



Bybrook Benefice Application Pack for Baptism or Thanksgiving



Together Sharing in Christ



Together Growing our Communities

Application for Baptism or Thanksgiving

We would like to thank you for your enquiry about baptism or thanksgiving. There are a number of different reasons that you are exploring this at this time. You may have had a baby recently and want to have them baptised, and a new birth is a great opportunity to think about all of the mysteries of life. You may have children that are a little older and have begun to think about what Christian faith is all about. You may be thinking of being baptised yourself and about making your own commitment to Jesus and to the church. Whatever position you find yourself in, baptism is a celebration of knowing Jesus and of joining his people, and so we hope this pack will help you to think through what baptism is, and to be sure it is the right thing for you.

Baptism in the Benefice

The Bybrook Benefice is a group of 10 rural churches served by a small ministry team, and so baptisms take place during one of our main Sunday services. There is not a service every week in every church and so dates for baptisms are set with baptism families once the application form has been returned, and once we know where you would like the baptism to take place. The reason baptisms take place in the service is for two reasons. Firstly, baptism is not a private arrangement but something that involves the wider community and the new church family. Secondly, we would like to welcome you, your family, friends and other guests to worship with us not only on the day, but beforehand and afterwards as well.

Who can be baptised here?

If you (legal guardian with parental responsibility of a minor to be baptised or the applicant if over 18) are:

- i. a regular member of one of our churches or;
- ii. have been married in one of our churches or;
- iii. you, your children or parents have been baptised in one of our churches or;
- iv. you live within the parish boundaries,

we would love to carry out the baptism for you once you have attended baptism preparation. If you live outside of the area covered by our parishes and do not regularly attend a church here, you should contact your own local church.

Baptism Preparation

Before the baptism service, you will need to participate in baptism preparation. There are two parts to this:

Firstly, if you are not a regular attender (regular attendance is defined as at least once per month for six months), you will need to attend at least 3 services within 6 months at the church where the baptism is to take place - taking the below attendance form with you to be signed and once completed pass it to the minister taking the baptism or send it to the benefice office.

Name of Applicant:		
	Date of attendance	Minister's Signature
First Attendance		
Second Attendance		
Third Attendance		

Secondly, parents must attend baptism preparation to talk informally through what baptism is, and to think about the promises you will be making in the service. If godparents are able to attend this meeting, then that would be even better, but we know that this is not always possible.

Are there alternatives to baptism for a child?

There are many ways to celebrate the birth of a new child. The two main options that we can offer as a church are baptism or a thanksgiving service. In a baptism service, you will be asked to make a commitment to do your best to encourage and support your child along with their godparents as they grown into an understanding of what it means to be a Christian, and that you will accompany them on their journey of faith. As the church, we also make promises that we will accompany those who come to be baptised.

If you feel that you cannot make the vows or undertake the commitment that baptism involves, let us know. If this is the case, a thanksgiving service might be a better option for you. You can invite your friends to come along and thank God for the gift of your child. The difference is that your child will not be baptised and you will not have to make any commitment to bring them up in the Christian faith.

What can we expect from the church?

The church takes baptism very seriously, which is why baptism preparation is a requirement before the service. We will help you to understand what you are going to do and say, and help you to think through the roles you will enter into if you are parents and godparents of a baptised child. If you are an adult coming for baptism, we will also help you to understand the commitment that you are making for yourself. We also offer groups for children and for adults to help you to grow into your faith and to learn more about the God whose people we become in baptism. For more information, please contact the benefice office on 01249 782704.

What should I do next?

It is worth spending time to make sure that baptism is the right choice for you. We have a DVD called First Steps that we can lend you to watch and return, and this can help to decide on what is most appropriate for you.

Once you have decided if baptism or thanksgiving (dedication) is most appropriate, and you have read through the FAQs on the next page, please complete the application form and return it to our office. You can email it to bybrook.office@gmail.com or post it to The Bybrook Office, The Read Room, Yatton Keynell Village Hall, Biddestone Lane, Yatton Keynell, Wiltshire, SN14 7BD. If you have any queries, please contact the office either by email or on 01249 782704. Once we have received your application form, we will contact you to arrange the date for the service.

Is there any guidance about who to choose as godparents?

Yes. If it is a child who is to be baptised ideally there should be at least 3 godparents, two of the same sex as the child and one of the opposite sex. Parents can be godparents for their own children as long as there is at least one other godparent. We would encourage you not to have more than 4 godparents. Godparents must be baptised, and if possible confirmed, and they should be active Christians themselves.

If you are an adult applying for baptism then there is no need for godparents as you are able to make the commitment to faith for yourself. In this case it would be normal to choose 1 or 2 sponsors (supporters) who will be with you for your baptism, and will encourage you as you grow as a Christian.

How many people can come to the service?

As many as you like, but bear in mind that some of the churches are quite small so check when you are discussing in which church the baptism will take place.

Do we have to dress smartly?

