

Baptism Policy for..... Parish
In the Wye Reaches Benefice

Introduction

Baptism (or Christening) marks the beginning of a journey with God, which continues for the rest of our lives, the first step in response to God's love. For all involved, particularly the candidates but also parents, godparents and sponsors, it is a joyful moment when we rejoice in what God has done for us in Christ, making serious promises and declaring the faith. The wider community of the local church and friends welcome the new Christian, promising support and prayer for the future. Hearing and doing these things provides an opportunity to remember our own baptism and reflect on the progress made on that journey, which is now to be shared with this new member of the Church.

The Service of Baptism

The service paints many vivid pictures of what happens on the Christian way. There is the sign of the cross, the badge of faith in the Christian journey, which reminds us of Christ's death for us. Water is a sign of new life, as we are born again by water and the Spirit. This reminds us of Jesus' baptism. And as a sign of that new life, there may be a lighted candle, a picture of the light of Christ conquering the darkness of evil. Everyone who is baptized walks in that light for the rest of their lives.

Service of Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child

We also offer a service of thanks giving for the gift of a child, This service is the public celebration of the birth or adoption of a child or number of children as part of a main Sunday act of worship for those who see this service as a preliminary to Baptism or parents who do not wish their children to be baptized immediately; but who recognize that something has happened for which they wish to give thanks to God.

Baptism Policy

This Parish has an open baptism policy in that anyone living in the Parish is eligible to be baptised in our church. Those living outside the Benefice, but who have a close connection with the Parish, may be baptised here after consultation with the Minister responsible for Baptism within the Benefice who will also contact the Vicar of their home Parish.

It should be noted that there is no charge for Baptism or a Service of Thanksgiving.

Making contact

Those who wish either a service of thanksgiving for the gift of a child, their child to be baptised (Christened) or are thinking of baptism for themselves will be asked to contact any member of the clergy team who will pass details to The Baptism Chaplain (Rev Jill Stephens), and arrangements will be made for a meeting with a member of the Clergy. Contact will normally be made within 14 days.

(See below for contact phone numbers.)

Finding out more

For infant/child Baptism a member of the clergy will talk through the commitment of baptism and the organisation of the service.

For older children able to answer for themselves, there will be more than one meeting to ensure that they are able to understand the promises that they are going to make.

Godparents

If possible the Godparents should be included in the meeting to ensure that they can talk through the duties and commitment involved in being a God Parent.

Adults

For adults considering Baptism, after discussion with a member of the Clergy, they will be asked to undertake Baptism preparation, depending on where they are in their journey of Faith.

Request for a Service of Thanksgiving for the gift of a child.

If this is requested a member of the clergy will arrange a meeting to discuss the service.

Baptism is a public event

Because it is the whole church that welcomes each new member, child or adult, Baptism will take place at a Sunday service, normally the Family Service, but this can be discussed with the member of the clergy who will be taking the service. Parents who are confirmed or are regular churchgoers may prefer the Baptism to take place during a service of Holy Communion.

It is not our practice to conduct private Baptisms except for overwhelming Pastoral reasons, which again can be discussed with a member of the clergy.

Signed

Date

This policy will be reviewed by the above PCC annually

Contact for Baptism (Christening) or Thanksgiving for the birth or adoption of a child:

The Revd Jill Stephens.

Tel 01600 890975

e-mail: jill.stephens1@btinternet.com

Other clergy contact details:

Incumbent, Revd Kevin Cecil, 01600 713459

Assistant Curate: Revd Penny Powdrill, 01600 714096