

Application Pack for a Baptism Service in the By Brook Benefice



Application for Baptism

We would like to thank you for your enquiry about baptism. There are a number of different reasons that you are exploring baptism at this time. You may have had a baby recently and want to have them baptised, and a new birth is a great opportunity to think about all of the mysteries of life. You may have children that are a little older and have begun to think about what Christian faith is all about. You may be thinking of being baptised yourself and about making your own commitment to Jesus and to the church. Whatever position you find yourself in, baptism is a celebration of knowing Jesus and of joining his people, and so we hope this pack will help you to think through what baptism is, and to be sure it is the right thing for you.

Baptism in the By Brook Benefice

The By Brook Benefice is a group of 9 rural churches served by a small ministry team, and so baptisms take place during one of our Sunday services. There is not a service every week in every church and so dates for baptisms are set with baptism families once the application form has been returned, and once we know where you would like the baptism to take place. The reason baptisms take place in the service is for two reasons. Firstly, baptism is not a private arrangement but something that involves the wider community and the new church family. Secondly, we would like to welcome you, your family, friends and other guests to worship with us.

Before the baptism service, you will need to participate in baptism preparation. There are two parts to this. Firstly, you will need to attend at least 1 service at the church where the baptism is to take place. Secondly, parents must attend a baptism preparation evening to talk informally through what baptism is, and to think about the promises you will be making in the service. If godparents are able to attend this meeting then that would be even better, but we know that this is not always possible. Dates and times of these are available from Lynn in the benefice office.

Who can be baptised here?

If you are a regular member of one of our churches, or live within the parish boundaries we would love to carry out the baptism for you once you have attended baptism preparation. If you live outside of the area covered by our parishes and do not regularly attend a church here you should contact your own local church, as it is usually better to arrange the baptism in your local church so that you are among your local church family.

Are there alternatives to baptism for a child?

There are many ways to celebrate the birth of a new child. The two main options that we can offer as a church are baptism or a thanksgiving (dedication) service. In a baptism service, you will be asked to make a commitment to do your best to encourage and support your child along with their godparents as they grown into an understanding of what it means to be a Christian, and that you will accompany them on their journey of faith. As the church, we also make promises that we will accompany those who come to be baptised.

If you feel that you cannot make the vows or undertake the commitment that baptism involves, let us know. If this is the case, a thanksgiving (dedication) service might be a better option for you. You can invite your friends to come along and thank God for the gift of your child. The difference is that your child will not be baptised and you will not have to make any commitment to bring them up in the Christian faith.

What can we expect from the church?

The church takes baptism very seriously, which is why baptism preparation is a requirement before the service. We will help you to understand what you are going to do and say, and help you to think through the roles you will enter into if you are parents and godparents of a baptised child. If you are an adult coming for baptism, we will also help you to understand the commitment that you are making for yourself. We also offer groups for children and for adults to help you to grow into your faith and to learn more about the God whose people we become in baptism. For more information, please contact Revd Jonathan Philpott on 01249 782663.

What should I do next?

It is worth spending time to make sure that baptism is the right choice for you. Once you have decided if baptism or thanksgiving (dedication) is most appropriate, and you have read through the FAQs on the next page, please complete the application form and return it to Lynn at our office. You can email it to bybrook.parishoffice@btinternet.com or post it to The Benefice Office, The Bell Inn, High Street, Yatton Keynell, Wiltshire. SN14 7BG. If you have any queries, please contact Lynn either by email or on 01249 782704. Once we have received your application form, we will contact you to arrange the date for the service.

Some Frequently Asked Questions

Is there any guidance about who to choose as godparents?

Yes. If it is a child who is to be baptised ideally there should be at least 3 godparents, two of the same sex as the child and one of the opposite sex. Parents can be godparents for their own children as long as there is at least one other godparent. We would encourage you not to have more than 4 godparents. Godparents must be baptised, and if possible confirmed, and they should be active Christians themselves.

If you are an adult applying for baptism then there is no need for godparents as you are able to make the commitment to faith for yourself. In this case it would be normal to choose 1 or 2 sponsors (supporters) who will be with you for your baptism, and will encourage you as you grow as a Christian.

How many people can come to the service?

As many as you like, but bear in mind that some of the churches are quite small so check with Lynn when you are discussing in which church the baptism will take place.

Do we have to dress smartly?

We are a relaxed and welcoming group of churches. If you want to dress up then that's fine, but if you would feel more comfortable coming informally then that's fine too.

Do we have to attend church regularly after the baptism?

We're not going to chase after you to make you come to church, but we hope that you will feel welcomed into the church family for your baptism, and we hope that you will come and join us because you want to, and because you feel that we can support you after the baptism.

How can I find out more about what it means to be a Christian?

