**Dear Baptism enquirer**

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**BAPTISM**

Thank you for your enquiry about baptism at Christ Church. We are really pleased to welcome you to God’s Church and would like to outline below some further information about Baptism in the Church of England and particular aspects of baptism at Christ Church.

**What is baptism?**

Baptism, often called a “Christening”, is one of the two sacraments in the Church of England. It is a special service in which a new member of the church meets with God’s love and grace in a special way though very ordinary everyday things. For baptism it is water which is poured over the head of the person being baptized or in some cases as an adult you may be fully immersed in a bath of water. The other sacrament is Holy Communion where we share ordinary bread and wine to remember Christ’s sacrifice for us on the cross.

**What does baptism mean?**

The baptism we see in the New Testament is new believers being baptised in local rivers. The new believer went right under the water and back up again. This would signify that a transformation takes place as we are cleansed by God through the water and that we go down and rise again as Christ did at Easter. The new believer becomes a member of the church. The vows made by the whole congregation are a very important part of the service as you are welcomed into the church and the family of God vow to walk with you in your journey of faith. The baptized person becomes a brother or sister in Christ within the family of God.

**Do I need to go to church to be baptised or to have my child baptised?**

Yes. A Parish church such as Christ Church exists for all the people of the parish of Purley. Some of the vows that you make (for you or for your child) are about walking and developing in faith in Jesus. You can only really do this with other believers by joining them in worship. We therefore expect you to come to at least one service per month to worship with us but hopefully more regularly than that. To honour the vows made in baptism we would also expect you to continue to attend after the service too!

**How can I find out more about the Christian faith?**

Coming to baptism is also a public statement of a relationship with Jesus Christ. We believe Jesus to be the Son of God and our Lord and saviour. It is because of Jesus that we have access to a relationship with our creator, Father God, forever. That is why we ask you to say that you submit and turn to Christ. There are several ways in which you can find out more about the Christian faith. We run regular *Alpha* courses, have a resource library of books, music and recorded talks and of course you can ask any questions you like on a Sunday or make an arrangement to meet to discuss your faith. You will be asked to undertake a form of preparation which will include attending at least some of the Alpha course and meeting with a member of the clergy to explore your faith.

**What happens next?**

You will be contacted by a member of the baptism preparation team who will arrange to come and talk to you about what baptism is, your faith and any questions that you may have. We will help you decide if the commitment of baptism is right for you and your family at this time. After that meeting, if you wish to proceed, we will book a date for the baptism and make an arrangement for a further visit closer to the baptism. In the meantime we will look forward to worshipping with you at Christ Church. Please note that if you are not able to attend regularly we will have to reconsider if you are ready for this commitment at this time. A further form of preparation may be required to ensure that you are ready for this commitment.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you require any further information,

Yours faithfully

Doug

Rev Doug McHardie,

Vicar, Christ Church Purley

[Vicar@christchurchpurley.org.uk](mailto:Vicar@christchurchpurley.org.uk)

**APPLICATION FOR BAPTISM**

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| Date of birth of candidate |  | |
| Preferred date for baptism |  | |
| Full name(s) of candidate |  | |
| Address |  | |
| Telephone Number(s) |  | |
| E-mail(s) |  | |
| PARENTS |  | |
| Mother | Full name  Occupation  Baptised? Confirmed? | |
| Father | Full name  Occupation  Baptised? Confirmed? | |
| GODPARENTS |  | |
| 1. Name   Address | Baptised? Confirmed? | |
| 1. Name   Address | Baptised? Confirmed? | |
| 1. Name   Address | Baptised? Confirmed? | |
| PREPARATION |  | |
| Best days and times to arrange a baptism visit |  | |
| I have received the information about baptism and undertake to read this and take the opportunity to find out more about the responsibilities I have and how to honour the vows that I will make.  I should like to apply for the candidate named above to be baptized at Christ Church Purley.  I am applying for adult baptism and I have / have not been baptized as a child.  I would like to be baptized by (please tick one option):  a) full immersion  b) pouring water | |  |

Notes:

1. As a parent or godparents of infants you should ask yourself:

Are you prepared to the best of your ability to give the child a Christian upbringing within the family of Christ’s Church?

Will you help the child to be regular in public worship and in prayer, not only by your teaching but also by your example and your prayers?

Will you encourage the child in due time to come to Confirmation and Communion?

