

## Baptism of Children and Adults in the Upper Thames Group of Parishes



Holy Cross, Ashton Keynes

St. Sampson's, Cricklade

St. John's, Latton

All Saints', Leigh



Baptism is free and available for anyone (child or adult) who lives in the parish or has an association with one of our churches. We are glad that you are considering this for your child or for yourself.

Before you think about booking or setting a date for a christening we ask if you would do 2 things: -

**Please read the information** here, which explains the Christian nature of the ceremony

**Please come to one of our services, Informal Worships, Messy Church or other event to meet us**, the local clergy and the church community.



**When you have done that, if you would like to go ahead with a christening or baptism then please get in touch with us (details later).**

### A Christening or Baptism is:

- A visible sign of God's love; what is called a "sacrament".

At a child's christening, parents will be able to:-

- Celebrate and thank God for His gift of this child,
- Remember that your child is not only a member of your family but also becomes a member of God's family too
- Make a commitment to help your child on the journey of faith
- Ask for the Church's support in helping your child grow to know Jesus and to follow Him.



We hope that you, the family, will make a commitment to be part of the church, and as a church we make a commitment to support parents and godparents in helping the newly baptised person to follow Jesus.

## A Christening or Baptism ceremony includes

- making a commitment and making promises

Parents and the godparents **commit** to:

- caring for and praying for your child
- bringing your child up in the Christian faith and learning more about Jesus
- encouraging your child on his or her journey of faith by setting an example of Christian living.



Parents and Godparents will be asked to make some challenging **decisions** on the child's behalf:-

They will be asked:-

**Do you?**

- **Reject evil and all its many forms and all its empty promises.**
- **Turn to Jesus Christ and put your trust in Him.**
- **Promise to follow Jesus forever.**



The ceremony also includes a statement of what we as Christians believe about:

**God our Father** who created the world,

**Jesus** (God's Son) who came to earth in human form, died for us and rose again,

God's **Holy Spirit** who gives us life and keeps our faith alive.

## When do Baptisms take place?

We would like most baptisms to take place during one of our normal Sunday services and these are outlined in our four churches below.

- In **Cricklade**: Morning Worship on 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday; Informal Worship in the school hall at 4pm on all Sundays except the first in the month. It could also be during a communion service at 10am (please contact Revd Phil)
- In **Ashton Keynes**: Monthly family service 10am on the first Sunday in the month, Messy Church 4pm and usually on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in the month in the School Hall.
- In **Latton**: Family Service on 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday at 11.15am or during a communion (1<sup>st</sup> Sunday) or morning worship (3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday)
- In **Leigh**: will be by arrangement.

**Baptism/Christening services at other times** (usually a Sunday at 12 noon) are possible and can work better if your family and friends aren't used to coming to church or if you have a large number coming. Please still come and meet us first, and do talk to us about the arrangements you would like to make.

## How we can help you

The Baptism/Christening promises are challenging so we, the local church and its ministers, are here to help you. We would encourage you to **join us regularly**, especially for our family-friendly occasions.

### In Cricklade

- Messy Church, 4pm on 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in the month (held in Cricklade United Church, Calcutt St or St Sampson's School Hall – check venue at [www.upperthames.org.uk/calendar](http://www.upperthames.org.uk/calendar))
- Informal Worship for all ages held in St Sampson's School at 4pm on all other Sundays.

### In Ashton Keynes

- Family Service in church on 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday at 10am
- Messy Church monthly (usually 3rd Sunday) at 4pm in Ashton Keynes Primary School hall.

### In Latton

- Family Service in church on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday at 11.15am

### In Leigh

- We hold JAM (Jesus and Me) monthly for children and young families on a Friday after school.



**These (above) would also be the best services/worships/events to come and meet us prior to booking a Christening or Baptism too.**

## The three symbols of Baptism

In the Baptism service we meet 3 important symbols of our faith:

- **Light.** We light a large candle as a reminder that the light of Christ still shines in the world overcoming evil and a smaller Baptism candle is given to the newly baptised child.



- **Cross.** This is the badge of our faith the cross for love and forgiveness of on the forehead of the person being



and reminds us of how Jesus Christ died on each one of us. The mark of a cross is made baptised.

- **Water.** The water is blessed and is a sign of washing away the old life and taking on a new life following Christ. Water is a sign of life.



## Welcome into God's family

An important part of Baptism is the welcome into God's family, by the whole church community, which is why we like our baptisms to be within a church service.

We hope your family will continue to come one of our family-friendly services or Messy Church – we can all journey together following Jesus Christ.



## Giving of a lighted candle

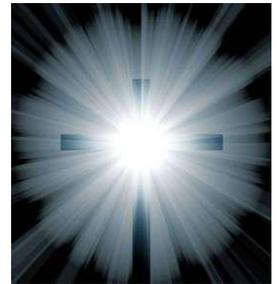
A lighted candle is a sign that we walk by the light of Jesus Christ and is given to the newly baptised person.



## Is there a Baptism preparation?

Yes. We would like to meet with you as parents (and any godparents or family members who are free are welcome too) on at least one occasion to explore who Jesus is, what our Christian faith is about, and what you and the godparents are committing to in baptism.

We also would like to talk with you about ways we can support you in helping your child follow Jesus.



## Who will take the Baptisms?

One of our clergy Revd Phil Bradley or Revd Shirley Danby will take the service and if it's in a main normal Sunday service, others from the church community will be present.

## Is there a cost?

Baptism is free – we are delighted to be welcoming your child into the church.

We do ask that you consider making a donation to the church, (£40 is a suggested amount), if your ceremony is not in one of our services. If you are able to Gift Aid your donation that is a great help and makes your gift go further.

## Do parents need to be baptised?

We don't insist that parents are baptised/christened but parents need to be comfortable that this is a Christian celebration and service and you need to be prepared to take on the Christian promises and commitments.

## Do Godparents need to be baptised?

At least one godparent must be baptised. If godparents are not baptised, then they can act as supportive friends and can choose whether or not they wish to make the decisions – or godparents can be baptised themselves on the same day. Please choose godparents or supportive friends who can happily make the decisions and who are comfortable to commit to the Christian aspect of Baptism.



## How many godparents can our child have?

The suggestion is to have about three godparents: for a boy, two godfathers and one godmother; for a girl, two godmothers and one godfather.

## What about a Thanksgiving Service or Naming Ceremony?

The Christian baptism promises can be very challenging and so a **Thanksgiving Service or a Naming Ceremony** could be better for you and your family. We give thanks for the new life of your child and ask for God's blessing upon him or her. It also includes the naming of your child before God. The service doesn't include the same promises as at the Baptism service and some families find this an excellent way of celebrating the arrival of a child and giving them their name.

## Can we take photos or a video?

Photos can often be distracting. You are more than welcome to take photos before or after the service and at certain times if the clergy are happy with this. If you wish to leave a video running throughout the service that's fine, but please ask us first.



## What next?

Firstly we ask you to **attend one of our normal church services, Informal Worships or events** to meet God's family and Revd Phil or Revd Shirley or another minister.

Please **read this leaflet** and then **complete the online application**. If you have NOT yet met us, please include in your online application the date of the service you will come along to, to meet us.

**Further questions or queries?** Please do get in touch at any time.

Thank you for reading our booklet and considering a Christening for your child.

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We do hope that you, your child and your family will enjoy the services in our churches as well as the occasion of your child's Baptism. We hope you will continue to come to other family-friendly services and events, such as our Crib Service, Harvest, Mothering Sunday as well as Messy Church, Family Service at Ashton Keynes or Latton, or Cricklade's Informal Worship.