



Baptism & Thanksgiving at St Paul's

St Paul's Values Statement

We seek to be a **loving, **relevant**, **God-centred**, **learning** and **welcoming** church that has **integrity**.**

Loving

By this we mean:

Mirroring God's love for us by supporting and encouraging those around us.

Relevant

By this we mean:

Being in tune with the culture of our community without compromising the Gospel.

God-centred

By this we mean:

Seeking to be a prayerful community that keeps God at the heart of all we do.

Learning

By this we mean:

Teaching the truth of God's Word while journeying together, uncovering the riches of Christ's saving nature.

Welcoming

By this we mean:

Being open to everyone and actively building and sustaining friendships.

Integrity

By this we mean:

Seeking to live our lives under God's direction, so that all can see our faith is real.

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Introduction

Thank you for contacting us about baptism (also known as a “christening”). This leaflet tells you a little about baptism and our policy here at St Paul’s.

You may have asked about a thanksgiving and we are happy to have a thanksgiving for your child if you would prefer that to baptism. This service, that allows children to make their own faith decisions when they are old enough, is becoming more popular and this leaflet will tell you all about it.



The Bible

The Bible is important to us at St Paul's and we are committed to following the rule of life laid out in scripture. So what does the Bible say about baptism?

Baptism is something we are commanded to do by Jesus, as part of someone coming to faith on their discipleship journey.

Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."
Matthew 28:18-20.

This is straightforward for someone who is able to make a profession of faith in Jesus Christ, but what about infants, those who are not old enough to do that?

In the Bible there are examples of whole families being baptised, that includes infants. When this happened it was always done within an

environment where the child would be brought up as a Christian. That means

- Teaching the child about Jesus.
- Bringing them to church.
- Praying with them.
- Encouraging them to read the Bible.

As a church we believe the Bible is the authoritative Word of God and so our policies on baptism reflect this aspect of our church.



Baptism

If you want to have your child baptised at St Paul's we will need to be sure of your commitment to bringing your child up as a Christian. During the baptism service you will be required to make some public vows about this intention.

The first step is to come to church. The most child-friendly service is at **10:30am on Sundays**. After the service you can talk to our Vicar to find out more.

We will expect you to come to church and become part of our church family before we go ahead and book a date for the service.

All our baptisms take place during a service at St Paul's, in line with church law and because by being baptised your child becomes a member of the church.

What else to consider?

- At least one parent / carer of the child needs to have been baptised.
- All Godparents need to have been baptised.

Thanksgiving

Thanksgivings for children are becoming increasingly common. They happen for a number of reasons that include:

- Families who would prefer to wait until their children can make a decision about baptism and faith for themselves.
- Those who feel unable to make the promises required within the baptism service but would still want to thank God for the arrival of their baby.
- Those for whom the focus is on the child rather than the Christian faith, but who would like an initiation or naming ceremony.
- Those who would like a separate service for their child outside of Sunday worship.

There is no requirement to come to church before having a thanksgiving.

A thanksgiving service may take place at any time convenient to the family and the minister

taking the service. It may, if wished, take place during a main Sunday service.

Before a thanksgiving service the family will be visited by the minister who will be taking the service.

Supporters for the child may be chosen by the family, taking a role similar to that of Godparents, though there is no requirement that they have been baptised.



Cost

Baptism

There is no cost for a baptism in the Church of England other than a small charge for the certificate and registration (currently £13 – 2016).

Thanksgiving

If the thanksgiving happens during Sunday worship, then there is no cost other than a small charge for the certificate and registration (currently £13).

If you wish to have a separate service for the thanksgiving of your child, the fee is currently £303 (2016).

Donations

St Paul's is a registered charity and all fees and donations are used to ensure our church can keep making an impact and to help those in our community and wider.

Contacts

St Paul's Church
Mill Road
Northumberland Heath
Erith
Kent
DA8 1HN

Office - Open on Mondays & Wednesdays 10am – 3pm &
Fridays 10am-1pm.

- 01322 336505
- office@stpaulsnorthumberlandheath.org.uk
- www.stpaulsnorthumberlandheath.org.uk

Vicar – Rev Clive Beazley-Long

- clive@stpaulsnorthumberlandheath.org.uk
- 01322 634579

Reader – Mrs Lauraine Wells

- laurainewells@hotmail.com
- 01322 407861

Finally

We hope this booklet has been helpful. If you think there are any improvements that could be made or something useful we've omitted, then please let us know.

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