



Baptisms/Christenings at All Hallows and Saint Mary Magdalene



We are delighted that you would like to be baptised, or have a child in your family baptised. Baptism is an important part of the Christian faith and something to be celebrated! This leaflet will help you understand more about baptism – what it means, why it's important and what happens when someone is baptised.

WHAT IS BAPTISM?

Baptism is membership into God's family. Just as you may be a member of many clubs, or groups, baptism is an outward sign to everyone that someone is a member of the church.

IS IT THE SAME THING AS A CHRISTENING?

Yes, it's the same thing. A christening refers to the naming part of the ceremony (christen means 'give a name to') whereas baptism is what we call a sacrament (see below).

CAN YOU BE BAPTISED MANY TIMES?

No, it takes place once in your life – there is no sell-by date! Baptism is what we call in churchy language a 'sacrament' – an outward sign of something God is doing.

AND WHAT IS GOD DOING?

He is accepting someone into his church family. This is a seal of the relationship between someone and God. It's a very holy and special moment when someone is baptised.

WHY BAPTISM THOUGH?

Jesus was baptised at the beginning of his three-year ministry – it tells us this in the Bible (Luke 3:21). Christians are asked to 'imitate Christ' (i.e. copy his lifestyle). If he was baptised, we should also do so. It represents a new start.

WHY DOES THE VICAR PUT WATER ON SOMEONE'S HEAD?

The water symbolises being washed clean, and starting a new relationship with God. Jesus was also baptised in the River Jordan (Matthew 3:13).

WHAT'S A GODPARENT?

If a baby or child is being baptised, they can't make the promise to follow Jesus by themselves. Those parents and godparents who make promises are doing so on behalf

of the young person. They promise to bring the baby or child up to love God, and his people.

WHO CAN BE A GODPARENT?

Godparents must be baptised themselves, as they are promising to bring a child up in the Christian faith. There must be a minimum of three godparents, at least two male godparents for a boy, and two female godparents for a girl.

WHY DOES BAPTISM TAKE PLACE IN A CHURCH SERVICE?

Baptism signifies membership, so at All Hallows or Saint Mary Magdalene baptism takes place within one of the Sunday morning services so that other members of our church family can welcome their newest member! The church family will also promise to encourage that person to live as a Christian.

DOES IT COST ANYTHING?

No, it doesn't, although if you wish to give a donation to the work of the Church, we will always be grateful.

WHO CAN BE BAPTISED?

Anyone! We are happy to baptise children of single parents or where the parents are not married. Where parents are of different faiths, that's ok too, as long as one parent is a Christian. Baptism is not just for children, so adults are welcome too.

CAN YOU ATTEND CHURCH IF YOU HAVEN'T BEEN BAPTISED?

Of course you can! We would love to welcome you at any of our services. Church is open to anyone, of any race, religion or background. Baptism is that 'next step' for those who want to increase their commitment to God.

THIS ALL SOUNDS A BIT COMPLICATED! DOES THE CHURCH OFFER ANY OTHER OPTION?

If you feel this is not for you, we are happy to organise a 'naming ceremony'. Get in touch with us to ask more about this.

WANT MORE INFORMATION?

Just phone **01937 574273** or email **bardseyparishchurch@gmail.com**

Or go to the Church of England website at **www.churchofenglandchristenings.org**