

The Baptism of your Child

Notes for parents and Godparents

The Benefice of Gravenhurst, Shillington & Stondon

All Saints' Church, Shillington



Dear Parents

Thank you for enquiring about the Baptism of your child in the Benefice of Gravenhurst, Shillington and Stondon.

The church family in your chosen church will do all that they can to make the preparations and the day itself as enjoyable and as special as possible.

This leaflet is designed to help you and your child's Godparents prepare yourselves for this special day.

What is Baptism/Christening?

Baptism and Christening are exactly the same thing. Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ was Baptised in the river Jordan at the beginning of his ministry. Baptism is therefore considered to be very important for the church. This service is first and foremost a wonderful celebration.

Baptism is one of the seven sacraments or 'Holy and Special' things that the church offers. In the service we officially start your child's journey of Christian faith.

Are there any 'Rules'?

Very few! Normally, anyone with a family tie with the church or a special link to it can be baptised at All Saints. However, if you live in another parish, you will need to have the permission of your local priest. Just contact the Churchwardens to discuss the detail.

When is the right time?

The 'right' time to be baptised is when you feel it is the right time either as a parent for your child or for yourself as an individual. You can be baptised at any age, from one day to 100 plus!

Church attendance

There is no requirement to attend church before the baptism service though it would be great to see you at one of our services as it would help you to understand more of the

Christian faith into which your child will be baptised. We recommend our first Sunday of the month family Communion services as a starting point.

Godparents

The role of Godparents is one of spiritual and moral guidance. They are there to support you, the parent/s, and your child as he or she learns more about the Christian faith.

Godparents should be over 18 and have been baptised themselves. Although there is no official number, many children have up to three Godparents, two being the same sex as the child.

Family structure

We are happy to baptise your child regardless of whether you are by yourself, in a marriage or a partnership. The commitment you make is for your child.

Symbolism in Baptism

All Church sacraments have a visible and physical element that represents something happening invisibly and spiritually. The most important of the symbols in Baptism is the pouring of water over the child's head. We will all see water being poured out on your child's head, but the church believes that it is a representation of the Holy Spirit being poured out on your child. This is the central part of the service.

Other symbolism within the service includes: -

- Darkness and light.
- Death and resurrection.
- Unclean and clean.

What happens at the service?

The baptism ceremony takes place around the font. The parent/s and Godparent/s standing together with the priest, who holds the child. During the service you as parents together with the Godparents will be asked the following questions: -

The priest will ask	The parents will respond
Parents and godparents, the Church receives this child with joy. Today we are trusting God for <i>his/her</i> growth in faith. Will you pray for, draw him/her by your example into the community of faith and walk with <i>him/her</i> in the way of Christ?	With the help of God, we will.
In baptism this child begin <i>his/her</i> journey in faith. You speak for <i>him/her</i> today. Will you care for <i>him/her</i> , and help <i>him/her</i> to take his/her place within the life and worship of Christ's Church?	With the help of God, we will.
In baptism, God calls us out of darkness into his marvellous light. To follow Christ means dying to sin and rising to new life with him. Therefore I ask: Do you reject the devil and all rebellion against God?	I reject them.
Do you renounce the deceit and corruption of evil?	I renounce them.
Do you repent of the sins that separate us from God and neighbour?	I repent of them.
Do you turn to Christ as Saviour?	I turn to Christ.
Do you submit to Christ as Lord?	I submit to Christ.
Do you come to Christ, the way, the truth and the life?	I come to Christ.

The priest will then anoint the child and welcome *him/her* into the church.

Arranging the Baptism Service

At All Saints you may have your child baptised during the normal 9.30 Sunday service where your child will be welcomed into the church family here at Shillington.

The service lasts about one hour. Your child will normally be the only one being baptised on that day. Of course, you are welcome to bring as many guests as you wish to witness your child's baptism.

Costs

There are no charges for the baptism service but we would be most grateful if you could remind your guests that there will be a collection taken after the service.

If every guest gave just £2 it would make a huge difference to the finances of the church. It costs over £175 a day to keep the church as a central part of the village.

What to do next

Please contact the Church Wardens via this link: - [Meet the Team - All Saints' Church Shillington \(shillington-hub.org.uk\)](https://shillington-hub.org.uk)

After the baptism

By answering the questions during the service, you and the Godparents are accepting the responsibility for your child's spiritual welfare. It is now the responsibility of the Godparents and yourselves to bring up your child in the Christian faith. This may seem very daunting but the church will help you in this role.

Of course, we don't check up on you after the service but the promises you make are made to God. It is therefore down to you to decide how you live them out. Again, the church will help you should you wish it to. Later on, when the child reaches adulthood, they may wish to take their own decisions regarding their faith and confirm their belief in a service of confirmation.

Confirmation

This next formal stage in the Christian journey comes when the child is old enough to understand the Christian faith. At the confirmation service the young person confirms the answers to the same questions that you were asked at the Baptism service.

At All Saints we are delighted when people come to us to discuss this step and we invite them to meet with us and others taking the same decision to talk through what it means and to plan their confirmation service.

Church Facilities

There is seating in the nave for about 120 people and another 50 in each aisle but with restricted views of the altar. The font is at the back of the church just inside the porch.

All Saints' church is at the top of a short hill. Parking space is limited to about 10 cars and people with mobility problems are given priority.

Please let us know if anyone has special needs. We would appreciate it if you could encourage your guests to park at the bottom of the hill. Note that access to the car park is only 2.5m wide. Three steps lead up from the car park to a 1 in 10 path to the door. A wheelchair ramp is available on request. The church has toilet facilities with wheelchair access.

Further information is available via this link: - [Church facilities - All Saints' Church Shillington \(shillington-hub.org.uk\)](http://shillington-hub.org.uk)

Find us at

Google maps - All Saints parish church SG5 3LH

Navigate to - 91 Church Street Shillington SG5 3LH

