

If you have been Christened your Parents and Godparents made promises that they would bring you up in the Christian faith so that one day you would declare that faith for yourself, as you will be doing during the service of baptism for your child. If you are willing to declare your faith in this way you may wish to consider doing this formally in a service of confirmation.

We regularly run short exploration courses where you can learn more about the christian faith, about who Jesus is, why Christians believe God loves us and what that means in our lives. This gives you the opportunity to meet with other people who may have such questions at the back of their minds as ;What is life about ? Why are we here? Does God really exist? What happens when we die ? Why is there such suffering in the world?

The sessions are very relaxed and there is no obligation attached to them to a commitment to come to church or confirm your faith (although, of course, you would be very welcome to do either if you wished).

If you would like to think further about what you believe or are interested in the confirmation of the declarations of your Parent and Godparents made on your behalf at your Baptism then please contact the Rector to discuss this further.



We look forward to welcoming your child into God's family and celebrating their new life as a Christian with you.

Please join us at our regular services as we would love to welcome you into our community.

## Contact

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## Loveden Group of Churches



## *Your Child's Christening*

This leaflet is designed to help you understand more about Christenings and also to help you consider where you are on your own journey of faith

## What is Christening?

Christening is another name for baptism. Jesus was baptised by John the Baptist in the river Jordan. As Jesus was baptised the Holy Spirit descended upon him and a voice from heaven was heard to say “You are my son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased.”

Jesus told his disciples to go out into the world and baptise those who want to follow him. They were to do this in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. These are the words you will hear as the water is poured over the head of anyone being baptised.

This instruction to baptise new followers has been carried out by the Church for nearly 2000 years. Christians believe that through baptism we are reborn into God’s family, we receive the Holy Spirit, our sins are forgiven and through our belief in Jesus and by his sacrifice on the cross we may gain access to Heaven.

Baptism is the beginning of a journey of faith. By bringing your child to be Christened (to be made Christ like) you are bringing them to to be made a Christian and begin that journey. The promises that you and your Godparents make are to teach and guide your child in the Christian faith so that, as they grow, they are able to declare their faith for themselves at a service of confirmation. The promises you make should not be taken lightly, they are not just words, but a promise to God and to your child. You can view these promises and the words you will say on your child’s behalf on our website.

## What is a Godparent?

Godparents are the special people who you choose to be the ones who will care for your child’s spiritual development by helping them to learn about the Christian Faith and also to pray for them.

The choice of Godparents for your child is an important one because these are the people who will help your child to grow to become more Christ like and will guide them towards confirming their faith for themselves. For this reason it is important to consider who you choose carefully, talk to them about what they believe and how they might help your child as they grow in relation to learning about Jesus.

There is a legal requirement for there to be two Godparents, one of each sex. Traditionally, however, there are three, two of the same sex as the child and one of the opposite sex.

Godparents have to make a declaration of faith on behalf of your child and so there is a requirement by law that they are themselves baptised. If there is someone who you would like to be a Godparent to your child, please speak to the Rector about how that can happen.

## What if I’m not Baptised?

There is no requirement for parents to be baptised, however as you are obviously bringing your child for Baptism, because you believe, then you may wish to speak to the Rector about being baptised and becoming a member of God’s family, just as your child will be.

## What happens at the Service?

### Sign of the Cross

Your child will have the sign of the cross made on it’s forehead. This is usually done using holy oil that has been blessed by the Bishop. The cross is the symbol which reminds us of the sacrifice Jesus made because he loves us. This invisible ‘badge’ marks them out as a child of God and a follower of Jesus.

### Water

Your child will be baptised using water from the font, that has been blessed. The use of water symbolises dying to an old way of life without God and being reborn into a new life with God. It is the sign of God giving the Holy Spirit to your child.



### Light

Your child will be presented with a candle to keep. This will be lit from the Paschal Candle (Easter Candle) to symbolise that your child has received the light of Christ. Jesus said that he is the “Light of the World”. Through baptism your child receives Jesus into their lives.

### Prayers

Prayers are said for your child for blessing, protection and guidance as well as prayers for you and your child’s Godparents as you seek to guide your child in the way of the Christian Faith