

Christening – Start an Amazing Journey!

Your Child's birth

The majority of our Christenings are for small children. Your Child's birth is a moment of huge importance. Suddenly you are responsible for another human life. How do you mark that arrival into your wider group of family and friends? How do you say thanks for their arrival? We strive to be open and welcoming to those living in the parish who ask for a Christening service. We seek to help you experience God's presence. We seek to help you understand the promises you will be asked to make. We believe the process we use helps take you, and your family, through from an initial enquiry to the baptism service and beyond.

A Sacrament

At a Christening your child will be baptized. Baptism is a sacrament of the church. It marks the beginning of a journey with God. It is the sign of entry into the Church. If the candidate is an infant there are important implications for the family and Godparents: There is a responsibility on the church to help the child to understand and grow in the Christian faith; there is a responsibility on Godparents and parents to help this too by being prepared to keep vows made on the child's behalf at their baptism service.

Can I have my child Christened in St Andrew's or the Church of the Resurrection?

If you live in our parish* and the child's godparents are happy to make the promises, and are Christened or Baptized themselves, then yes. If you live nearby and are a regular worshipper at one of our services (and the priest in the parish where you live agrees) the answer is often yes. If you live further away we would encourage you to make links with your church where you live – as you have a better chance of being a part of the church community there, something you promise to do in the service – and support you in holding your child's Christening service in that place.

What is the process?

Our Christening process is designed to help you meet those in the parish who have had experience of Christening, answer any questions you may have, and introduce you to the church community. It is expected that those requesting Christening will follow this process through. The service is generally held on the second Sunday in the month at 12 midday and takes place in one of our two churches.

- Enquiry and booking - this can be done by contacting the parish office by telephone or e-mail. Our parish office is open from 10.00am to 12pm at the Church of the Resurrection on weekday mornings. You can call in person there too. We are usually able to tell you whether a particular second Sunday is still available and which church is likely to be available. A request form can be downloaded from our website and sent in to our office.
- Confirming the date - One of our clergy team will contact you by phone or email to negotiate and confirm your date
- Home visit – a visit from one of the clergy or the Christening preparation 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 Christening preparation 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 at an evening session in the month before the service. Generally parents are encouraged to 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: there is plenty of time to raise questions.

- **Coming to Church** - As one of the promises that Parents and Godparents make is to help the child to grow up in the church family, in other words, to bring the child to church, we ask you to attend the 10am Family Service in the month before the special day of your child's service. You are, of course, welcome to attend other services too
- **The Christening service** - usually held on the 2nd Sunday at midday. We use one of the two churches (generally the first family to book get to choose which). Up to four families can be fitted in at Church of the Resurrection and up to two 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** – because the Christening service is dedicated to that purpose, it means that most of our regular congregation will not be present. We therefore invite all baptism families to come back to join us for worship on a normal Sunday to meet the congregation. The Family Service

happens on the 2nd Sunday of the month at 10am at Church of the Resurrection – it is an all-age service designed to be child friendly, but children and families are welcome at any time to any of our services.

*Check this on www.achurchnearyou.com

Updated October 2015