

Sunday 28th January – St James Worship 4 Everyone

note for online sermon readers:

The congregation were given the pictures of various transports and asked to think about journeys they had taken. Some families came and shared some stories from those journeys

I am sure each one of us has been on many journeys

Some more exciting than others; many happy ones – holidays, weddings, other celebrations; some sad.

And every journey has a starting point.

It may be home (travelling by car or walking)

It may be the train station, airport or ferry terminal

But a journey has to start somewhere

Actually a journey usually starts before then – with all the preparation and planning (bookings, packing, tickets, passports etc etc)

Journey starting points can be exciting places – the buzz of a big railways station; the busy-ness of an airport – a sense of expectancy

And every journey has a direction or destination

You are going somewhere.

To the seaside; to the hills; to visit a relative or friend

Things may not turn out quite as you expected – there was that plane last weekend that was heading from Manchester to Dublin but because of the storm got diverted to Paris!

Rail replacement buses; incidents on the motorway (Allys story)

But we know where we are heading

And every journey has some fellow travellers

Family groups

Coach parties

Even an individual travelling alone will come across others at the airport, on the train or even at the motorway service station.

Some of the best journeys we have been on are when we have met others on the journey and shared stories

Ski instructor in Austria; the oil worker on the train to Oban;

So what's all this got to do with baptism?

Sometimes we talk about the Christian faith as being on a journey

And we can see the point of baptism as the starting point of that journey
Whether we are 6 months, 6 years or 60 years old

There will be some preparation before (a bit like packing our suitcases) – again different for different ages - but the point of baptism is a starting place

We use these words -

*Now, Father, we ask you to bless this water,
that those who are baptized in it
may be cleansed in the water of life,
and, filled with your Spirit,
may know that they are loved as your children,
safe in Christ for ever.*

But there is no point getting to the airport or railway station and not getting on the plane or train
But sadly that's what many people do at baptism

They never begin the journey

The journey of faith is exciting and challenging
We don't know the future – but we get on the faith train in hope and trust

And we have the light of Christ – Jesus showing us the way

When things are hard; when things don't seem to go as we wish – we trust that he is our light to show us the way

The words we use:

You have received the light of Christ;

walk in this light all the days of your life.

**All Shine as a light in the world,
to the glory of God the Father.**

And finally the company

This is not a journey we take alone
It's a journey with other Christians

Some we already know; many we will meet on the journey as we share our stories, our hopes and our fears

We sometimes say its like having a new family who will support you, pray for you and look out for you

We use these words:

*There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism:
by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.*

**All We welcome you into the fellowship of faith;
we are children of the same heavenly Father;
we welcome you.**

So the journey of faith is like any journey with a start, a direction and company

Its important we don't just get to the start and never take the journey

A journey with Jesus the light leading us' a journey in the company of others – friends we know and friends we don't yet know

And a journey that will be exciting and fulfilling.

