

SEEKING BAPTISM AT SS PHILIP & JAMES

WHAT IS BAPTISM?

Baptism is the means of initiation into the Christian faith and way of life. In this church, we baptise through the sprinkling of Holy Water, and by anointing with Holy Oil. It is still favoured by many parents and carers as a desirable part of the provision they make for the development and growth of their family, whether they themselves are regular worshipping Christians or not.

WHY BAPTISM?

There are many reasons why parents wish to offer their children for baptism (*also known as **Christening***), and whatever that reason is, we receive that request with great joy. Baptisms are a time of celebration and joy in parish life as we give thanks to God for a new life and a new member of the faith!

WHO CAN BE BAPTISED?

In the Church of England, anyone can be baptised at any age. Typically children are presented for baptism, and require Godparents to speak for them. We are always delighted to welcome adults to baptism who, instead of godparents, would be accompanied by Sponsors

I WANT TO GET MY CHILD/REN BAPTISED. WHAT DO I NEED TO DO?

The process for seeking baptism is simple:

1. Contact Helen Bott, in the Parish Office, to book a date (Tel: 020 8898 2694 / email: office@whittonchurch.com)
2. Complete the Application Form (which can be posted to you or printed from this site) and return it to the Parish Office (or the Vicarage outside of office hours)
3. A member of the Baptism team will call you and may arrange to visit, to explain the service and answer any questions that you might have. They may enquire as to your reasons for baptism, but only so that we can celebrate God's calling on your life at that time.

4. We invite you and your family to the Family Service at 9.30am on the first Sunday of the month in which the baptism is booked, during which time we will welcome your child into the family of the church (in a simple and relaxed way)
5. The day of the baptism arrives!

IS THERE A COST?

While there is no specific 'charge' for the service, an opportunity to make a donation to the church will be made available to you if you feel able.

WHEN DO BAPTISMS TAKE PLACE?

There are two choices:

- The first Sunday of the month at 9.30am in the principal service
- The second and fourth Sundays of the month at 11.30am

The reasons for these choices vary, so we would discuss your needs and guide you accordingly when you first call to arrange dates. If you opt for a baptism on the second and fourth Sundays, we invite you to join us for the worship on the first Sunday in order that the parish can welcome your child in a relaxed and informal way within the service. In either case, we feel that it is important for the whole parish community to welcome your child/ren given that through Baptism you add their name to that list of members!

Due to the considerable demand for baptisms at Ss Philip & James, baptism ceremonies of more than one candidate may take place in the same service rather than extend the wait for baptism/

In very special circumstances, dates outside of the provision listed above can be made.

I DON'T NORMALLY GO TO CHURCH? IS THAT A PROBLEM?

Baptism is not just a 'first step' in faith for your child/ren. It can also be a first step for you. A copy of the Baptism Service is available on the website so that you can be familiar with the promises that you will make, and to enable you to make them with a clear intention!

WHO CAN BE GODPARENTS?

God parents are chosen for children who cannot make promises on their own behalf. Their role is important and the Church gives thanks for their vital place in the young life concerned. The regulations are simple:

- Godparents should be baptised
- For girls, the minimum requirement is for two female and one male godparents
- For boys, the minimum requirement is for two male and one female godparents
- Parents can be godparents, so long as the minimum requirements are met
- Godparents should have an understanding of their role

If there is any difficulty in meeting this standard, please do talk to Fr David. For example, it has been known for one to be a godparent who is not baptised, but who was in the process of becoming baptised. Each case would be considered according to its merits.

CHILDREN OF SINGLE PARENTS OR SAME-SEX PARENTS

Baptism is concerned with the spiritual journey of the child and those who support them. At Ss Philip & James Church we welcome families of all shapes and sizes and their children. If you are concerned about your own personal circumstances (*which vary family to family*) please do speak to us – we will be happy to reassure you!

May God bless you and your family in this amazing journey of faith that we share!