It is not essential under Church Law for parents to be baptized and confirmed unless they are to be godparents.

1. It is usual to have three godparents, two of the same sex as the child and one of the opposite sex. To have one godmother and one godfather is sufficient.

Parents may be godparents to their own children, provided that the child has at least one other godparent.

Sponsors in addition to godparents are permitted.

Church law requires that godparents should be baptized and confirmed but the requirement of confirmation can be relaxed in certain cases.

1. If the candidate is older then sponsors, who like godparents should normally be baptized and confirmed, may take the place of godparents.
2. You should normally be baptized at his or her parish church or the church the parents normally attend.

When we receive your application a member of the baptism team will arrange to come and visit you. We will write to you and provide some more information to explore the meaning of baptism and the Christian faith.

Once we have a date in the diary you will also receive a visit from the minister who will undertake the baptism to talk about the service and to answer any questions that you may have.

Please return this form by e-mail to [office@christchurchpurley.org.uk](mailto:office@christchurchpurley.org.uk) .

**BAPTISM DISCUSSION QUESTIONS** to help you prepare for baptism (its not a pas/fail test! – we will explore these questions when we come to visit you!)

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| 1. Christian baptism in church is | | | |
| A  A naming ceremony for a child | B  Only for babies | C  A form of membership rite for the Church | D  A good excuse for a party in a nice building |

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| 1. Baptism is | | | |
| A  Made up by the church | B  Not in the bible | C  Biblically based | D  A good excuse for a party in a nice building |

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| 1. In the Old Testament Abraham was made a promise by God (Genesis 17) that he would be the Father of all nations and as a sign of God’s promise (known as a covenant) Abraham and the chosen people were | | | |
| A  Marked with a cross | B  Circumcised | C  Made to grow long hair | D  Given a special name |

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| 1. John the Baptist baptised people in the Jordan (Luke 3) river by immersing them in the river. Others were outraged by this because | | | |
| A  Only non-Jews had to be cleansed in this way | B  He nearly drowned people | C  They didn’t get to have a party afterwards | D  The Jordan was so dirty |

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| 1. John told people to repent and receive God’s forgiveness. This means | | | |
| A  Say sorry | B  Turn away from bad behaviour | C  Turn to God | D  Read the Bible |

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| 1. Jesus offered himself to be baptised but John refused at first (Matthew 3:13-17). Jesus insisted and was baptised by John. John refused because | | | |
| A  Jesus was too old | B  Jesus was barred from baptism | C  Jesus had no sin to repent of | D  God told him not to |

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| 1. When Jesus was baptised the heavens opened and what happened? | | | |
| A  A dove landed on Jesus and God said that he was pleased with his son | B  God told John off for baptising Jesus | C  God said “time to party!” | D  The people grumbled and complained some more |

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| 1. Christians believe that Jesus is | | | |
| A  A very clever teacher | B  A prophet who heard from God and spread his message | C  The Son of God | D  A good role model |

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| 1. The most important festival in the Church is | | | |
| A  Harvest | B  Christmas | C  Easter | D  May Day |

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| 1. Jesus died on the cross and was raised again. This is important for Christians because | | | |
| A  It is a miracle | B  Jesus was very strong and a martyr | C  By his death the barriers to God are removed | D  We can live forever even after death |

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| 1. In baptism we pour running water over the persons head which signifies | | | |
| A  Cleansing in living water | B  A good bath | C  Dying to sin and rising to new life as Jesus died and was raised | D  The water is holy |

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| 1. Parents and God parents say which of the following | | | |
| A  Reject and renounce evil | B  Submit to Christ | C  Turn to Christ | D  Come to Christ |

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| 1. The welcome into the church and vows are said by | | | |
| A  Parents and godparents | B  The Vicar | C  Whole church | D  The Choir |

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| 1. Believing and following Jesus means | | | |
| A  Having a friend for life | B  Having a whole family of believing brothers and sisters | C  Your life is transformed and will never be the same again | D  Pointless |

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| 1. God is | | | |
| A  Distant and scary | B  A myth | C  A living God who walks with us daily by his Spirit | D  There if I need him in a crisis but not important to daily life |

Want to know more? Come and join the Alpha course that is designed to help people explore their questions about faith. E-mail [office@christchurchpurley.org.uk](mailto:office@christchurchpurley.org.uk) .