



St Martin's Church, Bryanston School

Information about Christening/Baptism



For more details about Christenings nationally please see:
<https://churchofenglandchristenings.org>

Will you Baptise our child?

The answer is **YES!**

I have never refused a request for baptism. (By the way Baptism and Christening mean the same thing!) All you need to do is to get in touch with me and then look forward to welcoming you and your family to celebrate this important occasion.

With you, we will thank God for the birth of your baby, name the child with its Christian name and welcome a new member into the Christian family of the Church.

If you are an adult who was not baptised as a child then we hope that baptism may be something which you would like to consider for yourself.

Baptism is a happy and special event, usually the first 'formal' event in a child's life and it provides an opportunity for all the family, relatives and friends to come together and we are very pleased to be able to share it with you. People celebrating baptism at St Martin's seem to really enjoy the service.

We hope that your child's baptism will be a wonderful and memorable occasion and that it will mark the beginning of a long and happy association with the church.

This guide may help you with some of the questions.

We do not put pressure upon parents or make them feel guilty about not coming to church, but sometimes a baptism can remind us of how much we have let our own Christian life slip. It can be an opportunity to affirm our trust in God and to make a fresh start. We hope that the welcome you receive will encourage you to feel a part of the worldwide Christian community.

We understand the effort involved for parents with young children to get organised and make a habit of going to church but parents who do are usually pleased that they took the trouble. We have a Children's Corner in the church and I really enjoy welcoming young families into our church services. Please don't worry if your child makes noise in the service either – I love it - it reminds us that there is new life and hope for the world's future!

Of course, the school is owned by Bryanston School but we welcome those associated to the school or those who live locally to come to worship with us when they wish. The Sunday service here is at 10.00am every week during term time and you would be most welcome to join us to see if you like the way we worship here.

It is my sincere belief that there is no better thing that you can give to a child than the opportunity to learn about God and his love for them. In the early years of a child's life it helps, I think, to have this grounding of faith which will be vital for them if they are to develop into happy and balanced adults.

Please feel able to contact me to discuss baptism - I will be only too pleased to help you.

What is Baptism?

- A chance for all the family to get together, celebrate and thank God for the new life which he has given.
- It is a time when we remember that as well as being a member of a human family your baby is a part of God's family too, the family of the Church.
- It is a sacrament, an outward and visible sign of God's love.

When Jesus was baptised in the River Jordan he became aware of God as his Father and felt the special presence of God and the power of the Holy Spirit, it was a turning point in his life. After his death and resurrection Jesus commanded his followers to make new disciples and baptise them too. This has been done ever since by Christians throughout the world.

Why do we baptise children?

Most parents like to say 'thank you' to someone for the wonderful gift of their child and suggest that 'someone' is God, who gives life to us all. Jesus told his disciples to baptise people who wanted to become Christians and join the church. The Bible tells us that whole households were being baptised and soon parents wanted their children to be baptised also.

Some people think that Baptism is like an insurance policy which you take out to make sure that your child goes to heaven. That is certainly not the case! I know God loves your child just as much now as after the baptism service.

However, it does make sense to give your child the very best start in life and what could be better than to encourage them from the very earliest days to be open to God and to know of his love for them.

Some churches do not baptise children until they are old enough to understand everything for themselves. However we do make all kinds of decisions on behalf of our children including schools and medical treatment as we do our best to encourage them in the best way for their lives. I am delighted that you are thinking to give your child the benefit of being welcomed into the church family.

In the baptism service we pray that one day they will want as adults to stand up for themselves to confirm the baptism vows which have been made on their behalf: this is called Confirmation

If *you* would like a chance to think more about the Christian faith, please speak with me or your local vicar for more details.

When will the baptism take place?

Baptisms usually take place in the main Sunday Morning Service at church, because part of the service is the welcoming of the child by the congregation. You can of course ask for the baptism to be at a time to suit you your family – obviously this will depend on my availability.

The Decision

Parents and godparents will be asked to stand up and declare their own Christian faith. It is important to make sure that you can make these promises and only you can truthfully know that. If you have any difficulty I can happily discuss the promises with you.

if you feel unable to say these things then perhaps you would prefer a Service of Thanksgiving for the child and a naming ceremony. The choice is yours.

A baptism is a very important occasion and not to be undertaken lightly.

At the baptism of children, the minister says to the parents and godparents
“Parents and godparents, the Church receives *these children* with joy. Today we are trusting God for *their* growth in faith. Will you pray for *them*, draw *them* by your example into the community of faith and walk with *them* in the way of Christ?”

The parents and godparents reply:
“With the help of God, we will.”

The minister continues by saying:
“In baptism *these children* begin *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?”

The parents and godparents reply:
“With the help of God, we will.”

Some Questions

There are then some questions which parents and godparents make the promises for themselves and also for the child. Here are some of the the questions with a short explanation;

Do you turn to Christ?

You will be asked to answer - I turn to Christ

This means that I will try to follow Jesus’ teaching to love God and to love neighbour and try to follow this guidance for life.

Do you repent of your sins?

