

## WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT... **WATER BAPTISM**

Baptism is inextricably linked to repentance and faith, and follows our confession of Jesus as Lord (Acts 2:37-38; Romans 10:9). Jesus was baptised (Matthew 3:13-17) and established a pattern for us. **Baptism is for believers** (Mark 16:15-16); there is no evidence in the Bible for sprinkling babies. Baptism is total immersion in water (John 3:23, Acts 8:38-39). The Greek word means 'to **submerge**'. Baptism is a biblical command for all Christians, it is not an optional extra (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:37-39; 10:48).

Baptism is a funeral with a difference. Unlike a normal funeral there is also a resurrection (Romans 6:3-9). Baptism involves a declaration of our repentance from sin and of faith in Jesus as our Lord (Acts 2:38). It is the beginning of a new life of discipleship (Matthew 28:19-20). In baptism we surrender to Jesus as the Lord of our life. **It is the burial of our old life with its sinful nature and is our resurrection to a brand new life** (Romans 6:3-4, Acts 22:16). We are now able to live the risen life of Jesus Christ himself in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Baptism not only has a 'vertical affect' toward God; it also has a 'horizontal affect' towards other Christians. We are not only baptised into Christ but also into church. This means that we are no longer to live independent lives. We belong to a new family, the people of God (1Peter 2:9-10). Baptism means things will never be the same again; **the old has gone and the new has come**(2Corinthians 5:17).