

*Baptism or Christening  
in the*



**Barrow and Wolds Group**

✦ HOLY TRINITY ✦ ST. MARY ✦ ST. ANDREW ✦ ST. MARY



*“Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,  
baptizing them in the name of the Father and  
of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”*

*(Matthew 28:19)*

## **Welcome.**

We are really glad that you are thinking of having your child christened/ baptised at one of our churches and look forward to warmly welcoming you.

We have a team of Baptism Volunteers who will be in touch with you and are there to answer any questions you have. You will also be invited to come to Baptism Preparation where we can explain everything, help you plan for the baptism and make a booking and arrange the date for the service.

## **Christening or Baptism?**

Christening means the same as baptism. Many people say 'christening', because it is the traditional English word; during the church service you will hear the word 'baptism' being used. A christening service is exactly the same as a baptism service.

## **What is Baptism?**

Your child is precious to you and precious to God. You want the very best for them, and so does God. You want them to make right choices in life, for themselves and for others.

During a baptism your child will be baptised with water. It's the start of an amazing journey of faith for your child and a special day for all your friends and family. Over the years to come, it's a journey you'll share together with your child by:

- Being there for your child to talk to about the bigger questions of life – questions about hope, faith and love.
- Praying for your child through the ups and downs of their faith journey.
- Showing them practically how to make those good choices in life.
- Helping them to learn more about their Christian faith, through their church and in other ways.

So, it's a commitment to start as you mean to go on.

## **What happens in the service?**

Children are usually baptised during the main Sunday morning service; the baptism will come after the sermon or talk. It is possible to arrange a separate service for baptism; you need to speak with the vicar to see if this can be arranged.

The baptism service includes the following:

- **Welcome:** The vicar will welcome everyone and especially the child who will be baptised and their family. There will be a Bible reading, and the vicar will also talk about what a christening means.
- **Promises:** The parents and the godparents will make some important promises for the child in the service. Everyone promises to continue supporting the child from this moment.
- **Sign of the Cross:** A special oil is used to make the sign of a cross on the child's forehead. It's a significant moment, which marks the child as belonging to God.
- **Water:** Water which is blessed in the church's font will be poured over the child's head by the vicar. This is the child's baptism. It's a sign of a new beginning and becoming a part of God's family.
- **Prayers and Welcome:** The vicar, or someone else from the church, will pray for the child and for all those who will support them in their path of faith. Everyone present welcomes the child into the family of the church with words given in the service.
- **Candle:** At the end of the service the child is given a lit candle with the words "Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God." If they have older brothers and sisters who have already been baptised, we can relight their candles at this time.

## **What about godparents?**

Choosing the right people as godparents for your child is a big decision. Here are some key things which might help you decide:

- Godparents will be people who'll be in touch with your family for many years to come. They may be relatives or friends of the family.
- They'll be people who you know you can trust and who'll be there for your child to talk about the bigger questions in life; questions about faith, hope and love.
- They should feel ready to make some big promises about faith for your child in church.
- Every child should have at least three godparents, traditionally two of the same sex and at least one of the opposite sex to your child. Although there is no official maximum number of godparents, three or four is usual. If you'd like more than that, talk to your vicar or baptism volunteer about the practicalities and they'll be pleased to advise.
- Parents may be godparents for their own children, providing they have at least one other godparent.
- Because of the very special role they have in supporting your child's faith journey, godparents must be baptised themselves. Ideally, they should be confirmed too, but the vicar can agree to godparents who aren't confirmed.
- If you're thinking about asking someone who is under 18 to be a godparent, talk to the vicar or your baptism volunteer first. There's no minimum age for godparents, but they must be mature enough to understand the responsibilities they're taking on.

## **Not baptised?**

If you discover the person you have asked to be a godparent is not baptised, don't worry! There are two options:

- If they are happy and ready to do so, we can arrange a baptism for them.

- Or you can ask them to be a ‘Sponsor’ or ‘Supporting Friend’; this is someone who plays a similar role to a godparent. They support you, the parents, in the bringing up of your child and in the making of good choices in life, they encourage the family to learn more about the Christian faith and they pray for you all through the ups and downs of life. For more information about this, talk to the vicar or baptism volunteer.

### **Being baptised as an adult?**

You can be baptised at any age and we will happily baptise adults as well as children. Adult baptism is usually combined with a confirmation service. If you are an adult or young person who wishes to be baptised, then please fill out the baptism enquiry form on the website and we will get in touch with you.

### **What is Confirmation?**

Confirmation is a special church service in which a person confirms the promises that were made when they were baptised. If you were baptised at a christening when you were a child, your parents and godparents made these promises on your behalf. As a young person or adult, you may be ready to affirm these promises for yourself and commit your life to following Jesus Christ. At a confirmation service, you make these promises for yourself. Your friends and family as well as the local Christian community will be there to promise to support and pray for you.

The local bishop will lay their hands on your head and ask God’s Holy Spirit to give you the strength and commitment to live God’s way for the rest of your life.

### **How much does it cost?**

There is no charge for a baptism service. However, we do have large running costs and we want the church to be here for future generations to come and be baptised, so if you are able to make a donation towards the work of the church we would be very grateful. A collection is also taken during all church services to support the ongoing work of the church.

### **Can we take photographs?**

We ask you to not take photographs during the service; it's much better for everyone to enjoy the occasion than be looking at a phone screen. You are welcome to take photographs before and after the service, both inside and outside the church. It is not possible to video or record the service.

### **Is there an alternative service?**

If you are not sure baptism is right for your child, then we can offer a service of thanksgiving, this focusses on saying thank you to God for the gift of a child but does not include the water and other symbols of baptism, neither are there any godparents. If you would like to know more about this the vicar will be pleased to talk with you.

### **How do I book, what do I need to do next?**

The easiest way is to fill in an enquiry form on our website:

- [www.barrowandwoldsgroup.com](http://www.barrowandwoldsgroup.com)

Under 'Life Events' click on Baptisms. Once we have received the enquiry we will invite you to come along to one of our baptism preparation meetings. One of our baptism volunteers will also be in touch with you.

### **Contact us.**

If you would like to ask any questions or talk to us about baptism, then you can get in touch with our administrator, Hannah:

- Email : [enquiries@barrowandwoldsgroup.com](mailto:enquiries@barrowandwoldsgroup.com)
- Tel: 01509 416520

or the priest in charge, Rev'd Clive Watts:

- Email: [rev.clive.watts@barrowandwoldsgroup.com](mailto:rev.clive.watts@barrowandwoldsgroup.com)
- Tel: 07534 899522



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