

Baptism of infants & children 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 yourself) and that you have made a pre-booking enquiry.

Please read this information and take time to consider some important features of Christian Baptism outlined here before you make a final decision and booking.
Baptism is much more than a naming ceremony.

We'd like you to be aware of the Christian nature of Baptism and for parents and godparents to be comfortable making some challenging promises on your child's behalf. You may find that you would prefer a Thanksgiving Service for the Gift of a Child, or a naming ceremony.



What is Baptism?

Baptism is a visible sign of God's love; it's what is called a "sacrament".

In Baptism,

you as parents have the opportunity to:-

Celebrate and thank God for his gift of new life, Remember that your child is not only a member of your family but also becomes a member of God's family too, the family of the Church.

In Baptism you are making a commitment to start your child on his or her journey of faith and asking for the Church's support in helping your child grow in knowing and following Jesus.



Baptism marks the start of a journey of faith,

and involves you, on the child's behalf, promising to turn away from evil and towards Jesus Christ and becoming a member of God's local and worldwide Christian family.

What does a Baptism service include?

Baptism is much more than a naming ceremony.

It includes **making a commitment and making promises**

In Baptism 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 and to try to keep some challenging **promises** and will be asked on the child's behalf:-

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 service also includes a statement of what we as Christians believe about

God our Father who created the world,

Jesus (God's Son) who became human, died for us and rose again,

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

How can we help you?

These promises are challenging so we, the local churches and its ministers, are here to help you. We would really like to encourage you to **join us regularly**, especially for our family-friendly occasions.

In **Cricklade**, "Informal Worship" which many young families attend, which is held at 4pm on Sundays. Sometimes there are social events and sometimes worship.

In **Ashton Keynes**,

Messy Church held after school in Ashton Keynes Primary School hall in non covid times (usually) termly at 3.30pm

In **Latton**, Family Worship on the 4th Sunday at 11.15am

In **Leigh** we sometimes hold children's JAM (Jesus and Me) on a Friday after school.



The three symbols of Baptism

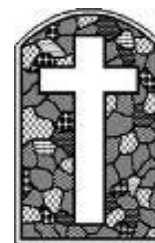
In the Baptism service we meet 3 important symbols of our faith

- **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 and reminds us of how Jesus Christ died on the cross for love and forgiveness of each one of us.

The mark of a cross is made on the forehead of the person being 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 – together 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

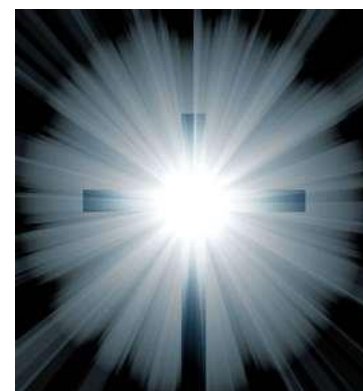


When do Baptisms take place?

- We would like to encourage you to come to a Baptism service during one of our normal Sunday services. It is also possible to hold a baptism service at another time.

Is there a Baptism preparation?

Yes we like to meet with you as parents (and any godparents or family members who are free are welcome too) on two occasions 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 ways we can support you in helping your child follow Jesus.

Who will take the Baptisms?

One of our clergy will take the service and if it's in a main service, some of our church community will be present.

Do parents need to be baptised?

We don't insist that parents are baptised 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. If you are not already baptised, then you can be baptised too.

Do Godparents need to be baptised.?

At least one godparent should be baptised.

If they are not baptised, then they can act as supportive friends and can choose whether or not they wish to make the decisions. Or they can be baptised on the same day.

Please choose godparents or supportive friends who can happily make the decisions and 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?

You (or those who might choose to be godparents) may not feel you can make the Christian baptism promises with integrity so a **Thanksgiving Service** could be just what you are looking for. 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.

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) particularly if your ceremony is not in one of our services. If you are able to gift aid your donation that is a great help.

Can we take photos or a video?

Photos can often be distracting. We are more than happy for you 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 and we'd like



you to ask us first.

What next?

Firstly we ask you to **attend some of our normal church services**. You probably wouldn't join a sports club without paying a visit first so we would like to meet you and for you to meet us prior to a baptism taking place.

Please **read this Baptism information** and then **complete the online application**. Let us know which service you will attend to meet us and when you are thinking you would like the baptism to take place.

Further questions or queries? Please do get in touch at any time. Thank you for reading our booklet and considering Baptism for your child.

Revd Shirley Danby shirleydanby21@gmail.com 07980 548844

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 our family-friendly services and events, such as Cricklade's Sunday afternoon Informal Worship, Crib Services, Harvest, Mothering Sunday, Messy Church, or Family Services at Latton.

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