



Whitefriars Church, Boughton Drive, Rushden, NN10 9JP

Baptism Policy for Whitefriars Church.

BACKGROUND:

- The NT model for baptism is that it is carried out for believers soon after professing faith and turning to God in repentance to receive His grace
- In scripture baptism seems to be the means of being incorporated into the Body of Christ, the church
- Therefore there is the sense in scripture that baptism is about believing and belonging
- The Church of England encompasses both perspectives and the incumbent is required to baptise children of parents living in the parish on request, after reasonable preparation

AIM OF THE BAPTISM POLICY:

- To help us be a welcoming community for those who live in the Parish and want to give thanks to God for their children through a thanksgiving service, or become part of the Body of Christ through baptism
- To offer believer's baptism for those who come to faith and if requested for the children of believing parents
- To provide adequate preparation for those considering bringing their children for baptism and to present a thanksgiving service as an equally valid option for those parents who feel they cannot make the vows the baptism service requires of them, with integrity

Key points:

- Whitefriars PCC considers reasonable preparation for baptism, to be:
 - An initial discussion with the vicar and
 - Church attendance for a minimum of 6-8 weeks as a family,
 - During which time the family will have support from the baptism visiting team and
 - will watch the CPAS First Steps DVD and discuss it with them
- Thanksgiving will always be presented as a positive alternative option to those not of faith

Process:

- On initial request, the family will be invited to attend a church service to meet the vicar and make an appointment with him.
- A discussion with the vicar will follow
- A letter will subsequently be sent to the family outlining the next steps (specimen attached)
- A member of the baptism visiting team will be assigned to support the family and start to build a relationship with them
- A date for baptism or thanksgiving will be set after 6-8 weeks of church attendance

This policy was adopted by the PCC on 11th January 2016

This policy will be reviewed again in 2018

Rev Chris Youngman

The Parish of Whitefriars Church, Rushden

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Date as postmark/email

Dear

Baptism/Christening Policy for the Parish of Whitefriars

(NB for the purpose of this letter, Baptism and Christening are used to mean the same thing)

Firstly, thank you for your enquiry regarding the Baptism of your child. It was good to talk to you and we set out now in detail the church's current policy on the Baptism of children:

1. We begin by encouraging you to come along to church to see what we are all about. You can attend the 10.15am Service on a Sunday morning at Whitefriars junior school on all but the second Sunday in each month (when we meet in smaller, Stepping Out communities). When you come to church, we will introduce your family to one of our baptism team, which will help you to feel a part of the church.
2. We then anticipate that you will continue to attend church for between six and eight weeks. The idea behind this is to give parents a chance to get to know the service, and some of the church family. This helps you to then reflect on your commitment (as explained in the Baptism Service) regarding nurturing your child within the Christian faith community. We then arrange a further meeting at your home.
3. At this meeting we:
 - Watch a DVD about the principles of Christian baptism
 - Go through the baptism service and the Christian commitment of the parents to bring the child up within the family of the church
 - And also look at the option of a Thanksgiving Service
 - Some parents, at this stage, decide they need more time to think and reflect on the issues
 - Some others make a decision there and then, and a date is agreed.

NB – Please note that if you decide on a Baptism, then the Godparents must have been baptised in order to participate.

I do hope this has been helpful to you in understanding our current practice. Thank you once again for your contact, and we look forward to meeting you very soon.

Yours sincerely

Rev Chris Youngman
Vicar of the Parish of Whitefriars

Please note: We only baptise children outside of the parish in exceptional circumstances and with the permission of your local vicar.