

## **Baptism of infants & children in the Upper Thames Group of Parishes**

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 and that you have made a pre-booking enquiry.

We ask that you now take time to consider some important features of Baptism outlined in this leaflet before you make a final decision and booking.

We'd like you to be aware of the Christian nature of Baptism and be comfortable with making some challenging promises on your child's behalf. In light of that, you might prefer a Thanksgiving Service for the Gift of a Child, or you might like to talk with one of us further about the Christian commitment involved.

### **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:

- Meet to celebrate and thank God for his gift of new life,
- Remember that your baby is not only a member of your family but also becomes a member of God's family too, the family of the Church.
- Make a commitment to start your child on the journey of faith
- Ask for the Church's support.

For your child, baptism marks the start of a journey of faith, and involves you, on the child's behalf, promising to turn towards Christ and becoming a member of the local and worldwide Christian family.

## What does a Baptism service include?

### A commitment and the promises

In baptism you as a parent 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**. You will be asked:-

Do you

- **turn to Christ?** – this means you and your child will try to follow Jesus, his teaching and his guidance for your life
- **repent of your sins?** – this means you are asking God's forgiveness for the times you have missed the mark of being the person God wants you to be.

- **renounce evil?** – this means you will try to choose what is good.

## How can we help you?

These promises are challenging so we, the local church and its ministers, are here to help you.

We would like to encourage you to join us regularly for our family friendly services:-

- ▲ In Cricklade, “Messy Church” on 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in the month at 4 pm.
- ▲ In Ashton Keynes to the Family Service on 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday at 10am or to Messy Church on 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday at 4 pm in Ashton Keynes Primary School Hall
- ▲ In Latton to the Informal Worship on 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday at 11.15am

## The three symbols of Baptism

In the Baptism service we use 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 candle for the person being baptised as a symbol of Christ’s light in them.
- **Cross.** Reminds of how Jesus Christ died for each one of us on a cross. The mark of a cross is made on the forehead.
- **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.

## The welcome & giving of a lighted candle.

When your child is Baptised he or she is welcomed into God's family, the church. As part of the welcome, a lighted candle is given to show that Baptism takes your child from darkness of sin into the light of Christ.



## **Welcome into the church**

An important part of the baptism service is the welcome into the church family. We therefore ask that you attend the Family Service or Messy Church in your parish as soon after the Baptism, where your child will be welcomed by other church families.

## **Who will take the Baptisms?**

Our clergy will meet with you for Baptism Preparation and will take the service. Please feel free to get in touch.

Associate Minister

Rev'd Shirley Danby tel 01793 751463  
email [shirleydanby@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:shirleydanby@tiscali.co.uk)

## **When do Baptisms take place?**

- Holy Cross Ashton Keynes – *either* during the family service on 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday in the month at 10 am *or* on a Sunday at 12 noon (not part of a church service). Please contact Shirley to arrange a date to suit.
- St Sampson's Cricklade – *either* during morning worship on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the month *or* on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday in the month at 12 noon or 12.45pm. (not part of a church service).

- St John the Baptist Latton – *either* during the family service on the 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday *or* at 12.30pm on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday (not part of a church service).
- All Saints Leigh – please contact the parish office.

### **What about a Thanksgiving Service?**

You may not feel you can make the baptism promises with integrity so a **thanksgiving service** could be what you are looking for. In this service we will give thanks for the new life of your child and we will ask God to bless your child. You don't make the same promises as at the Baptism service and some families find this an excellent way of giving thanks for their child within the life of the church.

### **Is there a cost?**

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

However, there are costs to the church, so we ask you for a donation of £40 for church administration.

### **Can we take photos or a video?**

We ask that you don't take photos during the service as it is often distracting. We are more than happy for you to take photos before or after the service. If you wish to leave a video running throughout the service we'd like you to ask us first.

## **What should you do next?**

If you'd like to book either a Baptism or a Thanksgiving Service, please visit the parish office on a Saturday 9.30 – 10.30am bringing the booking form. You'll be asked to come to a Baptism preparation group, normally held monthly on a Thursday at 7.30 pm.

We'd also ask you to bring the donation and it would help us greatly if you would consider gift-aiding it (if you are a UK tax payer).

If you still have some questions our clergy will be very happy if you contact us (details page 3) so we can talk things through with you.