

Baptism is public symbol of our faith

IT was a friend from work who invited Kayleigh Redler along to **Harbour Church** for the first time – which ultimately led to her being baptised.

Like many who embrace the Christian faith, Kayleigh wanted to symbolise the moment when she left the old life behind and embarked upon her new life. Baptism by immersion is a powerful symbol of this, as each person disappears underwater and is then raised up as a cleansed, fresh believer.

Most people associate baptism with the christening of babies and toddlers, when water is poured onto their foreheads, and their parents and godparents make promises on their behalf. But adult baptism has been an important symbol of Christian belief since shortly after Biblical times.

Kayleigh, who is now 26, was working in Port Solent with her friend Emma Rayfield, who goes to Harbour. Emma thought Kayleigh would enjoy their lively services based at St George’s Church in Portsea. The pair attended together for the first time last September, and Kayleigh joined an Alpha Course at the end of last year.

“I’d always been a Christian in my own way, but had never found a church that I felt comfortable in,” she said. “But at Harbour Church, I felt I belonged. It was friendly, and as soon as I walked in, it felt right and I felt at home. I’d never felt that anywhere else.

“I joined an Alpha Course, which



helped me to answer some questions about faith that other people hadn’t been able to answer.

“By about week 4 or 5, I started to wonder if I should be baptised. I prayed and that evening, my ‘Bible in a Year’ passage was about Jesus’s baptism. It felt like the right thing to do. So I made a decision to get baptised and there were a group of us who did it together in February this year.

“Going down into the water and back up again did feel freeing. It did bring me closer to God. We all also said something in the service about why we were getting baptised, and all my friends and family were there – they took up about three rows.

“Since then, I’ve carried on going to Harbour and enjoyed the positivity there, and being accepted. I like



Top: Zack Drake is baptised at St Jude’s Church, Southsea; below: Kayleigh Redler is baptised at Harbour Church