



## Baptism in the Shelswell Group of churches

### Interested in having your child baptised (christened)?

We are so glad that you have decided to ask for God's blessing on your child. We are very pleased to arrange this and to welcome your child into the Christian family.

A child is a wonderful gift from God and it is right that we want to celebrate such a fantastic present. The Church of England offers two approaches – thanksgiving and baptism (or christening as it is also known). **Both** are ways of celebrating the life of your child which involve making promises to God with the support of close friends. **Both** offer the opportunity for a family celebration, and take place during a Church service so all the church members can welcome and commit themselves to pray for you in the care of your child. The main difference is in the extent and depth of Christian commitment that each form of service expresses and we would be happy to talk to you about what is right for you and your child.

### We don't go to church regularly. Can we still have our child baptised or have a service of thanksgiving?

Major life events, such as marriage or having a baby, often give us the opportunity to explore some of the deeper questions of life. The church is there to help you do this. The baptism of your child could be the opportunity you need to start becoming more involved with the church. If you are sufficiently serious about the Christian faith to want to have your child baptised, it makes sense to plan to come along to church regularly. The other pages of this website will help you find the service that will work best for you and your family.

If however, you do not feel ready to commit to the church in this way and make the promises of baptism then we would be delighted to arrange a Thanksgiving service for your child.

### We don't live within the parish boundaries of the Shelswell churches. Can we still have the baptism there?

We are happy to baptise children who live outside the parish, if the parents already attend one of our churches and will be bringing the child to church here in the future.

If you have another reason to want to bring your child for baptism to one of our churches then this should be discussed with a member of the Benefice clergy. Ultimately the important thing is that your child gets the opportunity to grow up as a member of a local church whether that is within Shelswell or at another church closer to your home.

### What do I do next?

Please phone the Benefice Office and we will arrange to let you have a Baptism pack. This will be usually passed to you at the next church service you are able to attend. Further information can be found in this pack with regard to booking a baptism or thanksgiving service.

### What about teenagers and adults?

A person can be baptised at any age if they have come to the point of deciding that they want to be a follower of Jesus Christ. In the Church of England, a teenager or adult who gets baptised is usually confirmed, either shortly after baptism or in the same service. Confirmation is presided over by a bishop. If you are interested in baptism and confirmation then please phone the Benefice Office and we can discuss this further.