not babies or children too young to make a decision of their own. Baptism is for the person involved, and it is not for someone else to make that decision or commitment for them. Arena Church would define baptism as 'An outward expression of a decision and commitment to make Jesus Christ Saviour and Lord'.

Baptism is therefore not about perfection, but about new beginnings. It is not an initiation ceremony and there is nothing magical about the water. It is, however, a significant step of Christian discipleship and openly declares to Heaven that we believe Jesus is Lord. Furthermore, it shows the Church that we are glad to be part of God's family.

The full immersion in water echoes Christ rising from the grave to begin his new eternal life, and for us as Christians it shows that we are dead to our old lives and look forward to everlasting life with God. As Romans 6:3-4 says:

*<sup>3</sup> Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? <sup>4</sup> For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives.*

And Colossians 2:12 confirms this:

*For you were buried with Christ when you were baptised. And with him you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead.*

As a public statement of our commitment and intentions, it clearly demonstrates to the Enemy that we belong to God!

# Why should you be baptised?

Aside from being a public demonstration to both Heaven and Earth of your commitment to being a Christian and following the teachings of Jesus, it is commanded in the Bible that all believers be baptised.

Matthew 28:18-19 says:

*<sup>18</sup> Jesus came and told his disciples, "I have been given all authority in heaven and on earth.*

*<sup>19</sup> Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.*

By this point, Jesus himself had been baptised as an example to us all. Matthew 3:13-17:

*<sup>13</sup> Then Jesus went from Galilee to the Jordan River to be baptised by John. <sup>14</sup> But John tried to talk him out of it. "I am the one who needs to be baptised by you," he said, "so why are you coming to me?"*

*<sup>15</sup> But Jesus said, "It should be done, for we must carry out all that God requires." So John agreed to baptise him.*

*<sup>16</sup> After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on him. <sup>17</sup> And a voice from heaven said, "This is my dearly loved Son, who brings me great joy."*

## Can I be baptised?

Baptism does not reflect maturity in being a Christian - you do not need to have been a Christian for years - because it represents a new beginning, a new start to your life. If you genuinely want to follow the Lord, YOU are a perfect candidate for baptism. Acts 8:36 says:

*As they rode along, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "Look! There's some water! Why can't I be baptised?"*

So the very day that the man travelling to Ethiopia met Philip and gave his life to Christ, he saw water and asked 'Why can't I be baptised?' - and so the travelling stopped, and Philip baptised him.

## Practical things to consider for your own Baptism

**Come Prepared.** You are going to get wet! Make sure to bring a change of clothes.

**Invite Others.** It doesn't matter if they are Christians or not, they can witness your public confession of faith and be supportive.

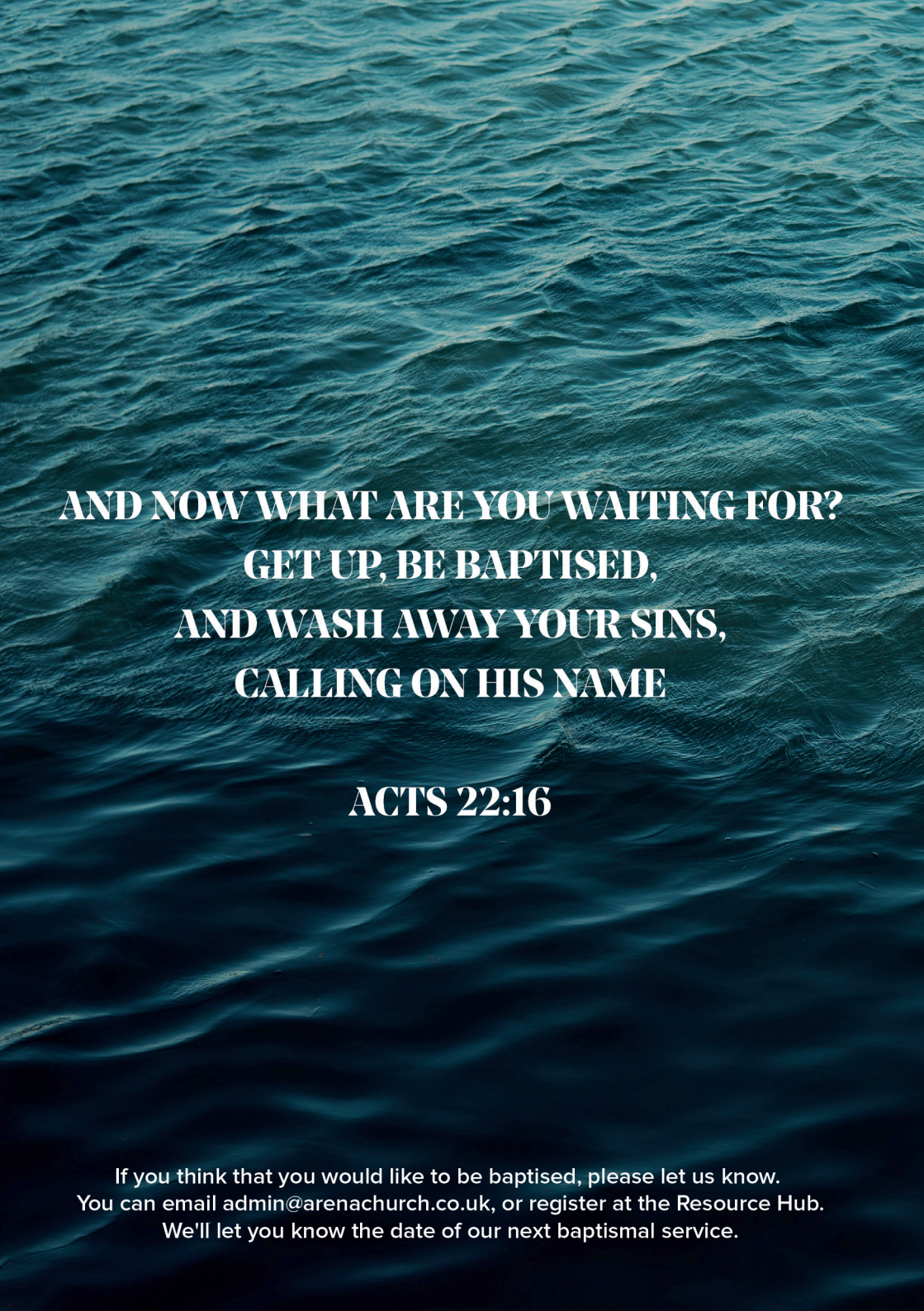
**Prepare a Testimony.** It is a time to tell your story. Make it brief, but make it matter - the way your life has been changed may well be an inspiration to others considering baptism.

**Relax.** Those baptising you will take good care of you. If you are a little nervous of water or of it covering your face, don't worry, you will be in good hands. Literally!

**Enjoy every moment of the service.** These services are always great times of rejoicing and celebration. Remember everyone is rooting for you, so take in all you can, and believe God will bless you in a way that will cause you to look back with thanks.

If you have any other questions prior to the baptism, please ask someone in the church. We will be glad to help you.





**AND NOW WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR?  
GET UP, BE BAPTISED,  
AND WASH AWAY YOUR SINS,  
CALLING ON HIS NAME**

**ACTS 22:16**

If you think that you would like to be baptised, please let us know.  
You can email [admin@arenachurch.co.uk](mailto:admin@arenachurch.co.uk), or register at the Resource Hub.  
We'll let you know the date of our next baptismal service.