



## *Some Guidelines*





If you are looking at this booklet, you may be thinking about baptism for yourself or one of your children (otherwise known as Christening – Baptism and Christening mean the same thing). If so, we're delighted

that you've made it this far and we look forward to welcoming you at All Saints', Orpington. Our church offers baptism to everyone who requests it and is serious about the steps they will be taking, and we aim to make it a rewarding and memorable experience. There are a few simple things to note which are detailed below. These make sure that you and/or your children are suitably prepared for baptism, understand what baptism is really all about and so that we have the opportunity to get know one-another better.

Baptism is one of the Church's sacraments – a visible sign of God's love for us in which he bestows his life-giving grace upon us. Jesus was himself baptised as the sign of a new beginning at the start of his public ministry. He told his followers to baptise others as a sign that they had turned away from their old way of life and begun a new life with him, a life lived in love, peace and grace. Christ gave his Church as the body in which his love and grace might dwell. This is why he called the Church 'his body'. Baptism marks an individual's entrance into the Church. Baptism also marks God's Spirit descending on them and his Grace spiritually protecting them

from that moment forward and for all eternity. This is marked in the service by the symbolic washing with Holy Water and anointing with Holy Oils. This life-long spiritual protection also requires a response from each of us, and it involves every baptised Christian continuing to work at growing in faith, good works and dedication to God through commitment to his Church (the Body of Christ). That is why, in baptism an individual promises ongoing commitment to the Church family and receives the inward Spirit of grace to begin growing a personal faith and trust in God. If it is a young child who is being baptised, then their parents and godparents make those promises on the child's behalf and agree to commit to bringing that child up as a Christian in the life of the Church. This means attending church with them regularly and encouraging them to attend the Church's children and youth provision as they grow up.



To be a Christian is to walk a life-long journey with God which includes ongoing dedication to his Church and perseverance in faith (even when it feels like a struggle). In the Church of England, it is common to baptise young children; this is sometimes known as 'Christening', because it marks the first step on that life-long Christian journey. Whether you are

seeking baptism for yourself or for your child, it marks a new start: a decision and commitment to follow Jesus Christ within the family of the Church. In Baptism you will make promises to God and the Church Community.



○ **MAY I OR MY CHILD BE BAPTISED AT ALL SAINTS'?**

Everyone is able to be baptised at All Saints', Orpington. All that is required is one of the following:

- (1) you are resident within the parishes or
- (2) you regularly attend services at our church.

Sometimes those who live and worship elsewhere but have a long-term connection with the parish may wish for a baptism at All Saints'.

Please contact [allsaintsorpington@gmail.com](mailto:allsaintsorpington@gmail.com) and we will help you to explore the possibilities.

○ **IS THERE ANYTHING THAT I OR MY CHILD WILL BE EXPECTED TO DO?**

1. Being baptised marks the beginning of a life-long journey of faith together with the whole of 'Christ's Body' - the Church. Thus, in baptism you commit to becoming a regular member of the Church. The way you begin the journey is important. We open our arms to anyone wishing to be baptised, or have their children baptised. All we ask is that families wishing to be baptised should begin

attending church. This gives us a chance to get to know you a little better, and you us, outside of all the hustle and bustle of the baptism service itself.

2. You will also be visited by a member of our baptism calling team who will help to prepare you and/or your child for Baptism. At these meetings, the meaning of baptism and the significance of the promises that are made will be discussed. This is a good opportunity for you to ask any further questions that you may have. They will be in touch with you to arrange a mutually convenient time.
3. In baptism, you promise to become a member of the 'Body of Christ' (the Church) and work at growing your faith, devotion and doing good works. You should try your best to attend church most weeks following the baptism. Making time in a busy schedule can be difficult, but it is in your and your family's best interests to begin giving church attendance a high priority.
4. If you have children, we try to make attending church as easy as possible for you. But please do not prevent your child from experiencing church just because you are nervous, unsure or embarrassed that they might make a noise. They are as much a part of God's family as anyone else and that means that they are just as welcome in God's house. Children are welcome at every main Sunday morning service. There is good Crèche, Sunday School and Youth Group provision – just ask.

