



Baptism Policy

Babies and Children

The aim of this policy is to set out the steps we take to engage with families seeking a Christening and to encourage them in the process to start to take steps along a faith journey as a family.

This ministry is the ministry of the whole church, evidenced by the welcome from the family of the church in the Baptism service. This policy is set out to encourage the PCCs and the wider church families to play an active part in this ministry.

- Families can find out about Baptism/christenings and Thanksgiving services through our website. First contact is either through the Rector or Associate Minister.
- At first point of contact families are sent a copy of our own 'First Steps' booklet which sets out the difference between the two services for children: Baptism and Thanksgiving. It also gives information about a new Church of England information site, www.churchofenglandchristenings.org. It also explains the process of preparation for the baptism. Firstly, a visit from the person taking the service and then a session in May looking at 'Why Baptism' and in October, 'Next steps' (If sufficient numbers to make this practical).
- A date for the service is agreed and in the light of that the person taking the service is decided (Rector or Associate Minister)
- The service will be in the morning service unless very good reason otherwise – and then they are encouraged to come to a service afterwards to be 'welcomed'
- A time is agreed for the Rector or Associate Minister to meet with the family and they are shown a short DVD 'First Steps' that again goes through the difference between the two services for children: Baptism and Thanksgiving. The family decide which service they feel is appropriate for them and fill in the booking form (includes information for registers & gives GDPR permissions for us to keep their data for later contact)
- They are given a leaflet explaining everything we offer as a benefice for children and young people and families and encouraged to attend church before the Christening and get involved in other groups as appropriate. They are also reminded about the May and October sessions.
- Each church has Lay Baptism Helpers who get to know the family beforehand, are a friendly face at the service and maintain some contact afterwards. These May and October sessions are also attended by the Lay Baptism Helpers from each church.
- At the service itself, the child baptised will be given a Children's Bible and a Baptism Bear (as well as the baptism candle).
- In the summer a 'Baptism Bear's Picnic' will be held to which Baptism families from the last 5 years are invited to bring their Baptism Bear.

- On the first 5 anniversaries of the baptism they will be sent an Anniversary of Baptism card.
- Invitations will be sent to Messy Church and other groups annually, to Mothering Sunday, Easter and Christmas services and other special events planned for children and families. An invitation will also be sent out to parents to attend the Alpha course.

Adults

- Adults seeking baptism will be encouraged to attend an Alpha Course (or similar).
- They will be encouraged also to be confirmed when the next opportunity arises.

This policy was agreed September 2020

This policy is currently under review