You will be asked to answer - I repent of my sins

This means that I am sorry about the past things I have done wrong or behaved in an inappropriate way. None of us can be perfect but we when we do wrong we have the hope that God forgives and accepts us if we are keen to do better. .

Do you renounce evil?

You will be asked to answer - I renounce evil

This means that I know that I sometimes have to make choices between good and evil. I want to set the evil behind me and from now on I will always try to choose the good.

Everyone then moves to the font for the baptism.

Naming

When the minister baptises the child he will ask what name you have chosen. This will be the Christian name for the child for the rest of its life.

At the font the minister asks one of the parents to hold the child over the font and then says:

N, I baptise you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.

The sign of the cross

The minister will make the sign of the cross on the forehead of the child using holy oil. This oil has been blessed by the Bishop just before Easter and reminds us that your child has not only been baptised here at Bryanston Church but in the worldwide Christian community. Baptism is recognized by all Christian denominations throughout the world.

It is also to remind us of how Christ died for each one of us on the cross. As Christ died for us so we are now signed with the cross -the badge of our faith - to remind us that we must not be ashamed to profess our faith and fight against all that is evil.

The minister then says: “May God, who has received you by baptism into his Church, pour upon you the riches of his grace, that within the company of Christ’s pilgrim people you may daily be renewed by his anointing Spirit, and come to the inheritance of the saints in glory. Amen.”

A Candle

The minister gives the family a lit candle to show that, through baptism, we pass from darkness to light. Jesus is described in the Bible as the light of the world and as Christians we are to shine as lights in the world. Our world needs more than ever for us to all reject the ways of darkness and follow Christ in the Christian faith.

As the lighted candle is given and the minister says,
“Receive this light ... this is to show that you have passed from darkness to light.”

The congregation says:
“Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father.”

The Welcome

At the end of the baptism the congregation joins to say,

“We welcome you into the Lord's family. We are members together of the body of Christ; we are children of the same heavenly Father; we are inheritors of the kingdom of God. We welcome you”.

The service then ends with a blessing.

RECORDS

A permanent record of the baptism is made in the official registers of the church. A copy of this is given in the form of a special certificate as a reminder of this day.

Remember that Baptism is not just for children! Many parents can be baptized at the same time as their children.

GODPARENTS

You will need to consider names of godparents and these will be included in the church register and the baptism certificate. Being asked to be a godparent is always a real privilege and shows that you have a special place in the family, but there are expectations and responsibilities too. You are asked to promise that you will love and encourage the child in the Christian faith by prayer, example and teaching. Parents should not feel pressure to choose certain friends but try to find people who can make the promises and mean them.

It is important therefore that Godparents are baptised themselves and ideally confirmed. If a chosen Godparent has not been baptised they can either be baptised at the same time as your child or they can speak to their local vicar and ask to be baptised before the service.

Godparents often buy a small present for the child; they should remember that this is a Christian occasion and so perhaps buy the child a children's Bible or story book of Bible stories. The Ministers will be pleased to help you decide.

Prayers for families considering baptism

God loves your child and went to enormous lengths to show how much he loves all of his children, even to the point of sending his own Son, Jesus. into the world.

God is a loving parent too. In the days and years ahead try to remember that you are not alone and loved beyond all measure by God and the Christian Church.

Some Prayers

Here are some prayers which you may find helpful.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil, for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen

God our Father, maker of all that is living, we praise you for the wonder and joy of creation. We thank you from our hearts for the life of this child, for a safe delivery, and for the privilege of parenthood. Accept our thanks and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Lord Jesus Christ, you welcomed children when others turned them away. Help me to love my child as you love her/him. Give me patience when I am tired, strength to cope when things get tough. Give your Holy Spirit of love and joy to abide in our home and keep us safe. Amen.

*God so loved the world that he gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life
The Gospel of John Chapter 3 Verse 16*

Times and costs of Baptism services at St Martins, Bryanston School.

We generally have baptisms as part of the main Sunday service which starts at 10.00am.

These services tend to be just under an hour long.

Baptisms are free!

If the service is held within the normal Sunday act of worship then there is no charge for the organist.

However, in exceptional circumstances it may be possible to have a baptism at a different time. If that is the case then you will need to think of a couple of extra things.

You will need to select a reading – you can actually have as many as you like – but it is great if one can come from the Bible! Have a think too about who you might like to read them too.

You may also like to have some hymns during the service – although if the baptism service takes place outside the normal Sunday service then there is a fee for the organist.

Here are some details of the readings:

Readings at a Baptism

How many readings are there at Baptism?

If you are requesting to have the baptism outside family worship then there can be as many readings as you like! If there is only one reading, I would encourage you to have take it from the Bible. If there are two or more then one can be from the bible and any others can be a reading that means a lot to you as a family.

Who reads them?

The reading(s) may be read by family members or friends. Please be sure to choose a reader who is able to read clearly and audibly, so that your guests will be able to hear the reading you have chosen. If your child's is to be baptised during the main school service then generally the readings will be the readings of the Day, and will usually be read by a parish reader.

