

Baptism and Thanksgiving Services



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A booklet for parents

St Mark's and St Magnus

"I have come so that you can
enjoy life to the full"

Jesus

A page for your questions

(It may be handy to have these ready for our visit!)

FAQ

Do you have to be baptized to be married in the Church of England?

No!

Does having a Thanksgiving stop the child being baptised later?

No! —Thanksgiving is often a first step.

Sometimes the family decide to join in the life of the church and then have a baptism.

Sometimes the parent's leave the decision to the children to be baptised when they are older.

What does St Mark's prefer?

We prefer you all to relish and enjoy the full life of the church, make good friends among us, eat and relax and live a life worth living with us, day to day.



Some things Christians believe

We believe that *God* loves the whole universe, that includes us!

We also believe that although its mostly good, things have gone wrong—just look around—and that *God* has done something about it.

Jesus came so we could live life to the full. This includes getting to know him like a friend, for real and to 'follow' him - and he sets us free from the grip of things we've done wrong.

He gives us a fresh start to live like he lived. An active, revolutionary, life of love, with people who increasingly want to live the same way.

That's liberating—and it's a challenge. He said things like 'forgive from your heart' and 'do good to your enemies' - which really goes against the grain, but its life giving. Plus he is also known for the great moral teaching.

Living this is impossible without experiencing that *God* is real, that he loves us, that he gives us new hearts that help us really live, that he gives us a fresh start and a lasting purpose and significance.

It's a 'Life worth Living!'

Any questions? Give us a ring.

Baptism and Thanksgiving both significant events

(these are sometimes called Christenings)

Thank you for asking about a Christening.

- Christening is a joyful occasion.
- It means a lot to everybody.

What does Christening mean to you?

Parents want the best for their child.

These days there are different options open to you.

This booklet explores the possibilities. We hope it helps you to consider what is best for your family.

It will be more helpful if you read it before somebody comes to discuss the service.



A summary of the choices

Baptism

This is aimed at families that either already regularly attend Church or are planning to do so. They are people that not only believe in God, but who also trust Jesus and want to follow him with others of the same mind. It means promising to bring up the child in the Christian faith and to come to church on Sundays or another day with them. (This has always been the thinking which lay behind the readiness of Church of England to Baptize young children)

Thanksgiving

Some families believe there is a God, and want to name the child and thank God in church—but are not ready to make a commitment to joining a church and attending regularly. For them, a service of Thanksgiving is more in line with their beliefs and avoids the necessity for them to make public promises which they feel unable to keep.

Some have a Thanksgiving, then decide to join the church. Others do this but leave Baptism to the child to decide about when older. (Adults may also be Baptized)

This booklet help you choose which to have.



Service times and some midweek groups.

(for full details contact the office on 424906)

St Mark's

12noon—New Life: A fun congregation for young families, couples and singles. Monthly.

10.30am: A friendly family service with teaching.

9.30am: Midweek Communion (Wednesdays)

Midweek Groups

Little Acorn's 10am till 11.30am. Every Thursday during term time. A group for pre-school children & parents, carers, aunts, uncles or grandparents. It's free—all welcome.

Xstream, 7.15, every Thursday in the "Chill Zone" during term time. For the youth on the estate to relax and enjoy themselves with different activities each week

Real Xstream 7pm every Friday during term time. For those at secondary school to talk discover more about God.

Saturday Car-boot,

Monday Club (those 60 years +).

Kaleidoscope half-termly for Little Acorns, all kids at Primary School and their families. Everyone!

Several mid week groups in homes

St Magnus

8am from spring to autumn and Special services as announced

Christ Church

Christ Church is a very active large and varied church.

see: www.christchurchbridlington.com for more information.

What now ?

The first thing is to have all your questions ready for our visit. Its just an informal chat really—and you may have things to ask about this booklet! During this chat we'll book the service.

Next, come to church for a couple of weeks,—Or try out one of our many small groups which meet in peoples homes.

St Mark's has a friendly informal 10:30 am service each Sunday. Plus other groups and activities to enjoy during the week.

If you live away from the area, there is certain to be a church near you which you can enjoy being part of.

If you want to find out more about Christianity and ask all kinds of questions around a good meal, book up to join one of our Alpha courses. No strings attached!

The next of these is in September.

It's a great evening.



Alpha

Jesus said

“ I have come so that you can live life to the full”

Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child

The birth of a child is a 'milestone event' in our lives.

The church loves to celebrate the birth, with the family.

The Thanksgiving gives an opportunity to give thanks to God for the baby.

In the service, parents and friends:

- Thank God for the baby.
- Name the baby (The minister will anoint the baby with oil)
- Pray for the baby.

In addition,

- A copy of one of the gospels (Matthew, Mark, Luke or John) is given to the family.
- All will be asked if they will help the family to bring up the child.

Differences from a Baptism service

In a Baptism service, many solemn promises are made, in public, in church, in front of lots of people. All parents and godparents have to think very seriously about doing this, because in Baptism the promises include:-

- Joining the church (which means joining the life of the church on Sundays or in peoples homes during the week)
- Bring the child to church, throughout childhood
- Showing the child how to pray and to grow up trusting God

These promises are not made in a Thanksgiving service

Sometimes families join the church (which means joining in with its life as a whole) after a Thanksgiving service and then when they feel ready bring their child for baptism.

Baptism

Baptism celebrates the birth of the child and welcomes them into membership of the church. It is the start of a journey which begins in childhood and which will continue throughout their lives.

In the service, parents and friends:

- Thank God for the baby
- Name the baby (the minister will baptise with water)
- Pray for the baby and
- Welcome the baby into the life of the church.

For this to really happen, a set of wonderful and far reaching promises are made publicly in the service.

The promises and declarations parents make include these:

- To declare their belief and trust in God, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- To live as Jesus wants us to live.
- By their example to help the child grow in faith.
- To continue to be, or to become part of the church fellowship, in its life and worship.

Who is Baptism for and who is Thanksgiving for?

Baptism is for people who are already, or certainly will immediately join the 'family of the church'.

Thanksgiving is for those who want to mark a birth before God, but who are not ready to commit to church life. Both of these services are proper Church of England initiations.

Some history!

In bible times, only active Christians were baptised. In the past (roughly from 1600 to 1980), the Church of England assumed that everybody went to church and so children were baptised, as they joined their parents in church.

All parents, whether choosing Baptism or Thanksgiving are invited to our START! course. It's a light-hearted informal six evening course complete with a great pudding. Its run termly, midweek by St Mark's and on Sundays at Christ Church. It helps you think about God stuff in a non cringy fun way.

If you choose Baptism and are not already a regular church goer you will need to do this course before we make a date for the Baptism.

Now you are thinking about this great step, why not come to our services and enjoy God with us?

Many of all ages come to church in West Hill (St Mark's) and in Bridlington (Christ Church)

The role of the Church

There are a range of enjoyable activities which help us all to know God better. These include:

- Informal and interesting Sunday Services which are up-to-date.
- Fun church for youngsters in different age groups.
- A variety of midweek groups in various homes, for adults, many include a great evening meal, and chance to ask all those difficult questions—as well as a chance to look at the Bible and pray.
- Lively groups for youngsters during the week

Currently, there are more of these activities are at Christ Church with St Mark's having a growing friendly congregation.