

## BAPTISM IN THE PARISH OF FARLINGTON

### **Our policy:**

Baptism is a sacrament of the church expressing the beginning of a journey with God and entry into the Church. As a sacrament, baptism provides a way through which God's grace is given to the one who is baptised. It has important implications for the family and godparents, in particular if the candidate is an infant. This is because there is a responsibility to consider how the child is going to be helped to understand and grow into the vows made on their behalf at their baptism service. Our policy is therefore to be open and welcoming to those in the parish who request baptism, and seek to help them experience God's presence in this way. We have a process that helps take each candidate or family through from an initial enquiry to the baptism service and beyond.

### **The process:**

Our baptismal process is designed to help you meet those in the parish who have had experience of baptism, answer any questions you may have, and introduce you to the church community. It is expected that those requesting baptism will follow this pattern through. The baptism service is generally held on the second Sunday in the month at 3pm and alternates month by month between our two churches.

- **Enquiry and booking** - at present this can be done by contacting The Rector by telephone or e-mail. Our parish office is open from 9.30am to 12pm at the Church of the Resurrection on Tuesday and Thursday mornings; enquiries can be made there also. After a baptism service date is chosen, an application form will be sent out with a copy of the 'Baptism in the Church of England' leaflet which answers some basic questions.
- **Home visit** - a visit from one of the clergy or the baptism preparations team can be arranged, if required, to discuss any questions that may arise.
- **The preparation class** - a monthly discussion meeting is hosted by one of our baptism-team members and gathers the families who will be attending the baptism service to talk through any questions and explain what happens at the service. At present this happens on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 8pm (e.g. those attending a July baptism will have a preparation class in June). Generally parents attend this without the distraction of younger children, although any candidate who is old enough to appreciate it or any godparent is also welcome to attend. Discussion is based around the baptism leaflet provided, and printed discussion cards; ample opportunity is given to raise questions.

- **A rehearsal** - taken by the person who will perform the baptism and generally held immediately before the Toddler Service on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday afternoon of the month (the month of the baptism service). It involves explaining and running through the service and choosing the hymns/songs.
- **The baptism service** - usually held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday afternoon at 3pm. We alternate venues between the two churches, which means up to four families at Church of the Resurrection and up to three at St. Andrew's. Those who have led your preparation class should be there to welcome you, and present your baptism and godparent certificates.
- **Meet the family** - one month on from the baptism the family are invited to attend the Family Service which happens on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month at 10am at Church of the Resurrection. This is an all-age service designed to be child friendly; as a baptism family you will be welcomed at this service and it provides an opportunity to meet the rest of the Church community.