

The Church rules indicate that there should be **at least three** godparents. Two of these should be the same sex as the child. Remember, godparents *must already be baptised*.

You may have chosen Guardians for your child - people who would bring up your child if something happened to you. It is not necessary for the Guardian to be the child's Godparent; they have quite different roles.

How long will the service take?

The whole service will last about 30 minutes.

Is there a charge for the service?

The Baptism service is an acknowledgement of the great gift of God in the life of a new human being. God's gifts to us are many, and our response to God should come in the light of that truth of our faith. There is, therefore, **no statutory charge for Baptism**.

Your gift back to the Church should include your willingness to support the mission of the church through your prayers, example and teaching, through regular attendance at worship and through **regular giving** to help maintain the ministry offered by the Church in this place.

We would very much appreciate it, if you are able to offer a financial offering at the service for your child, that you make it using our 'Gift Aid' envelopes available in Church. All you have to do is fill in the details on the front of the envelope and hand it in on the offering plate.

If you are a tax payer, this means that we are able to claim back the tax on any donation you make. For every £10 given, we are able to collect an extra £2.50 from the government **AT NO COST TO YOU**. This really does make a significant difference.

Offerings gathered at Baptisms are used to support the work of Children in Distress (in Romania) and the Church of England's Children's Society.

Thank you for your support and commitment

We very much hope you feel part of the community of faith at St Nick's

The Rev'd Dr Jonathan N Bauer

The Parish Office
The Village Hall
Church Lane
Chislehurst
BR75PE

02084670196

stnicholaschislehurst@outlook.com

www.stnicholas-chislehurst.org.uk

ST NICHOLAS CHURCH
CHISLEHURST



Marked
as
Christ's Own
Forever



Holy Baptism
Information Leaflet



Version 2.01– June 2021

CONGRATULATIONS!

The birth of some children is carefully planned; others come as a surprise. But it is always a wonderful privilege, and a great responsibility, to care for a young child. So it's very natural to want to give thanks to God for one of the greatest gifts God has ever given you, and to ask for God's blessing on your child and your family. We would be really delighted to arrange a special service for you and your child, and your family and friends.

Whether your child has been born to you, or whether you have recently adopted, we are here to help you make the right Christian choices for your child.

First things first...

The single most important thing to say is how **delighted** we are that you'd like God to be part of your celebrations!

As a community of faith, we are here to help you and guide you through the next steps.

Giving thanks to God for the gift of new life in the arrival of your child is an important part of what we offer in our ministry to the very young and their families. We want to do our best to help you understand the choices that are ahead of you.

We believe that baptism is a GIFT from God to the Church. It is first and foremost about an **on-going commitment to building your relationship with God and God's Church. You will be asked to make promises - and to make them publicly and with sincerity.**

We want to get to know you as a family and we assume that your request for Baptism is part of your commitment to be part of the local church. That commitment is worked out through your **participation** in the life of the church, your offering of time, talents and resources, and your commitment to be part of the family of faith here.

We want to get to know you! We hope the feeling is mutual.

What next?

The process usually starts by completing and submitting an online enquiry form from our website, or a phone call to the Parish Office, or a visit to see the priest - The Rev'd Dr Jonathan N Bauer.

If you are not resident in the ecclesiastical parish of St Nicholas, Chislehurst, and you have no link to St Nicholas', you must seek the goodwill of the Church of England parish priest where you live.

Having read this booklet and discussed it as a family, you should then arrange to meet with Jonathan (if a date and time has not already been arranged).

At that meeting Jonathan will want to get to know you a little better and talk about how we proceed together. We want to make your celebrations the best we can, so it does take a little time to get things planned out correctly.

The first thing to note is that this is a *journey*. Since we are dealing with a treasure of yours, we need to remember that this process is not just like purchasing a product from a shop! The journey will involve getting to know you and your family a little better.

You will need to attend a 9.30am service on the 3rd Sunday of a month prior to the baptism. At this service we will present you and your child to the church. We will plan this with you. We want to get to know you, and pray for you!

At the baptism service itself we can accommodate up to 50 or so guests (although perhaps not every guest and / or family member will be comfortable with the 'churchy' bit). Baptisms happen on the 2nd and 3rd Sundays of the month, at 3pm. Please remember that you may not be the only family with a baptism at that service.

After the baptism, we look forward to getting to know you more, as a family, in the weeks, months and years to come!

Some of the practicalities...

Baptism is a commitment

In the case of a small child, it is a commitment on the child's behalf, through the parents and godparents. At least one parent should be baptised already.

Baptisms usually take place in the church building. Under extreme pastoral circumstances, the baptism may happen elsewhere.

Godparents

Godparents **must already be baptised**, and aged 16 years or older. Those who do not meet this criteria are allowed to act as 'sponsors' but cannot act as a 'godparent'.

Some parents choose life-long friends to be Godparents, without ever realising that the primary role of Godparents is as a **Christian example**, and to **pray** regularly for your child. Friends of other faiths cannot be Godparents, even though they might be excellent examples of love and compassion. Similarly, people with no real faith or church commitment, even though baptised themselves, do not really fulfil the expectations of the role of the godparent as the church understands it, which is **actively** Christian.