



**Baptism of infants and children in the
Upper Thames Group of Parishes
[Cricklade, Latton, Ashton Keynes or the Leigh]**

If you are thinking about a christening or baptism for your child, we'd like you to read a little more about what it's about and the arrangements in our Upper Thames Parishes.

What is a Christening (or Baptism) about?

1. It is the service which marks initiation into the church, the start of your child's journey of faith. As this journey will last a life-time, your child will need encouragement from you as parents as well as from godparents and the church community.
2. It's an outward sign of the grace of God's love for your child.
3. It's a welcome into God's family.

Who can be christened/baptised in Upper Thames?

1. Anyone living in one of the parishes of Cricklade, Latton, Ashton Keynes or the Leigh is eligible to be christened/baptised in their local church.
2. If you live out of the parish but have a strong connection with one of our churches we would be very happy to talk to you further about your request and will ask you to seek permission from the vicar of the church in the parish where you live.
3. There is no upper or lower age limit. Anyone can be christened/baptised at any age.

What will the service include?

A Christening/Baptism is the beginning of your child's life of faith in the church. The service includes :-

1. Parents and godparents making a commitment to care for and pray for the child and to help them grow in the Christian faith.
2. Parents and Godparents make a decision on behalf of the child to turn away from evil and to

commit to following Jesus as the way the truth and the life.

3. The baptism (using water as a symbol of cleansing).
4. Statement of what we as Christians believe.
5. Prayers (one of which we will ask you to write)
6. Bible reading (which you may be asked to choose)



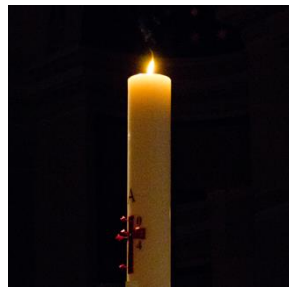
We want you to feel involved and be able to participate fully in the service, so there are **four things we ask you to do**

1. We would like you to get to know us and the church community before you make any arrangements for the christening, and so we **ask you to come to at least two of our church services** (Sunday mornings at 10am on 1st or 3rd Sundays in the month at St Sampson's Cricklade have activities for children and Latton has an informal all age morning worship on the 1st Sunday in the month). Do please let us know that you are planning to come along. If this isn't possible eg you work on a Sunday or your request is for a christening at Leigh, then do please get in touch.

2. We would like you to consider the **values** that are important to your family and which you hope will shape how your child grows up. We want you to describe those values and think about how they fit into the Christian faith.
3. A christening service includes prayers. We would like you to write down what you would ask God for - which will be **your prayer** for your child, either for when your child is young or as he/she grows up. We will include your prayer in the service.
4. If the christening service is not part of a Sunday morning service, we will ask you to choose a **Bible reading** (there are several you could choose from) and to tell us why it is special to you and your family.

The three symbols of our faith you'll meet in the service

1. Light. We light our large Easter candle as a reminder that the light of Christ's light shines in the world and a candle is given to the newly baptised child.



2. The Cross. This is the “badge” of our faith and reminds us of how Jesus Christ died on the cross because of his love and forgiveness of each one of us. The sign of the cross is made on the forehead of the person being baptised.
3. Water is a sign of cleansing, of washing away the old life and taking on a new life following Christ. We pray for God's blessing on the water.

Good and useful information for parents can be found here

<https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/christenings/parents-guide-christenings>

What about Godparents?

Please choose godparents or supportive friends who can happily make the decisions and commit to the Christian aspect of Baptism.



Godparents should be christened/baptised and if aren't, they can be supportive friends (they then choose whether or not they wish to make the promises and decisions). They could also (after preparation) be baptised on the same day.

The suggestion is to have about 3 godparents. For a boy; two godfathers and one godmother. For a girl; two godmothers and one godfather.

There is good information for godparents here:

<https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/christenings/guide-godparents>

What about a Thanksgiving Service?

You (or those who might choose to be godparents) may not feel you can make the Christian baptism promises with integrity so a **Thanksgiving Service for the gift of a child** could be just what you are looking for.

We give thanks for the new life seen in your child and ask for God's blessing upon him or her. It also includes the naming of your child before God.

The service doesn't include the same promises and decisions as in the Christening/Baptism service so some families have found this an excellent way of celebrating the arrival of a child and giving them their name.

Is there a cost?

Baptism is free - we are delighted to be welcoming your child into the church. We do ask that you consider making a donation to the church as a contribution towards the cost of administration and candle and certificates. If your ceremony isn't taking place in one of our Sunday services we would be grateful if you would donate the cost of heating. If you are able to gift aid any donation that is a great help.

Any questions?

If you have queries, do feel free to get in touch with our parishes administrator Jane Eyles

admin@upperthames.org.uk 01793 979304

or Revd Shirley Danby shirleydanby21@gmail.com or 07980 548844

There's also further good information from the Church of England website about Christenings.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/life-events/christenings>