Come and talk to one of the ministers and we can point you towards some helpful literature. We also run a short introductory course called "Start" that you might find helpful. You could also have a look at www.rejesus.co.uk or www.christianity.org.uk

The words of the baptism service

BAPTISM INTRODUCTION

Our Lord Jesus Christ told us that to enter the kingdom of heaven we must be born again of water and the Spirit, and has given us baptism as the sign and seal of this new birth.

Faith is the gift of God to his people. In baptism the Lord is adding to our number those whom he is calling. People of God, will you welcome this child and uphold them in their new life in Christ?

All: With the help of God, we will.

To the parents and godparents

This child belongs to God in Christ. From this day this child will be at home in the Christian community, and there will always be a place for them. Tell them of their baptism, and unfold to them the treasure they have been given today, so that they may know they are baptised, and, as they grow, make their own response in faith and love, and come in due time to share in the communion of the body and blood of Christ.

Do you promise, depending on the grace of God, to teach this child the truths and duties of the Christian faith; and by prayer and example to bring them up in the life and worship of the Church?

Parents and Godparents: With the help of God, we will.

In baptism this child begins their journey in faith. You speak for them today. Will you care for them, and help them to take their place within the life and worship of Christ's Church.

Parents and Godparents: With the help of God, we will.

THE DECISION

Parents and godparents, those who bring children to be baptised must affirm their allegiance to Christ and their rejection to all that is evil. It is your duty to bring up this child to fight against evil and to follow Christ. Therefore I ask you these questions which you must answer for yourselves and for this child:

Do you turn to Christ? **Parents and Godparents: I turn to Christ.**

Do you repent of your sins? **Parents and Godparents: I repent of my sins.**

Do you renounce evil? **Parents and Godparents: I renounce evil.**

And now together we remind ourselves of the faith of the church into which this child is to be baptised.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father who made the world? **All: I believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in his Son, Jesus Christ, who redeemed the world? **All: I believe and trust in him.**

Do you believe and trust in his Holy Spirit who gives life to the people of God? **All: I believe and trust in him.**

This is the faith of the Church. **All: This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**

THE BAPTISM

(Name), I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**

(Name), may God, who has received you by baptism into his Church, bless you with wisdom and love. May you grow in the Holy Spirit and follow Christ your whole life long. **Amen.**

SIGNING WITH THE CROSS

(Name), I sign you with the sign of the cross to show that you now belong to Christ.

GIVING OF A LIGHTED CANDLE

Receive this light; it is a reminder of Jesus who said, 'I am the light of the world'. May you walk in this light all the days of your life. **All: Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father. Amen.**

BAPTISM APPLICATION FORM

Please complete the sections appropriate to this application, sign and return as directed.

1. Details of person to be baptised:

Forenames:	Surname:
Date of Birth:	Age:
Address:	
.....	Postcode.....
Telephone no.....	
Email.....	
If this application is for an adult baptism please go to section 3	

2. Where the above is a child, please also complete the following:

2.1 Mother's Details

Forenames:	Surname:	
Address:		
Home Tel No.:	Mobile Tel No:	
Occupation:		
Email.....		
Are you	Baptised Yes/No	Confirmed Yes/No (delete as appropriate)

2.2 Father's Details

Forenames:	Surname:	
Address:		
Home Tel No.:	Mobile Tel No:	
Occupation:		
Email.....		
Are you	Baptised Yes/No	Confirmed Yes/No (delete as appropriate)

2.3 Data Protection

We would like to be able to contact you about what is going on in the Greater By Brook Group, such as special services or family events. If you would prefer that we did not contact you in this way, please put a cross in this box.

3. Godparents and Sponsors

Please remember the guidelines given about godparents and sponsors (supporters) in the FAQ section.

1. Forenames:	Surname:	
Address:		
Email.....		
Telephone.....		
Are they	Baptised Yes/No	Confirmed Yes/No (delete as appropriate)
2. Forenames:	Surname:	
Address:		
Email.....		
Telephone.....		
Are they	Baptised Yes/No	Confirmed Yes/No (delete as appropriate)
3. Forenames:	Surname:	
Address:		
Email.....		
Telephone.....		
Are they	Baptised Yes/No	Confirmed Yes/No (delete as appropriate)
4. Forenames:	Surname:	
Address:		
Email.....		
Telephone.....		
Are they	Baptised Yes/No	Confirmed Yes/No (delete as appropriate)

4. Service details

In which church would you like the baptism to take place?

How many members of your family and friends do you expect to attend?

5. Confirmation and Signature

I would like my child / I would like* to be baptised and promise to do my best to follow the teachings and faith of the Christian Church. (Parents/guardians or candidate should sign below)

Signed Date

Please return the form to The Benefice Office, The Bell Inn, High Street, Yatton Keynell, Wiltshire.
SN14 7BG or email any enquiries to bybrook.parishoffice@btinternet.com