

CHRISTENINGS at



Easthampstead
Parish Church

01844 212 123
Parish of Easthampstead
Church of St. Mary & St. John the Baptist
"The Church of the Holy Trinity"
Easthampstead, Isle of Wight
www.easthampsteadparish.org.uk
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Welcome

Whether you're exploring the possibility of a christening or whether you've already decided, we will be delighted to hear from you to talk about it.

You can always be christened in your local church, and it's good to make a connection locally so your child's church family is close by. If you do not live in the parish but you have a link to the church, such as a family connection, then you can still ask us about having a christening here. When you call the church, you may be able to book a date straightaway or someone may call back. You'll then meet either with me or one of the clergy that works in the parish to talk through the service and to help answer any questions you may have.



During a christening your child will be baptised with water. It's the start of an amazing journey of faith and a special day for all your friends and family. This booklet has been prepared to answer some questions you may have and to explore all that a christening means, not just on the day but long afterwards.

Revd Gareth Morley

Rector


www.stmichaelseasthampstead.org.uk

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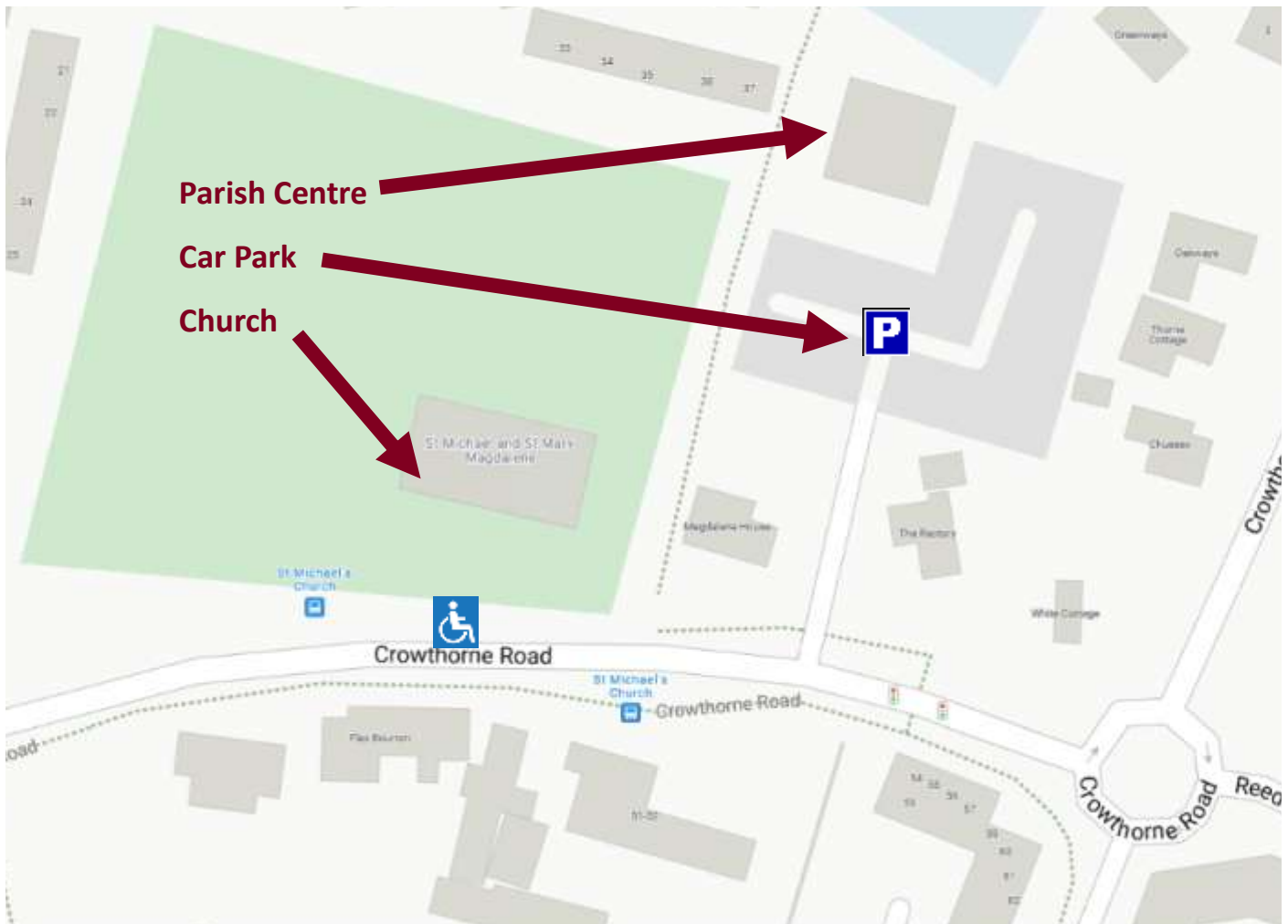
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Location



