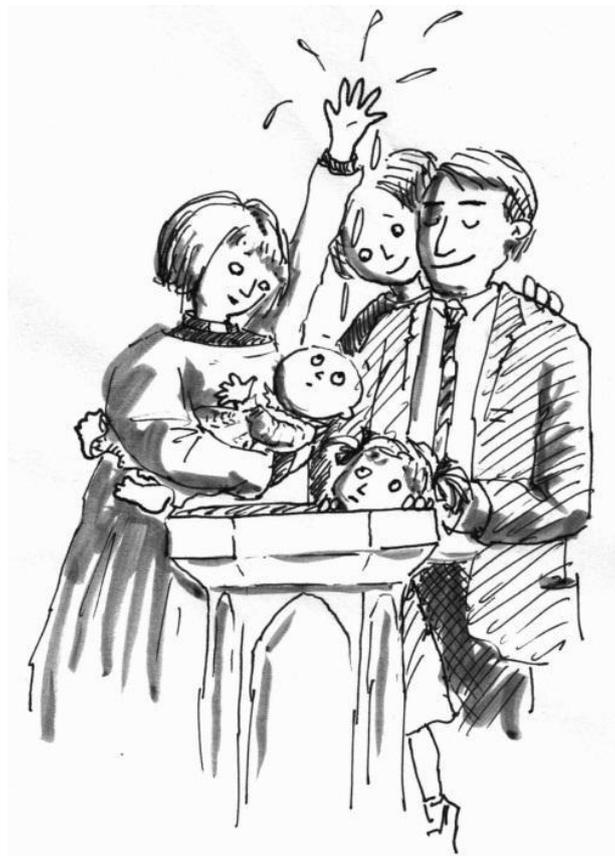




St Mark & St Cuthbert

the church on the park

Thinking about Baptism for your child?



Welcome!

Thank you for your interest in baptism at St Cuthbert's. This guide explains a little about what baptism is, who it is for, and how to apply. Baptism is a joyful but serious sacrament, and should be carefully considered.

What is Baptism?

Baptism marks the beginning of a journey with God which continues for the rest of our lives, the first step in response to God's love.

In the beginning of Christianity – and in many places of the world still today – being 'marked for Christ' put people at risk of punishment by those who wanted to see Christianity stamped out. Being baptized made you stand out, as someone who lived differently, who had chosen to follow Jesus Christ in all areas of their life.

Today in baptism, parents and godparents stand before the church to declare their faith, the faith into which they promise to bring up their children. They give thanks for this great gift of a child, committing to teach a child about Jesus Christ, his saving grace and his instructions as to how to live honouring God. Family and friends who join in the celebration also promise support and prayer for the future.

We take baptism and the promises made by parents and godparents seriously, and we expect you to do so too. We promise to support you in helping your child grow in faith and participate in the Christian community, and we will stay in touch with you to help you.

The promises and declarations form as much of the ceremony of baptism as the moments when the minister marks the sign of the cross on the child's forehead, sprinkles them with water from the font and baptizes them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

If you really want to celebrate the birth of your child, but do not feel confident enough to make the baptism promises, please do ask the Vicar about Thanksgiving services and/or about our courses to learn more about the Christian faith.

What happens?

The service of Baptism contains rich symbolism of the Christian faith:



We make **solemn promises** to submit to and to follow Jesus Christ, that we understand him to be our Saviour.

We are anointed with the sign of the **cross**, reminding us of Christ's death for us.

We are 'born again' in the **water** of baptism, dying to sin and being raised to new life in Christ.

As a sign of that new life, we receive a lighted **candle**, to remind us that the light of Christ always conquers the darkness of evil. Everyone who is baptized walks in that light for the rest of their lives.

Those being baptized will be prayed for and you may then want to take photographs to remember this special day by. Usually the celebration continues after church with a party somewhere!

Who and how?

We gladly accept our responsibility to baptize children or adults who live in this parish. We will also baptize the children of any person whose name is on the church's electoral roll or who worship here regularly. We always encourage building relationships with your local parish church, but children or adults who live outside this parish may be baptized here at the Vicar's discretion.

In all cases, we will ask you to join us first in worship – we are a friendly church and visitors and children are very welcome in church and in Junior Church – and also to attend a preparation session to think about your hopes and dreams for your child, and the promises you will be making on their behalf. We will encourage you to bring your godparents to this session.

When?

Baptisms usually happen in a block, one Sunday a month (sometimes, out of 'wedding season', it might be a Saturday afternoon). For 2018, it is almost always the first weekend of the month.

Due to the high number of baptisms and weddings across our churches, it is rarely possible to respond to particular requests for dates, but we will offer you the nearest we can manage.

Often you will be the only family in a service, occasionally there will be two families. The baptism service lasts around forty minutes, and you can fit around 40-50 guests per family. We will suggest a maximum of around 75 if you are the only family, but we would not be able to confirm being the only family until a week or two in advance.

On request, we can also baptize in the main worship service, which is a communion service and lasts around an hour. However, it is at 9.30am, which you may feel is too early to gather your guests or party afterwards, which is why we generally begin baptisms at 11.15am.

Now what?

If you would like to apply, you can fill in the attached and return form to any service or event at church, or to the vicarage at 3, Page Avenue (just off King George Road). If you would like to discuss dates first (this is advisable), then you could email stcuthbertcleadonpark@gmail.com or drop in to see us.

Bertie's

In Spring 2017 we began our new baby and toddler group in the church hall, on Tuesday mornings. Baptism info can be obtained and forms returned there too. Or just come along anyway!