We are a relaxed and welcoming group of churches. If you want to dress up then that's fine, but if you would feel more comfortable coming informally then that's fine too.

What about photography at a baptism or thanksgiving service?

Baptisms and thanksgivings take place during a public act of worship, along with regular worshippers, and so we have to try and find the right balance for all people. We would advise against the use of a "professional" photographer, and ask that any posed photos take place following the service where you can have as much time as you like at the font.

Do we have to attend church regularly after the baptism?

We're not going to chase after you to make you come to church, but we hope that you will feel welcomed into the church family for your baptism, and we hope that you will come and join us because you want to, and because you feel that we can support you after the baptism.

How can I find out more about what it means to be a Christian?

Come and talk to one of the ministers and we can point you towards some helpful literature. We also run a short introductory course called "Start" that you might find helpful. You could also have a look at www.rejesus.co.uk or www.christianity.org.uk

The words of the baptism service

BAPTISM INTRODUCTION

Our Lord Jesus Christ told us that to enter the kingdom of heaven we must be born again of water and the Spirit, and has given us baptism as the sign and seal of this new birth.

Faith is the gift of God to his people. In baptism the Lord is adding to our number those whom he is calling. People of God, will you welcome this child and uphold them in their new life in Christ?

All: With the help of God, we will.

To the parents and godparents

This child belongs to God in Christ. From this day this child will be at home in the Christian community, and there will always be a place for them. Tell them of their baptism, and unfold to them the treasure they have been given today, so that they may know they are baptised, and, as they grow, make their own response in faith and love, and come in due time to share in the communion of the body and blood of Christ.

Do you promise, depending on the grace of God, to teach this child the truths and duties of the Christian faith; and by prayer and example to bring them up in the life and worship of the Church?

Parents and Godparents: With the help of God, we will.

In baptism this child begins their journey in faith. You speak for them today. Will you care for them, and help them to take their place within the life and worship of Christ's Church.

Parents and Godparents: With the help of God, we will.

THE DECISION

Parents and godparents, those who bring children to be baptised must affirm their allegiance to Christ and their rejection to all that is evil. It is your duty to bring up this child to fight against evil and to follow Christ. Therefore I ask you these questions which you must answer for yourselves and for this child:

Do you turn to Christ? **Parents and Godparents: I turn to Christ.**
Do you repent of your sins? **Parents and Godparents: I repent of my sins.**
Do you renounce evil? **Parents and Godparents: I renounce evil.**

And now together we remind ourselves of the faith of the church into which this child is to be baptised.

Do you believe and trust in God the Father who made the world?

All: I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in his Son, Jesus Christ, who redeemed the world?

All: I believe and trust in him.

Do you believe and trust in his Holy Spirit who gives life to the people of God?

All: I believe and trust in him.

This is the faith of the Church.

All: This is our faith. We believe and trust in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

THE BAPTISM

(Name), I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen

(Name), may God, who has received you by baptism into his Church, bless you with wisdom and love. May you grow in the Holy Spirit and follow Christ your whole life long. **Amen.**

SIGNING WITH THE CROSS

(Name), I sign you with the sign of the cross to show that you now belong to Christ.

GIVING OF A LIGHTED CANDLE

Receive this light; it is a reminder of Jesus who said, 'I am the light of the world'. May you walk in this light all the days of your life.

All: Shine as a light in the world to the glory of God the Father. Amen.

The words of the thanksgiving service

INTRODUCTION

We are here today to give thanks for **N**, with **his/her** family and friends, and to support **his/her parents, N** in their responsibilities with prayer and love. God became one of us in Jesus and understands all that surrounds the arrival and upbringing of children. It is God's purpose that children should know love within the stability of their home, grow in faith and come at last to the eternal city where his love reigns supreme.

Minister: Do you receive **this child/these children** as a gift from God?

Parents: We do.

Minister: Do you wish to give thanks to God and seek his blessing?

Parents: We do.

Minister: God our creator, we thank you for the wonder of new life and for the mystery of human love. We thank you for all whose support and skill surround and sustain the beginning of life. We thank you that we are known to you by name and loved by you for all eternity. We thank you for Jesus Christ, who has opened to us the way of love. We praise you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

All: Blessed be God for ever.

The minister may say for each child

Minister: What name have you given this child?

A parent or supporting friend replies

Parent: *His/her name is N.*

Minister: As Jesus took children in his arms and blessed them, so now we ask God's blessing on **N**. Heavenly Father, we praise you for **N's** birth; surround **him/her** with your blessing that **he/she** may know your love, be protected from evil, and know your goodness all **his/her** days.

When all the children have been prayed for

All: **May he/she learn to love all that is true, grow in wisdom and strength and, in due time, come through faith and baptism to the fullness of your grace; through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

The minister prays for the parents

Minister: May God the Father of all bless **these parents** and give them grace to love and care for their children. May God give them wisdom, patience and faith, help them to provide for the children's needs and, by their example, reveal the love and truth that are in Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

GIVING OF THE GOSPEL

A copy of a Gospel is presented, with these words

Minister: Receive this book. It is the good news of God's love. Take it as your guide.

