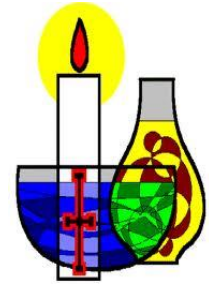


Christian Baptism in the Anglican Church

Information for Parents.



Thank you for your enquiry about baptism for your child.

Here is some information for you to read and a form to return to the officiating priest.

What is Baptism?

Baptism is a rite of Christian initiation. In other words it is a ritual which celebrates someone becoming a Christian and a member of the church. Baptism is a once in a lifetime act. By baptising children and babies we make it clear, as Jesus taught, that all are welcome in God's kingdom. Children are valued and equal members of the Body of Christ. Baptism in the Anglican Church is recognized by all other mainline churches (and vice versa)

What do the different parts of the service mean?

Baptismal promises – A child is presented for baptism by parents and godparents (sometimes called sponsors). The first responses the parents and godparents make is to accept the responsibility to answer on behalf of the child. Following this the ancient questions of baptism are asked: **Do you turn to Christ? Do you repent of your sins? Do you renounce evil?** By answering these questions on behalf of your child you are affirming your own faith also. You and the Godparents then commit yourselves to the great commandment of Jesus: *Love God and love others and you love yourself (Matthew 22:37-40)* If the child is of school age then they can join in and make the promises themselves. Even so it is a great idea to have the support of Godparents/parents making the vows with them as well.

The Creed – During the baptism service the Apostles Creed is said. This is a statement of Christian belief. It is really in summary form and so every line is packed with meaning and imagery. All Christians seek to understand what the creed means for them. The creed is proclaimed by you, the godparents and the congregation during the baptism service as an affirmation of the whole spectrum of Christian faith within which your child will find a place.

The Symbols of Baptism – Baptism is a richly symbolic act. **Water** is used as a universal symbol of life. Water symbolizes the cleansing from sin and also the pouring over of the Holy Spirit. A **Shell** is used to pour the water which is an ancient symbol of Christian pilgrimage. **Oil** is used to make the sign of the cross on your child's forehead. This oil, blessed by the bishop at Easter symbolizes the new life of Christ and the giving of strength. A **Baptismal Candle** will be given to your child, or you can provide your own. The baptismal candle is lit from the Easter (Paschal) Candle reminding us of the Light of Christ. At baptism a child is called by **Name**. In the early church followers of Jesus often took on a new name (Saul became Paul, Simon became Peter, Joseph became Barnabas) thus the expression "Christian" name. The naming represents that we are a new person in Christ, known and loved by God.

A Parent's Prayer

Loving and life-giving God
As you teach us and nurture us
So give us the wisdom and resources
To teach and nurture our child
With generosity and love.
Accompany us on life's journey
And give us eyes to see your face
In those we meet,
And hearts to share your gift of love
With those entrusted to our care. Amen.

Baptism Information Form

Please either return this form by email or print it off and return by mail, at least a week before your child's baptism.

Child's Christian names	
Child's Surname	
Child's date of birth	
Proposed date of baptism	Time: Date:
Location of Baptism	
Number of people you anticipate attending	
Father's full name	
Father's Occupation	
Mother's full name	
Mother's Occupation	
Address	
Home Phone	
Mobile(s)	
Names of Godparents (sponsors) <i>Godparents should themselves be baptised</i>	
Any other information You wish to pass on.	