

Baptism (Christening) at St Botolph's



St Botolph's
Church
Good News for Barton Seagrave

The birth of a baby is always special. It is truly a life changing event and things will really never be the same again! So, congratulations if you have had a recent addition to your family. The information here is to help you if you would like to mark the birth of your baby with a service at St Botolph's.

The Church of England offers two complementary ways of celebrating the arrival of your baby. We want to help you decide which one is right for you. Both involve a service in church where, with your family, we will thank God, pray for you and your child, and seek God's blessing for you. In one, however, you make promises to commit yourselves, and your family, to regular church attendance, prayer, Bible study and daily Christian living. In the other, you give thanks to God and pray that He will help your child make up his or her own mind about faith as he or she grows.

Option 1: A Service of Thanksgiving

When we are given a gift, it is right to say, 'thank you'. The Bible says, 'children are a gift from the Lord' – and so it is good and right to thank Him for them. For centuries parents have brought their children to church to give thanks to God for them, and to pray for them as they grow. A 'Thanksgiving' service is the best way to do this but without making any promises about your own personal commitment, that you know you won't keep, or that might make you uncomfortable.

The Thanksgiving service is usually included within our main Sunday morning service at 9:15am where there will be many other families and babies present. The Bible says that on one occasion, Jesus 'took ... children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.' In the Thanksgiving Service, we follow Jesus' example. We will thank God for your child, and ask for His blessing on them. We will also pray for you and your family, and the new responsibility you have. After the service we will offer you any support we can as you learn to be a family. It's a journey of lifelong learning and discovery!

You can find an outline of the service at [TinyURL.com/BotsThanks](https://www.tinyurl.com/BotsThanks)

Option 2: Baptism (sometimes called 'Christening')

In the Baptism Service, parents and godparents make important, public promises before God. These include a commitment to regular (weekly) church attendance as an example to your child of how to live as a Christian. As well as making public promises, you and your chosen godparents will be asked to make a public declaration that you yourselves are committed followers of Jesus Christ. These are serious, binding promises, that you, and your godparents, must consider very carefully. If you, or your godparents, are not regular attenders at church, or you are uncomfortable making such declarations, then this service is not for you at the moment. If you have any doubts, opt for a service of thanksgiving.

You can find an outline of the service at TinyURL.com/BotsBaptism

What do I do next?

- Think very carefully about which service is for you and your family. Use the diagram on the back page to help you.
- Ask God to guide you as you make this decision. There is no hurry. If you would like to talk it through with one of the ministry team at St Botolph's, please contact the church office to arrange this.
- If you are not sure, opt for a service of thanksgiving; a baptism can always be arranged in the future.

As you think and pray about this decision, it would be great to meet you and your family in church. Services are every Sunday morning at 9.15 am. There are other services too, but this is the most appropriate for young families. When you come please introduce yourselves, so we can get to know you.

We run a regular toddler group called *Make and Play* that meets in Church House (the big house next to the church building) every Tuesday morning from 9.30 am. You would be most welcome to come along.

Contacts: Church Office: 01536 414052, office@stbots.church

