

WHAT IF I FEEL I CANNOT MAKE THE PROMISES?

We wouldn't want you to promise anything that you felt went against your conscience or that you weren't serious about keeping. As an alternative we also offer a Service of Thanksgiving, sometimes also known as a Blessing or Dedication service. This gives an opportunity for you and your family and friends to gather together and to celebrate the birth of your child and for us to pray for God's blessing upon him/her. We don't ask you to make any declarations of faith in this service, although we do encourage your child to become involved in the life of the church.

However, if you are happy to take on the responsibility of baptism, we are very happy to help you to prepare for this and to encourage your child to become part of our church family.

AND FINALLY....

* We encourage you to come and worship with us before you make your decision. You will receive a warm welcome and it will give you an idea of what happens in our services.

* If you don't live within one of our parishes (Chipping Sodbury, Old Sodbury, Little Sodbury, Horton) or don't already worship with us we would need a note from the Vicar/Rector in your own Church of England parish to ensure we have their agreement and goodwill in baptising your child.

If you have any questions please contact either:

The Church Office 01454 325160

office@svbcofe.org.uk

or:

Canon David Bowers 01454 313159

rector@svbcofe.org.uk

Please also visit our website at: www.svbcofe.org.uk

The Sodbury Vale Benefice

YOUR CHILD'S BAPTISM



Thank you for enquiring about baptism (or christening) for your child. I hope you find this short leaflet helpful as you make your decision.

Baptisms take place as part of a main service on a Sunday morning or, under exceptional circumstances, on a Sunday afternoon. In both cases the service may occasionally be shared with one other family.

Please read through this leaflet and contact me if you have any questions.

Canon David Bowers (Rector)

When you bring your child for baptism, you will be asked to declare publicly on behalf of your child, and on your own behalf, that you believe in God and that you will bring your child up to follow Jesus.

You will be asked to answer, again for yourself and on your child's behalf, that you have decided to turn away from everything that is wrong and instead to turn towards Christ.

THE ROLE OF GODPARENTS

Godparents make the same promises on behalf of the child as parents. Godparents promise to pray for and support the child and to help the parents to bring up the child in the Christian faith. It is an important and responsible role.

You should normally have at least two or three godparents. If three, two should be of the same sex as the child and one of the opposite sex. Godparents can be family members or friends. However, it is important that you choose people who will take an interest in your child's spiritual growth and who will pray for you and your child. Godparents must themselves be baptised.

HOW TO APPLY FOR BAPTISM

As a church we try to take seriously our responsibility of helping you to prepare for this important step. The procedure for application is:

1. Complete an application form

This can be obtained from our Church Office at St John's Church Centre in Chipping Sodbury, tel. 01454 325160. The form should be returned to the office.

2. Come to a preparation session

These will be held on a number of Saturday mornings at 10am at St John's Church Centre on Wickwar Road, Chipping Sodbury.

The session lasts for about one hour. There will be a short presentation about baptism and the baptism service and an opportunity to ask questions. It will also be an opportunity to meet other families who are preparing for baptism. We ask that both parents and, where possible, godparents, attend. With the application form there will be a list of dates of these sessions and we ask you to indicate which one you can attend.

3. Setting the date for the baptism

After attending a preparation session you will meet with the Rector (or one of the other ministers) to fix a date for the baptism.

4. Getting involved

One of the promises of baptism is to encourage your child to be involved in the life of the church. We provide a number of opportunities for families to worship together and we hope that you will come along. They include:

* **Storkies** a very informal, fun and interactive time for pre-school children, including crafts, games, singing and stories. This is on Tuesday morning at 9.15am each week during term time at St John's, Chipping Sodbury.

* **At St John's, Chipping Sodbury** at 9.30am each Sunday there is a Sunday School that meets during part of the service. On the first Sunday of each month there is St John's Praise, an informal all-age service, also at 9.30.

* **At St John's, Old Sodbury**, children are welcome at all the services, but there is an all age Holy Communion service on the first Sunday of the month at 11.15 and an informal Family Service on the second Sunday.

* **At St James the Elder, Horton**, children are welcome at all the services, but there is a modern language Holy Communion service on the fourth Sunday of each month at 11.15

* **At St Adeline's, Little Sodbury**, the services are in the evening but children are always warmly welcomed.