

When does the service take place?

Normally the Baptism can be arranged with the minister on a date and time which is convenient for both the family and the Church., but some Parishes organise Baptisms on particular Sundays.

How many Godparents do I need?

Normally three, but sometimes a couple or two couples act as Godparents. They need to be over 16 years old. Traditionally a boy child would have two Godfathers and a Godmother and a girl two Godmothers and a Godfather.

What does the service cost?

There is NO set charge for a Baptism, but people usually wish to make a donation to the church. Parishes have to find the funds to maintain and insure their buildings, contribute to the training and work of their ministers, and meet all the costs of the work they do. All of which is raised from the donations and the regular giving of those who are part of the congregation and community.

What do I do next?

Make contact with the Church, usually via the Parish Office or the Vicar. If everything is straightforward then a date and time can usually be agreed soon after you phone. You will need to provide information about yourselves, those of your child and the Godparents. Often the minister will arrange to meet you and talk through the service and answer any questions you might have.



Jesus said "Let the little children come to me, for to such as these does the Kingdom of Heaven belong."

More information about the work of Mothers' Union in the Diocese of Winchester can be found at www.muwinchester.org.uk

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Thinking about having your child



Baptised?

*A short 'Guide' to Baptism.
[also known as Christening.]*

In the Service your child is...

- **Marked with the Sign of the Cross - the sign of Jesus Christ.**
The cross is not a good luck charm or a protection from difficult times, but a reminder that Jesus died on the cross for each one of us. Jesus did not have an easy life and he experienced pain and suffering and so understands human life as it really is.
- **Baptised with Water**
as a sign of God's forgiveness and love and as a sign of new birth in the family of the church.
- **given a lighted candle**
as a sign of God's promise to guide all who trust in Him and as a sign of the presence of Jesus with all believers.
We hope and pray that everyone baptised will shine as a light for God in the world by the way they live and treat other people and God's creation.
- **welcomed into the family of the Church.**
The church has over a billion members worldwide.
Baptism is a sign of membership of this community of Christians.

Godparents – Why?

The role of Godparents is to speak on behalf of the infant being baptised during the baptism service itself and to support the parents in bringing the child up as a Christian within the family of the Church, so that they will confess the faith for themselves and come in due time to confirmation. In order that they can fulfil their role Godparents need be able to make the declarations and promises in the baptism services, which is why the Church of England requires all Godparents to be baptised themselves and normally to be confirmed as well. Parents and godparents promise to help those they bring to the church for baptism in three ways: **Prayer:** By praying regularly for the child, their parents and all who will help the child as he or she grows up.

Example: By seeking to live out a Christian life and attending worship regularly. **Teaching:** Helping the child know more about the life and teaching of Jesus.

[The role of Godparents is often confused with the legal role of guardians, but the two roles are entirely separate. The people you choose may well be the same because they are close and you trust them].

Promises made on behalf of the child by the parents and godparents in the Service....

There are two sets of promises made by the parents and godparents at a Baptism and whilst the words may be different in the service, they still ask the basic questions of :

Do you turn to Christ?

All of us have a choice in life between good and evil.
As Christians we look to the teaching and example of Jesus as a way of trying to live our lives. We need to turn to Him.

Do you repent of your sin?

We all say, think and do things, which are wrong and fail at times to do the right thing. As Christians we believe that if we are sorry then God will forgive us and give us another chance.

Do you renounce evil?

There is much evil in the world today. As Christians we need to renounce evil, everything that degrades or devalues human beings.

God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit

Christians believe that God is revealed in three ways: as the Creator (Father) of the universe, in the person of Jesus Christ (Son) and in the Holy Spirit, an inner voice which guides and directs us in the right way.

Some questions answered.....

Can I have my child baptised if I am not married?

Yes, any child who lives in the parish or whose parent(s) worships regularly, or if there is a connection with the Church. Otherwise if you live outside the parish Baptisms normally only happen with the goodwill of the local parish priest, so they need to be consulted. It may be that in this case a welcoming service may take place in the parish where you live after the Baptism as this is their local Christian family.