We are located on Crowthorne Road in Easthampstead. We own and operate our own car park shown on the map. We also have good bus links to the town centre and railway station.

Disabled parking is available both in the car park and on Crowthorne Road.

Your guests may also use the Church Hill House carpark on the opposite side of the road (with whom we have an agreement). This can be accessed on Turing Drive, RG12 7FR.

If you have any questions contact us and ask

01344 425205


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*First steps on an
amazing journey*

I'm wondering...?

...what's the difference between a baptism and a christening?

There is no difference between a christening service and a baptism service. Some churches will use the word 'baptism' and some the word 'christening'. The moment when your child has water poured or wiped on their head is the actual baptism and is at the heart of the service.

...I am not baptised, can I have my child baptised though?

You can have your child baptised at a christening regardless of whether or not you, the parents, are baptised.

...at what age can I or my child be baptised?

Any age! but there are different forms of the service for babies, older children and adults.

...can we have a private christening?

Christenings usually take place during the Sunday service of a church, so that the whole congregation can offer a warm welcome to you and your family. There are opportunities to have a service at a different time (usually on a Sunday) if you are: expecting a large number of guests, guests travelling from a long distance away or another suitable pastoral reason.



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History

Did you know that Easthampstead Parish Church is over 900 year old. The exact date the church was built is unknown but research shows it was likely built around the 11th or 12th Century. The building was reconstructed in 1867 and is full of Victorian treasures as well as those of the old church.

When your child is baptised here in this church you join the many millions of people who have also been baptised here. Your child forms that connection and becomes part of the continuing history of this place.



Personal

You will be involved in making choices about your ceremony. The extent will vary depending on whether the christening is part of a Sunday service or outside of the main service.

When supporting you in something as important as christening, the church will pray for you before, during and after the event. The Church will also welcome you as part of the family and as such invite you to various events in the churches life.



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Godparents

Do I need Godparents?

If the christening candidate is a child, yes!

Are Godparents important?

Choosing them is one of the biggest decisions you will make. Godparents will be people who'll be in touch with your family for many years to come. They'll be people who you know you can trust and who'll be there for your child to talk about the bigger questions in life; questions about faith, hope and love.

Who can be Godparents?

They may be relatives or friends of the family. Parents may be godparents for their own children, providing they have at least one other godparent. If you're thinking about asking someone who is under 18 to be a godparent we will want to ask some questions around this. There's no minimum age for godparents, but they must be mature enough to understand the responsibilities they're taking on; we can help you decide if this is the right choice for your child and the young godparent.

Do Godparents need to be baptised and confirmed?

Because of the very special role they have in supporting your child's faith journey, godparents must be baptised themselves. Ideally they should be confirmed too, but this is not an absolute requirement. They should feel ready to make some big promises about faith for your child in church. We will talk this through with you.

How many Godparents can my child have?

Every child should have at least three godparents, two of the same sex and at least one of the opposite sex to your child. Although there is no official maximum number of godparents, three or four is usual. If you'd like more than that, talk to us about the practicalities and we'll be pleased to advise.



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Order of Service

A christening typically usually lasts about 1 hour as part of the main Sunday service. At the christening your child will be baptised with water. This is the heart of the christening.

Welcome

The priest will begin with a few words of welcome to all present for the christening. There will be a reading and the priest will talk about what christening means.

The promises

Parents and Godparents will make some important promises for your child. We will talk these through with you in advance. Everyone present then promises to continue to support the candidate from this moment.