Selecting the readings

The following contain a selection of readings, approved by the Church for use at Baptism. It may well be that among the readings you will find a favourite reading, or a reading that has been traditionally used at family baptisms - and that you decide to choose this reading for use on this occasion too. On the other hand it may be that none of the readings offered are very familiar to you and if you would like I can happily suggest some others.

In either case we recommend that you take your time to read through the various readings offered. Each one has something to say to us about baptism and the life of faith. It would be a good thing to let this reading of the scriptures, listening to God's word, be a part of your spiritual preparation for your child's baptism. Consider what they have to say about Jesus and the life of faith, and about baptism. Bring the readings and your

response to them to your prayer. It can be helpful too, to discuss the readings - at least the ones that you have chosen to have at the Baptism, with your husband or wife, the godparents, your family, or friends.

A reading from Matthew (22:35-40)

A lawyer asked Jesus a question, 'Master, which the is greatest commandment of the Law?'

Jesus said, you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first Commandment. The second resembles it. You must love your neighbour as yourself.'

A reading from Matthew (28:18-20)

Make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Jesus came up and spoke to his disciples. He said, 'All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, make disciples of all the nations; baptise them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teach them to observe all the commands I gave you. And know that I am with you always; yes to the end of time.'

A reading from Mark (1:9-11)

Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptised in the Jordan by John. No sooner had he come up out of the water than he saw the heavens torn apart and the Spirit, like a dove, descending on him. And a voice came from heaven, 'You are my Son, the Beloved; my favour rests on you.'

A reading from Mark (10:13-16)

People were bringing little children to Jesus, for him to touch them. The disciples turned them away, but when Jesus saw this he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. I tell you solemnly, anyone who does not welcome the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.' Then he put his arms round them, laid his hands on them and gave them his blessing.

A reading from Mark (12:28-34)

One of the scribes came up and put a question to Jesus, 'Which is the first of all the commandments?' Jesus replied, 'This is the first: Listen, Israel, the Lord our God is the one Lord, and you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength. The second is this: You must love your neighbour as yourself. There is no commandment greater than these.'

Suggested hymns

There aren't many hymns specially for baptism, but there are a good number of hymns and more modern worship songs that are highly appropriate. Here are a few suggestions.

All Things Bright and Beautiful - can be used here for its childlike enthusiasm and because it is dimly remembered from school. There are two tunes, the more common *All things bright and beautiful* and slightly less common, *Royal Oak* .

Be thou my vision - a lovely Irish tune (same as *Lord of All Hopefulness*) and words asking for God to be there for us and to inspire us.

Breathe on me, breath of God - the words of this stirring hymn are asking for the Spirit of God to come upon us, and so are highly appropriate in the context of baptism

Come down, O love divine - another powerful traditional hymn, asking for the Holy Spirit to fill us, so again highly appropriate for baptism

Give Me Joy in My Heart - this joyful hymn is easy to sing and though not directly relevant to baptism, expresses the congregation's joy.

I, the Lord of Sea and Sky - rightly one of the most popular of the modern worship songs, this is a rousing request to be called by God. Check if the church has a music group - this works a lot better with modern backing than with an organ.

Lord of All Hopefulness - sung to the attractive Irish folk hymn tune Slane, the positive feel of this hymn with its summary of the day is a good choice for a baptism.

Now Thank We All Our God - a stately hymn that has a good celebratory tone to mark the aspect of thanking God for the child being baptised.

O Jesus I have Promised - a general, well known hymn that works well for baptism because of the promises made by the baptised, or the godparents on the baby's behalf. Confusingly has several separate tunes in the UK: first there's *Wolvercote* , then there's *Thornbury* or you can have *Day of Rest* or the "modern" tune *Hathrop Castle* . Also sung to the very Victorian *Angel's Story* .

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty - slightly more upbeat in tempo but still very traditional and positive hymn.

The King of Love My Shepherd is - the 23rd psalm contrasts the light and dark sides of life, so works well when looking forward to the realities of life.

The Lord's My Shepherd - like "The King of Love My Shepherd Is" a setting of the 23rd psalm that is a fine choice for a baptism as we think of the child coming into God's fold.

These are just a selection and you are welcome to have any hymns or songs of your choice.

Organist

The school organist is Graham Scott – I think one of the best organists in the country! He is also Deputy Director of Music at the school. You will need to speak to him – or ask me to ask if he is available. If he is not then he will suggest another organist. I will happily give you his details as an when needed.

Please do not hesitate to get in touch with me if you need to ask any questions at all in regard to Baptism here at St Martin's Church, Bryanston School.

With every blessing to you at this time

Andrew

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Application for Baptism
at St Martin's Church, Bryanston School

Child's Date of Birth:	
Proposed Date of Baptism:	
Child's Christian Names:	
Child's Surname:	
Father's Full Name:	
Mother's Full Name:	
Father's Occupation:	
Mother's Occupation:	
Address:	
Post Code:	Telephone:
Email:	

Godparents' Names, address and email:	Baptised	Confirmed

How many people might be in your party?
I have read the above boxes and agree that they are correct

Signed: _____ Date: _____