

Baptism is about Symbols

WATER

- a symbol of our new birth into life with Christ.
- a visible sign of God's love pouring down upon the person being baptised.
- a visible sign that God will always forgive us when we are truly sorry for the mistakes we may make.

SIGN OF THE CROSS WITH OIL

- a symbol that the person being baptized belongs to God.
- a symbol that they will live and grow as followers of Christ.
- a symbol of the Holy Spirit guiding and strengthening them day by day.

LIGHTED CANDLE

- a reminder that Jesus is the Light of the World.
- a reminder that God's light continues to shine, even when the darkness feels overwhelming.
- a reminder that God's love and light shine out of the person being baptised into the world.



Your options

If you think carefully about all the questions, you will realize that having a child baptized involves you in a commitment to the Christian faith as much as it does the child. Because of this it is essential that a period of preparation precede the Baptism, especially for those who have had little contact with the Church.

It is also an opportunity for parents to reflect on their own Christian faith. Our regular ALPHA courses provide a helpful means to do so where small groups can talk about faith and ask questions in a relaxed atmosphere. Details of the next course can be obtained by discussion with a member of the clergy.

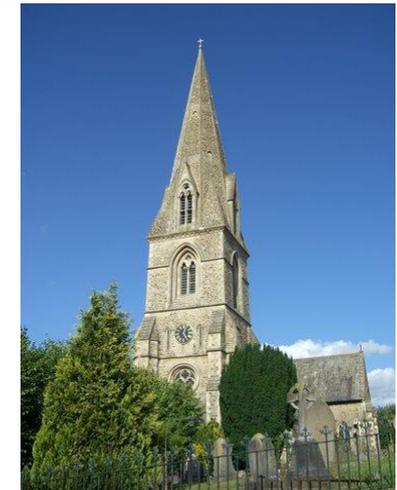
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Baptisms & Thanksgivings in our Parish

What is the difference between Baptism and Thanksgiving for the birth of a child?

When it comes to your child's journey of faith, there are decisions to be made.

We are delighted that you are thinking about recognizing your child as God's gift and considering Baptism or Thanksgiving. We hope this leaflet will help you make the right choices for your family.

At the birth or adoption of a child, many parents feel that they would like to say 'thank you' to God for a new life and a new addition to the family.

The Service of 'Thanksgiving for the birth of a child' offers an opportunity to do just that. You may feel that this is the right thing for you to do.

A **Thanksgiving Service** forms part of the main All Age Sunday Service where you and your child will be prayed for: when we ask God to bless you all and for him to help you in your role as parents.

To have a child **Baptised (Christened)** is saying that you and your family are wishing to follow Jesus, be part of the Church family and that you desire to bring your child up within the family of the Church.

Your child would be beginning a life-long journey of faith, with Jesus as their guide and with you and their godparents, to help them on their way.

We take the Christian faith seriously, and expect those who come for Baptism to take it just as seriously.

In view of the nature of the promises that need to be made, there are a number of questions for you to think about.

Considered carefully, these will help you decide whether **Baptism** would be right for you and your child or whether a **Service of Thanksgiving** would be more appropriate at this stage.

Considering Baptism?

- Am I prepared to give my child a Christian upbringing by being actively involved within the family of the Church?
- Will I help my child to attend Sunday worship regularly and learn to pray, not just through my teaching, but by my own example?
- Will I pray regularly for my child?
- Will I encourage my child in due time to come to Confirmation and Communion?
- Can I make the promises that will be required of me in the Baptism Service with integrity?