

Infant Baptism Policy

Firstly, we are so pleased that you are considering having your child Baptised into the Christian Faith at our church. The following points will hopefully help you understand our Baptism Policy and how we conduct our services.

- Our Baptism's are generally carried out in a small service after the main service at 12pm by arrangement with the vicar. Regular worshippers may have their child's service in a suitably arranged main service.
- You are required to have at least three Godparents of whom all must be baptised and at least two of the same sex as your child. Parents can be Godparents to their own children if they so want.
- If you meet the last statement but really would like someone else to be involved in your child's Christian upbringing who is not baptised; you may have them as a sponsor as well.
- Baptism Cards and Godparent certificates are not given out during the Baptism service, unless in a main service, for we warmly invite you back to any of our main 10am services to collect them. There you will be welcomed by the rest of the Christian family here in Cliffe.
- To book your child's baptism you must attend one of our main 10am services where we will start to explain what happens next and get you to fill out a booking form.
- If you would like more information on what is and what happens within a baptism service within the Church of England you can find out more by following the following link.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/christenings/christening-service-step-step>

Please note that infant, child baptism is only given to children ten or younger after that it is believed that the promises the child makes, they make for themselves, this is then adult baptism which your Vicar is happy to talk about. This will involve recognised commitment to the worshipping community.

Vicar's notes to help you and encourage you with your child's baptism.

Please note that Infant Baptism is a serious act of commitment within the Christian Church, Parents and Godparents are making serious public promises to bring the presented child up within the life and patterns of the Christian faith.

Myths and truths around baptism: infant baptism cannot make someone a Christian, you can still be married or buried in the Christian faith without being baptised but as stated you cannot be a Godparent or take a voting or leadership position without.

A Christian then in brief, is someone who accepts Jesus Christ as their saviour and makes a personal declaration to follow in the way of life that he revealed to us and can be found in our Bibles, turning from sin which is anything that separates us from God.

Infant baptism then only welcomes a child into the 'membership' of the church and through active direction and prayer from parents, Godparents and other members of Christ's church we all pray for that child, that when they are old enough they will come to accept the Christian faith for themselves and then within the Church of England make a public declaration of this through coming to confirmation, in other denominations this may be done through Adult Baptism or, and, by giving a personal testimony. In the bible you will see this as spiritual baptism it differs from water baptism, it's the point when God's Spirit touches and changes your life either instantly or gradually over time.

We then would like to encourage you and help you in committing yourself to the promises you will make for your child; and the Church offers you many ways in which to do this.

Like any membership the group that it represents is only as good as its active members, there can be no Church without those who gather together to form it.

The true definition of 'The Church' is; the people who regularly meet together to form different parts of one body, for Christians that is Christ Jesus's body, with him as our head.

The Church is not a building that's just the place where the Church meets! But we do have a building here at St. Helen's offering various forms of worship and activities to suit you and your family and we would love to see you and welcome you again as we meet together to help you in your promises.

We are working hard to be a true family church of Jesus you are most welcome.

If you have any other questions about the Christian faith, please do not hesitate to ask.

God Bless you and your child in your decision

Clifford