The sign

A special oil is used to make the sign of the cross on your child's forehead. It's a significant moment as it marks them as belonging to God.

The water

Water which is blessed in the church's font will be poured over your child's head by the priest. This is the moment of christening. It is a sign of a new beginning and becoming part of God's family.

Prayers and welcome

The priest, or someone else will pray for your child and all those who will support them in their faith. If you are having your christening as part of the main Sunday service everyone present will then welcome the child into the family of the church. If you are having the service outside of the main Sunday service then this will take place during the main Sunday service on the first Sunday after the christening.

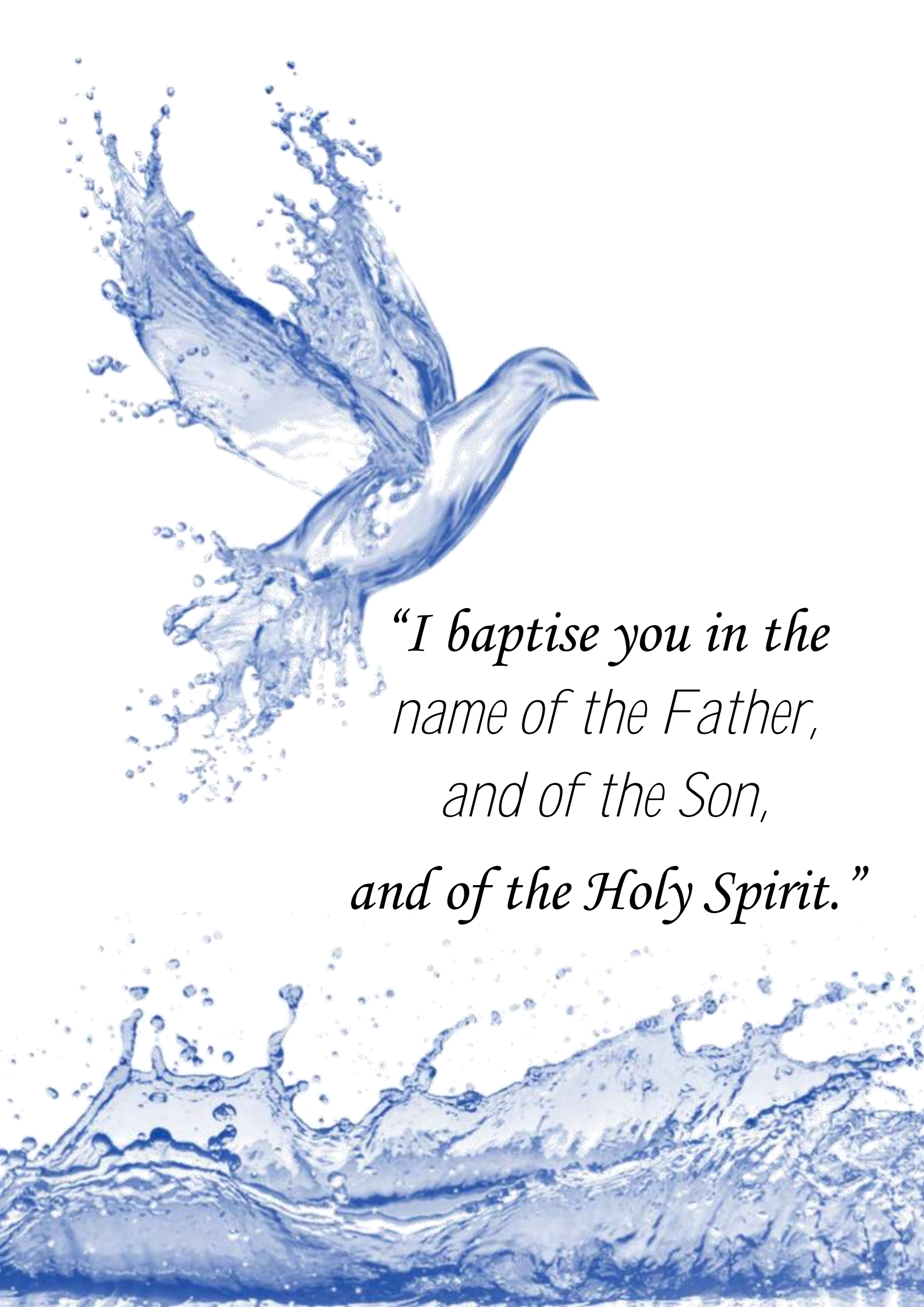
A candle

A candle is given to your child at the christening to symbolise the new life now present within them. Our suggestion is that you keep this and light it every year on the anniversary of their baptism as a reminder of the promises made.

