

# Booking your Child's Christening

## Stilton Group of Churches

St Mary Magdalene, Stilton

St Helen's, Folksworth

All Saints, Elton

All Saints, Morborne

St Mary's, Haddon

We are delighted that you have chosen to have your child Christened. This booklet is designed to help you with your preparations and to answer some of your questions.



## Welcome

This booklet will guide you through the essential information you need to know when planning your child's christening. When you are ready to book a christening, or would like further information, please contact Revd Richard Gibbs on 01733 248701 or email [stiltonchurches@hotmail.com](mailto:stiltonchurches@hotmail.com).

If you would like to know more about what a Christening involves, the Church of England website has some very useful information. You can find this here [www.churchofenglandchristenings.org](http://www.churchofenglandchristenings.org). There is also a link to it on our website [www.stiltonchurches.com](http://www.stiltonchurches.com).

## What happens in a Christening?

During a christening your child will be baptised with water. It is the beginning of your child's journey of faith and a special day for family and friends.

The Vicar will welcome everyone to the service, especially the child being christened and their family. There will be a bible reading and the Vicar will talk about the meaning of a christening.

Next, there will be promises made by the godparents and everyone promises to continue supporting the child in their journey. At this point in the service the parents and godparents are invited to the front of the church and the baptism water is used to make the sign of the cross on the child's forehead.

This is a significant moment marking the child's belonging to God. The baptism water, which is blessed in the church's font, will be poured on to the child's head by the Vicar. A new beginning is signified and belonging to God's family.

The Vicar will pray for the child and for all those who support them in their faith.

## Bookings

If you wish to book a christening, please contact the Vicar, who will arrange an appointment to meet you. During this visit, the arrangements for a baptism will be explained, the application form will be given and a date discussed for the service. Once the application form is completed and returned, the booking process is normally complete. You must live in the parish or be able to demonstrate a connection to the church prior to booking. As this is a service marking the entry of the child into membership of the church, the christening takes place during a Sunday Service.

## For Parents

You don't have to be christened yourself nor do you need to be a regular churchgoer to arrange a christening for your child. You are entitled to contact your parish Vicar to arrange a service at your church. If you wish to have a christening at a church other than your parish church, then in The Stilton Group of Churches you can establish a connection with that church through attendance at worship. To find out what this means in practice, then please contact the Vicar to find out which services may be most suitable for families. You will need to choose who you wish to be Godparents. Godparents can be family members or friends, they will be people who will be in touch with your family for many years to come and will play a supportive role in your child's life. Traditionally for a girl you will choose 2 female godparents and 1 male. For a boy, 2 male godparents and 1 female godparent. Normally there will be 3 godparents however if you wish to have more, please speak to your Vicar. Godparents must be christened themselves. If you would like to choose supporters who are not christened then they are termed 'sponsors' (though not in the service, where no distinction is made). In this case, they make the same promises and have the same responsibilities, but we do not enter their names in the Baptism Register where only Godparents are entered.

## For Godparents

Godparents are amongst the most important people at a Christening, it is a promise to a child that you will support them in their journey in the Christian faith throughout their lifetime. During the christening service godparents will make promises to their godchild. These promises describe how you turn away from all things that are against God and turn positively towards Jesus as your role model for life.

## Before the service

A week prior to the Christening, the Vicar will often be in touch to check everything is ready for the service, but you are always welcome to make contact yourself if you have any questions.

If you would like to have a small poster with a balloon at the entrance to the church welcoming guests on the day of the Christening, this can be arranged.

## Orders of Service

As Christenings with the Stilton Group of Churches take place within a Sunday Service, there is a standard Order of Service that is used. These will be given out to all guests as they arrive at the church, before they take their seats. You can read the order of service here [www.stiltonchurches.com/baptisms](http://www.stiltonchurches.com/baptisms)

## Music and Readings

During the service, we have a number of songs and at least one reading from the Bible. If you have a favourite worship song, or a family member or friend who would like to read from the Bible, then please let the Vicar know when you make your booking.

## Making a Donation

At a baptism, when we look to the future with such joy, there is an opportunity to share hope and happiness with those who may have little to celebrate or look forward to. To that end, an offering plate may be passed around the congregation during the service, and any monies collected will go towards our work here and overseas.

## Photographs and Video

We do not normally allow photography during the service as it is an act of worship at which everyone in the congregation is requested to participate fully. However, both before and after the service, you are welcome to take any photographs you wish including posed photographs at the font.

## After the Service

A lighted candle and Christening certificate are given to the child at the end of the service. Each child Christened will be presented with an age appropriate Bible to support their journey. The parents will also be gifted a Bible. After the service, details of the child Christened will be added to the Baptism register. We may contact you in due course to let you know of other events and opportunities related to our promise to support you in bringing up your child with a good understanding of their church and living the Christian faith.

