

The Preparation Course
The course will usually be run on Sunday mornings, after the 10am service. If this doesn't suit you, please let Phil know.

The children begin their preparation at one of our morning services. During the service the church congregation and their sponsors will pray for them.

We will then meet as a group over four sessions which each last about an hour. Except Session 4 where we meet on the Saturday afternoon and also have the rehearsal. If your child can't make every session, that's not a problem.

Week 1- Belonging (*16th June*)
We'll discuss what it means to belong to the Church Family & being baptised.

Week 2- Believing (*23rd June*)
What do we believe? Thinking about our faith and what it means to be a Christian.

30th June - No session

Week 3- Being (*7th July*)
The importance of Prayer, the Bible and other ways we can be closer to God.

Week 4 & Rehearsal- Bread & Wine
Sat 13th July 3pm (Please note different day, after the meeting we'll have a rehearsal for the service). We'll learn about the Last Supper and why it continues to be so important.

First Communion Service, *Sun 14th July 10:00am*. During this special All-Age Service the children will be admitted to receive Holy Communion.

Sponsors

The nurture of a child in the Christian faith should be a partnership between God, the child, the parents/family, godparents and the church community.

To foster a link between your child and the family of the church we will choose a longstanding member of our church congregation to sponsor each child. This person will pray for your child during the weeks of the preparation course and will be there to support them on the day of their first communion.

Aftercare

It is expected that your child will continue to join in the life of the church and continue to grow in their journey of faith. There are many different opportunities to take part, appreciate and serve others at our services:

10am Parish Eucharist
Every Sunday in Holy Trinity Church

Forest Church Service
Meets fortnightly, beginning at the Methodist Church at 4:15pm, then continuing in Holy Trinity Churchyard

The Parish of Stratford-upon-Avon
www.stratford-upon-avon.org

HOLY TRINITY
CHURCH
STRATFORD-UPON-AVON



Welcome to the Lord's Table

The Admission of Children to Holy Communion before Confirmation

In this parish we welcome children to receive Holy Communion before they are Confirmed.

This leaflet contains details of the preparation we offer to enable your child to make this important step in their journey of faith.

We invite you...
to consider whether your child would like to receive Holy Communion and encourage you to discuss this with them. This needs to be something they want to do, to meet and receive Jesus Christ in the bread and wine at the Christian family meal known as the Eucharist.

Traditionally children were confirmed from the age of 11 by a Bishop, confirming their Christian belief and beginning to receive Holy Communion. This process separates receiving the bread and wine and confirming their faith. It allows children to begin receiving Holy Communion from a younger age and delaying Confirmation till they're older (possible 16+ when they are in a better position to confirm a lifelong faith).

The process of discernment

Before a child can be admitted to Holy Communion before Confirmation:
they must have been baptised
they must want to be admitted

- normally, they will be at least 7yrs old at the time of their First Holy Communion.
- they have regularly attended church.
- a person with parental responsibility is content that they should be admitted.
- they must take part in a suitable preparation course.

As with all decisions affecting your child this is a matter for you and your child to decide.
Frequently asked questions.

Q. Who in the Church could I discuss this with? Who do I need to contact to register my child be on the course?

A. All children need to register their wish to be admitted to Holy Communion before Confirmation. To register or for more information contact:
Phil Harper (Children & Families Minister) 07791005696
phil@stratford-upon-avon.org

Q. What if my child is not baptised or christened?

A. This is not a problem. Your child can be baptised as part of the service.

Q. Is my child too young to understand?

A. Experience over the years has shown that many children at 7yrs and over have a sufficient maturity and understanding.

Q. As an adult I'd like to know more for myself. How do I do that?

A. There are regular opportunities for adults to find out about the Christian faith through our different courses as well as groups preparing for Confirmation. If you would like more information for adult exploration of faith please contact Phil.

Q. Why is the Eucharist so special in our worshipping family?

A. The first and simplest reason is that Jesus commanded his disciples to do this in memory of him (Luke 22:19) and, therefore, it is something that every Christian community should value and explore.

- The Eucharist has been a distinctive mark of the worshipping church since its beginnings and the experience of being part of the regular congregation at a Eucharist draws us all into a deeper understanding of what it means to be a Christian.
- The Eucharist (which means thanksgiving) is an outward sign of the work of the Holy Spirit in all of our life.
- In the bread and wine we are drawn closer to Jesus and the love he shows for each of us through the cross.

"As our children explore the riches of the Eucharist there will be valuable lessons to learn about commitment to the Lord and what it means to belong to his family, the duties as well as the joys" *

*The former Bishop of Horsham, Lindsay Urwin: "Thanks for the Memory: A good practice guide to celebrating the eucharist in schools"

