



**Your child's christening
at
St Barnabas**



What does christening mean?

Christening is another word for baptism - you may hear people use either word. It is a sign of being welcomed into the Christian family of the church. At baptism the parents and godparents make promises on behalf of the young child to follow the Christian way of life. They also promise to pray for the child, bring them to church as they grow up, and teach them Christian values.

At the service the vicar signs the child with the sign of the cross on their forehead and baptises them with water. The child is then given a lighted candle as a sign of the light of Jesus shining in their life.

Baptism is a very meaningful service and - like marriage - is not to be taken lightly.

Who can be christened at St Barnabas?

We are delighted to welcome any children for christening if their parents have genuine desire to bring them up in the Christian faith. If the children are over 5 years old it is important that they understand about christening and wish it for themselves. Any child over 10 or 11 would be making the promises themselves and we would wish them to be attending church or Sunday School regularly and be aware of the significance of the baptism promises.

If you have a special connection with St Barnabas church we would be happy to welcome you for christening whether or not you live within the parish area. On the whole however it is recommended that you have your christening in your local parish church.

Who can be godparents?

A godparent is someone who you would trust to care for and bring up your child in your absence. You can invite anyone of your choice to be a godparent. We would suggest 2 or 3 (not more than 4) god parents for each child. It is not essential that they are baptised themselves, but it is important that they have a Christian belief, and want that for your child.

What is the cost of a christening?

There is no charge for a christening. We ask that you consider giving a donation to the church, to cover the expenses of your service, and to help with the ongoing upkeep and work of the church. As a rough guide we suggest £25 - £40. A collection will also be taken during the service.



When do christening services take place?

Special services for christenings are held on Sundays, usually at 11.45 am. You will be given a choice of possible dates. They are only held on certain Sundays as they have to fit around other activities at the church. There may be another family sharing the service.

If you are a regular church attender you may wish to have the christening during the main Sunday service, and this can be discussed.

How many people can I invite?

In order to make sure the service is special for you and your child, and in respect of any other family also at the service, we recommend that you do not invite more than about 40 people.

What will the service be like?

The service will be very relaxed, and we will especially make it enjoyable for other children who may be coming. There will be a bible story and songs suitable for children, as well as the special moments when you make your promises, and your child is baptised.

What if I'm not sure?

Some families feel they are not ready to make the promises of a christening service, and prefer to hold a "Thanksgiving Service" for their child. This can be just as special; the child is given their name, and their candle, and we say special prayers of thanks for them and blessing on their life. Please discuss this with the vicar if you think it would suit you and your family better.

What do I do next?

Phone the vicar, on the number overleaf, to confirm that you want to go ahead, and your preferred date. You will then receive a letter of confirmation. A fortnight or so before the christening the vicar, or a member of the church, will arrange a time to visit you at home to meet you and talk further about the service.



Family Praise

On the third Sunday of every month at 10am there is a special service, called Family Praise, that is planned with children and families in mind. The worship is informal with a story, songs to join in and other activities and lasts less than an hour. You may like to come to this before your christening so that you can feel at home at St Barnabas.

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Vestry Time, for bookings and enquiries : every Thursday 6 - 6.30pm
Church Office open Tues and Thurs 10am—12 noon