The minister may address the supporting friends and say

Minister: Will you do all that you can to help and support **N and N** in the bringing up of **N**?

Friends: **With the help of God, we will.**

The minister may address the wider family and friends and say

Minister: Will you do all that you can to help and support this family?

All: **With the help of God, we will.**

BAPTISM APPLICATION FORM

Please complete the sections appropriate to this application, sign and return with a copy of your child's birth certificate as directed below.

1. Details of person to be baptised:

Forenames:	Surname:
Date of Birth:	Age:
Address:	
..... Postcode.....	
Telephone no.....	
Email.....	
Connection to the Parish	
.....	

If this application is for an adult baptism please go to section 3

2. Where the above is a child, please also complete the following:

2.1 Father's Details

Forenames:	Surname:	
Address:		
Home Tel No.:	Mobile Tel No:	
Occupation:		
Email.....		
Are you	Baptised Yes/No	Confirmed Yes/No (delete as appropriate)

2.2 Mother's Details

Forenames:	Surname:	
Address:		
Home Tel No.:	Mobile Tel No:	
Occupation:		
Email.....		
Are you	Baptised Yes/No	Confirmed Yes/No (delete as appropriate)

2.3 Data Protection

We would like to be able to contact you about what is going on in the Bybrook Team Ministry, such as special services or family events. Please indicate below if you are happy for us to contact you in this way. Yes No

3. Godparents and Sponsors

Please remember the guidelines given about godparents and sponsors (supporters) in the FAQ section.

1. Forenames:	Surname:	
Address:		
Email.....		
Telephone.....		
Are they	Baptised Yes/No	Confirmed Yes/No (delete as appropriate)
2. Forenames:	Surname:	
Address:		
Email.....		
Telephone.....		
Are they	Baptised Yes/No	Confirmed Yes/No (delete as appropriate)
3. Forenames:	Surname:	
Address:		
Email.....		
Telephone.....		
Are they	Baptised Yes/No	Confirmed Yes/No (delete as appropriate)
4. Forenames:	Surname:	
Address:		
Email.....		
Telephone.....		
Are they	Baptised Yes/No	Confirmed Yes/No (delete as appropriate)

4. Service details

In which church would you like the baptism to take place?

How many members of your family and friends do you expect to attend? Please specify number of adults and children (under the age of 11) adults children

Preferred Date of Baptism.....

It may be that we are unable to accommodate your preferred date, in which case we will come back to you with alternative suggestions.

5. Confirmation and Signature

I would like my child / I would like* to be baptised and promise to do my best to follow the teachings and faith of the Christian Church. (Parents/guardians or candidate should sign below)

Signed Parent 1..... Date

Signed Parent 2..... Date

Please return the form along with a **copy of the birth certificate** to The Bybrook Office, The Read Room, Yatton Keynell Village Hall, Biddestone Lane, Yatton Keynell, Wiltshire, SN14 7BD or email any enquiries to bybrook.office@gmail.com

THANKSGIVING APPLICATION FORM

Please complete the sections appropriate to this application, sign and return as directed.

1. Details of child:

Forenames:	Surname:
Date of Birth:	Age:
Address:	
..... Postcode.....	
Telephone no.....	

2.1 Father's Details

Forenames:	Surname:
Address:	
Home Tel No.:	Mobile Tel No:
Occupation:	
Email.....	

2.2 Mother's Details

Forenames:	Surname:
.....	
Address:	
.....	
Home Tel No.:	Mobile Tel No:
Occupation:	
Email.....	

2.3 Data Protection

We would like to be able to contact you about what is going on in the Bybrook Team Ministry, such as special services or family events. Please indicate below if you are happy for us to contact you in this way. Yes No

3. Supporting Friends (Sponsors)

You do not have to choose any, but if you have a few friends that would be a helpful support to you as you bring your child up, either in the Christian faith or not as the case may be, you may like to include them here to support you in the service.

1. Forenames:	Surname:
Address:	
Email.....	
Telephone.....	
2. Forenames:	Surname:
Address:	
Email.....	
Telephone.....	
3. Forenames:	Surname:
Address:	
Email.....	
Telephone.....	
4. Forenames:	Surname:
Address:	
Email.....	
Telephone.....	

4. Service details

In which church would you like the service to take place?

How many members of your family and friends do you expect to attend? Please specify number of adults and children (under the age of 11) adults children

Preferred Date of Thanksgiving.....

It may be that we are unable to accommodate your preferred date, in which case we will come back to you with alternative suggestions.

5. Confirmation and Signature

Signed Parent 1..... Date

Signed Parent 2..... Date

Please return the form along with a **copy of the birth certificate** to The Bybrook Office, The Read Room, Yatton Keynell Village Hall, Biddestone Lane, Yatton Keynell, Wiltshire, SN14 7BD or email any enquiries to bybrook.office@gmail.com