## ○ **WHEN DO BAPTISMS HAPPEN?**

Whether you are seeking baptism for yourself or for your child, it marks a new start: a decision and commitment to follow Jesus Christ within your own household and within the family of the Church. The usual times for our baptisms are either during our Sunday Parish Eucharist (9.30am) or at 3.00pm on the first Sunday of the month. Baptism is never a private affair: the church community should always be present. For this reason, there could be multiple baptisms on any one occasion (this still leaves plenty of space for you to invite up to 70 guests). Because of the sheer volume of baptism enquiries, we regret that we are usually unable to offer baptisms outside of these times.

We have all been to those baptisms where only close relatives attend, nobody joins in and the service is dull and meaningless, with everyone just wanting to get it over with and wishing they could get to the pub. The format at All Saints' looks to avoid such a disheartening scenario. Your baptism is an occasion for joy and calls for joint celebration of your family together with your new Church family too!

We will advise you of available dates following your initial contact with us so that you can decide which available date best suits you.

**TO AVOID DISAPPOINTMENT, PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU HAVE MADE A CHURCH BOOKING BEFORE EXPLORING A PARTY VENUE OR MAKING ANY OTHER ARRANGEMENTS.**

## ○ **GODPARENTS**

Godparents make the same promises as parents; to help raise children in the Christian faith.

Because it is an important and responsible role, Church law states that ALL Godparents must be Baptised and at least one

Confirmed in the Church. This is because they make promises to openly support a child's long-term Christian upbringing and all round spiritual welfare. Godparents must also be over 16 years of age. It is a responsible role, so choose carefully! Try not to simply choose those you are most fond of, but choose people you can trust to take a proper interest in your child's long-term spiritual health. When you ask them, let them know that this is what is expected of them. You may have a maximum of 4 Godparents. If you are struggling to find people who fit the bill, have a word with your parish priest or someone at church and they might be able to suggest someone.

It would be a good idea to invite your chosen Godparents to at least one Sunday morning service before the baptism, so that they can become a little more familiar with the way church looks and feels. It might also be helpful for them to attend the baptism preparation evenings when the Baptism visitor visits you.



○ **NEXT STEPS**

If you would like to take this further, we would love to hear from you. Here are our details:

Parish Administrator: All Saints' Church, Bark Hart Road  
Orpington BR6 0QD  
Tel: (01689) 832031

Email: [allsaintsorpington@gmail.com](mailto:allsaintsorpington@gmail.com)

Website: [www.allsaintsorpington.org.uk](http://www.allsaintsorpington.org.uk)

*Office Hours 9.30–12.30 Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays & Fridays*

○ **SERVICES AT ALL SAINTS'**

**Sundays:**

8.00 am Holy Communion

9.30 am Parish Eucharist with Crèche, Sunday School (Kingfishers) and Youth Group (Heaven)

**Tuesday to Friday:** 9.00 am Morning Prayer

**Wednesdays:** 10.00 am Eucharist

**Saturday:** 9.30 am Morning Prayer

There are additional services, including choral evensong, to celebrate special occasions. Any alterations to services will be shown on noticeboards in and outside the church

○ **GROUPS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN**

Crèche & Kingfishers (Toddler to Yr6):

Lesley Birse (01689) 836392

Heaven Group (Teenagers):

Mandy Turner (01689) 818126

TOTS (for toddlers) Thursdays:

Angela Pentlow (01689) 815772

(in term-time)

Little Bees Pre-school:

Laura O'Brian (07710) 862272

(Mondays-Fridays in term-time)

The Church has an approved  
Child Protection Policy & Procedures

We hope that your baptism will be a wonderful and memorable occasion and that it will mark the beginning of a long and happy association with All Saints', Orpington.

*May God's blessing and guidance be with you as  
you consider this exciting next step on the  
journey of faith.*

*We hope to see you soon!*