What next?

You will be invited to join the church family whenever you can. We will keep in touch with you and support you as much as we can in the faith formation of your child.

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*“I baptise you in the
name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.”*

Preparation

Getting ready for your christening is exciting. But there's also a lot to think about and do. Whether you have done this before or not, read on for some helpful ideas and tips.

- Have a look at what will happen in the service and the words that you will be saying. We will go through the service step by step with you.
- It's a great idea to go along to church or one of the various church activities before the day so you can meet some of the people at the church.
- You will need to go along to our preparation class when invited in order to talk through more about the meaning of a christening.
- Enjoy the party – a key part of the day is being with family and friends.
- Think about what you/your-child are going to wear. Like any celebration event, many families like to dress up for the occasion too. There are no hard and fast rules – choose what you'll be happy and comfortable wearing on the day.
- Get in touch with any godparents and tell them what will be happening. They might like to know about the preparation class as they can attend with you! They may also want to look at the website churchofenglandchristenings.org which has some information for godparents on it.
- Don't forget photos!
- Why not take a few moments to ask God to be close to you and your family as you start this amazing journey of faith. You might like to pop into church to light a candle and say a prayer.



*"Train up a child in the way he should go;
even when they are old they will not depart from it."*

(Proverbs 22:6)

Toddlers



Our Toddler Group is a safe, supportive and nurturing environment, where parents, carers and children meet to enjoy an interactive activity and shared playtime. We provide a healthy snack and juice for the children, and hot drinks for the adults. If you arrive at 9:30am you will be able to join 'Church Mouse' for some singing, a story, some relaxing time with bubbles, and your little one will receive a sticker. 'Church Mouse' is one of the vergers in the Church. Look out for 'Church Mouse' next time you visit as he often helps out with services.

Children at Church

Our 9:30am service is very family friendly. We have toy bags, colouring, and we run a Sunday School at this service during term times on the first, second and fourth Sundays of the month.

Continuing to develop our provision for children and young people is a priority for us. Our aim is to enable children and young people in our community to grow in the knowledge and love of Jesus Christ.

'Act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly before our God'

(Micah 6:8)

Safeguarding our children and young people is an essential part of our duty of care. All our groups are run by volunteers who have had appropriate safeguarding training.



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A photograph of two hands reaching towards each other against a clear blue sky. The hand on the left is open and palm-up, while the hand on the right is slightly curled, with the index finger pointing towards the other hand. The text is overlaid on the upper half of the image.

*A Christening
is the first step
in the journey...*

*...and we will walk
with you as you
continue that journey*

Contact us

Our Parish Office is located in the Parish Centre. It is only open at certain time throughout the week and we suggest you call first. The address is:

Parish Office

Parish Centre

Crowthorne Road

Bracknell

Berkshire RG12 7ER

You can also phone: or email us as follows:

01344 425205

office@stmichaelseasthampstead.org.uk

To enquire about holding your Church Wedding please complete the [Wedding Enquiry Form](#).

Baptism preparation

We need to make sure you understand the questions you will be asked in the service and are adequately prepared. We therefore require parents to attend baptism preparation. We will walk you through the service before the day and we can also answer any questions you might have. Godparents are welcome to attend if they are able to, although it is not compulsory.

Do come to the church for baptism preparation and you will be met by our team. Your baptism preparation has been arranged on:

(date) _____ / _____ / _____

(time) **8:00pm**

Your Baptism

Your child's baptism has been arranged for:

(date) _____ / _____ / _____

(time) _____ : _____

Your Baptism welcome

After your child has been baptised we invite you back so that we might welcome your child as a new member of our church family and give them their Baptism Certificate.

(date) _____ / _____ / _____

(time) **9:30am**