

Baptism Policy: issued 21st March 2017

The wording of this policy assumes we are talking about the christening (baptism) of a baby or child, but it applies equally to teenagers and adults.

Can you have a christening in one of our churches?

In accordance with the national policy of the Church of England we christen those who live within our parishes, so that we can offer care and pastoral support before and after the event. If this is not you, we encourage you to contact the vicar where you live.

We will christen your child if you fall into the following categories:

1. You are resident in the six parishes of Woodbridge (Brinkworth, Dauntsey, Garsdon, Great Somerford, Little Somerford, Lea – please check using www.achurchnearyou.com)
2. You are regular attenders of one of the six parish churches or are listed on the church's Electoral Roll

We understand that you may want to hold your service in our church because previous services for your family have taken place there, or because other members of your family attend here, but if you do not live locally it is difficult for us to support you in the long term and we believe that you can best receive the support you need close to where you live. If this is you, we would prefer that you contact your local church for a christening there.

When can we have a christening?

Before agreeing on a date for your ceremony we will ask you to attend church a few times over a period of three months so that we can get to know you. If you are considering having your child christened part of the service asks you to promise to bring them up within the life of the church, and this will help you decide if this is something you are prepared to commit to. Once you have completed this attendance we will ask you to come to a short preparation session with other families where we will be happy to discuss potential dates for your ceremony.

Christenings take place in certain of our main Sunday services and occasionally in special Sunday services where several christenings may be taking place together. Except in extreme circumstances we will not conduct ceremonies outside of these arrangements.

Ceremonies have to be scheduled when one of our vicars is available and is not busy in other services. It is particularly difficult to find suitable slots in October, November and December with a succession of Harvest, Remembrance and Christmas services.

During the preparation we will discuss with you the promises that you are required to make during the christening. If you then feel that you cannot honestly make those promises it is possible to have an alternative special ceremony called a Thanksgiving where, as part of a Sunday service, we give thanks to God for your child.

Rev Steve Wilkinson (Rector), Rev Velma Oxley (Associate Minister)

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