

GODPARENTS

Godparents are really important. Choosing them is one of the biggest decisions parents will make. Whether you are still thinking or have already asked some special friends, we'd like you to think about what it means to be or have godparents.

- Godparents will be people who'll be in touch with your family for many years to come. They may be relatives or friends of the family.
- They'll be people who you know you can trust and who'll be there for your child to talk about the bigger questions in life; questions about faith, hope and love.
- They should feel ready to make some big promises about faith for your child in church.
- It is suggested that each child should have at least three godparents, two of the same sex and at least one of the opposite sex to the child. You can have more than three godparents if you wish.
- Parents may be godparents for their own children, providing they have at least one other godparent.
- Because of the very special role they have in supporting your child's faith journey, godparents must be baptised themselves, and ideally confirmed too, but that isn't a requirement.

QUESTIONS AND PROMISES

In the christening service, the parents and godparents are asked questions and asked to make some promises to support their child or godchild throughout their life. They are big questions and big promises, so we would suggest that you put aside a little time to explore them for yourself and to think about your own Christian faith.

The parents and godparents are asked to pray for the child and help them to follow Christ.

The parents and godparents are asked...

Do you turn away from sin?

Do you reject evil?

Do you turn to Christ as Saviour?

Do you trust in him as Lord?

Do you feel you can say 'I will' and 'I do' to these questions?

In the service we say 'I believe...

- in God the Father, source of all being and life, the one for whom we exist.

- and trust in God the Son, who took our human nature, died for us and rose again.

- and trust in God the Holy Spirit, who gives life to the people of God and makes Christ known in the world.

Are these things you can say and mean?

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YOUR CHILD'S CHRISTENING



It's not unusual for people to ask...

*"What is the difference between
a Christening and a Baptism?"*

It is a christening service at which someone is baptised with water and the Holy Spirit.

You don't have to have been christened yourself, and you don't have to have been a regular churchgoer to have your child baptised.

THE DASSETT MAGNA GROUP

Avon Dassett with Fenny Compton,

Burton Dassett, Farnborough,

Gaydon with Chadshunt

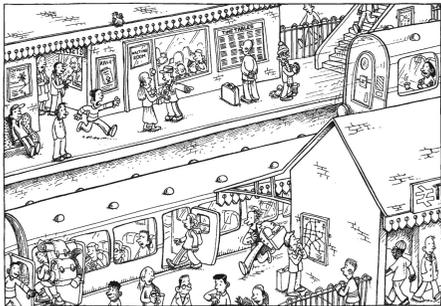
THE JOURNEY OF FAITH

Faith is often described as a journey and baptism is the first step in a journey of faith.

Being with God could be described as rather like setting out on a train journey.

The picture below represents people at different stages of their faith. Looking at the picture, can you explain which character you are and why?

Are you on the train, on the platform, getting off the train or leaving the station?



GOD

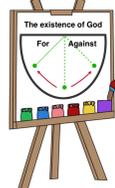
Think about the reasons for believing, or disbelieving in the existence of God.

How do you stand on this?

Are you for, or against the existence of God?

Where would you put yourself on this pendulum?

Is there one factor that influences your answer?



JESUS

Take a little time to think about the following questions:

Jesus told stories, can you think of any?

What do we know about when he was born?

How did he die?

What did people think of him?

What do you think about him?

SIN & EVIL

In the christening service the parents and Godparents are asked...

Do you turn away from sin?

Do you reject evil?



Evil and sin aren't words we use in everyday life so what do they mean?

What do you understand by sin?

What is evil?

When does something change from being simply wrong to being a sin or evil?

God loved the world so much that he gave his Son Jesus to die for our sins - so that our sins would be forgiven. He died so that no one would perish, but all would have eternal life.

In the service we baptise with water - Jesus cleanses us from sin so we can have a relationship with God.

The train station picture is taken from the CPAS Start course

Christians believe that sin is not just about doing, or thinking bad things, but also about not letting God have a central place in our lives. When we push God from the centre things become unbalanced.

In the christening service it is recognised that we all sin and... "wander far from God and lose our way:" but "Christ comes to find us and welcomes us home."

Baptism joins us to Christ and to his whole Church, on earth and in heaven.

Bringing up a child as a Christian has its challenges. They need to learn the story of Christ's birth, death and resurrection, the pattern of his loving life, and the teaching that he gave.

Being a Christian means going to church, and more. Christians are called to stand up for truth and justice, and show compassion to those in need. They are to be faithful and loving.

There are lots of ways to continue the amazing journey of faith as a family. It's not just about special times, but about the ordinary times of wonder, love and joy - and the times when things go wrong. A candle is given to the child at the christening to remind us that the baptised shine as a light in the world - and also that Jesus the light of the world is always with us.

If you would like a chat with Reverend Nicki about any of this please don't hesitate to contact her. We look forward to seeing you at the christening.