

New Life in Christ



Guide to Baptism

---oOo---

Who to contact:

Revd Rob Burles

The Rectory
Parsonage Rd, Takeley, CM22 6QX

01279 870214

minister@tlcchurch.co.uk

---oOo---

Sunday services:

9 - 9.50am All Saints, Little Canfield

*(at the end of Church Ln, off the Stortford Rd,
opposite the turning to Little Canfield Hall)*

10.30 - 11.30am Holy Trinity, Takeley

*(at the end of Church Ln, off the Dunmow Rd,
by the speed camera just to the west of the main village centre)*

Children are welcome at all our church services -
there is usually an activity provided for them.

There is parking at both our churches.

Refreshments are served after all our services -
so you can get to know us and feel part of the church family.

---oOo---

We're delighted that you're thinking of baptism for your child. Your child is precious to you and precious to God. At baptism you promise to raise your child to know God loves them, and to help them to follow Jesus as a member of the Church.

Jesus himself was baptised as the sign of a new beginning. You can read the story at the start of Mark's Gospel in the New Testament. Jesus told his followers to baptise others as a sign that they had turned away from their old life and begun a new life as his followers. Now they were members of Christ's Body (*the Church*), and could be certain of God's forgiveness.

Baptism is a sacrament, a visible sign of God's love for us. In baptism, we thank God for his gift of life and publicly acknowledge his love. It marks a new start: a decision to follow Jesus Christ within the family of the Church.

---oOo---

What happens during the service?

Normally baptisms take place during a regular Sunday morning service, so that the congregation can welcome your child into the family of the church.

You and the godparents publicly promise to do your best to raise your child to follow Jesus, as part of the wider Church family. The local church members welcome your child and promise to support, encourage and pray for him or her, and for you as a family.

For part of the service, the minister asks you and the godparents to bring your child to the front of church; for the baptism itself, we gather round the font (*containing the water for baptism*). You are asked to make various promises on behalf of your child. After that your child is baptised, and then welcomed into the church.

Don't worry about things going smoothly, the minister will make sure that you know what to do and when.

---oOo---

What will we be asked to say?

During the baptism service you and the godparents will be asked to answer these questions:

The Church receives *these children* with joy.
Today we are trusting God
for *their* growth in faith.
Will you pray for *them*,
draw *them* by your example
into the community of faith
and walk with *them* in the way of Christ?
With the help of God, we will.

In baptism *these children* begin *their* journey in faith.
You speak for *them* today.
Will you care for *them*,
and help *them* to take *their* place
within the life and worship of Christ's Church?
With the help of God, we will.

In baptism, God calls us out of darkness
into his marvellous light.

To follow Christ means dying to sin
and rising to new life with him.

Therefore, I ask these questions,
which you answer for yourselves
and on behalf of *the children* to be baptised.

Do you turn to Christ?
I turn to Christ.

Do you repent of your sins?
I repent of my sins.

Do you renounce evil?
I renounce evil.

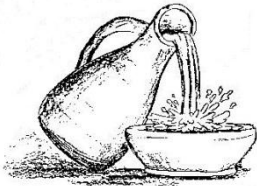
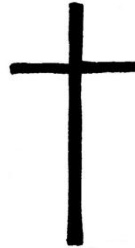
You will also be asked to join the rest of the church community in
publicly declaring your faith in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

---oOo---

Symbols and signs used during the service

The baptism service includes several important symbols:

The sign of the cross – the minister makes the sign of a cross on your child’s forehead. This is like an invisible badge to show that Christians are united with Christ and must not be ashamed to stand up for their faith in him.



Water – the minister pours water on your child’s head as a sign of being washed free from sin and beginning a new life with God.

The welcome – the church congregation says a few words to welcome your child into the Church family and to show how pleased they are to have you among them.

Candle – Jesus said ‘I am the light of the world.’ You will be given a lighted candle at the end of the service as a reminder of the light of Christ in your child’s life.



---oOo---

The role of godparents

Godparents make the same promises on behalf of your child as parents; to pray for and support your child, and to help you in raising your child in the Christian faith as part of the Church family. It is an important and responsible role.

It is usual to choose three godparents (*two of the same sex as the child and one of the opposite sex*).

Godparents can be family members or friends. Choose people you trust to take an interest in your child's spiritual welfare and who will pray for you and your child.

Godparents must themselves be baptised.

---oOo---

Frequently Asked Questions

Q What's the difference between a baptism and a christening?
A *None, they are just different words for the same thing.*

Q I'm not a regular churchgoer, can I still have my child baptised?

A *Yes, the Church believes that God's love is available to all, regardless of their background.*

A What is the right age for baptism?

A *Baptism can happen at any age. What matters is that you believe it is the right thing to do. Teenagers and adults may also be baptised, if they have decided that they wish to follow Jesus for themselves.*



Q What does it cost?

A *The baptism service is free. However, there is a small charge for a baptism certificate.*

Q Can we have a private baptism service?

A *Baptisms usually take place in the main church service, so that you can see the church community they are joining, and the congregation know who they are welcoming as a new member.*

Q What is thanksgiving?

A *In this service, you thank God for your child and the child is blessed. However, you do not make the same promises as in the baptism service. If you choose to have a thanksgiving, you can still have a baptism for your child some time later.*

Q Shouldn't our children make their own decisions?

A *One day they will - sooner than you think! But in the meantime you probably make decisions for your children every day. You don't wait until they can ask before you feed them. In the same way, choosing to baptise your child shows you want them to have spiritual food as they grow up and to be fully part of the Christian family, the Church. Later they will be able to declare their faith for themselves at a confirmation service.*

Q What happens after the baptism?

A *Children are welcome at all our Church services – there is usually an activity provided for them. We also have a group for parents and carers with their pre-school-age children, and we offer regular courses to explore the Christian faith.*

---oOo---

We hope that your child's baptism will be a wonderful and memorable occasion and that it will mark the beginning of a long and happy association with this church for you and your family.

