

BAPTISM POLICY

All Souls Parish Church Harlesden

The Sacrament of Baptism is administered here at All Souls, both to children and adults. Baptisms **usually take place on the last Sunday of the month**. We believe that it is a beautiful moment, not only for the individual and their family but also for us as a Christian Community. To this end we encourage people to have baptism during the main service on Sundays at 10am.

We recognise that sometimes, for reasons beyond their control, this is not an appropriate time for some families, and on these occasions, the Baptism can take place after the main service. Then, the welcome by the whole Christian family of its new members will occur the following Sunday at 10am. Usually, a Sunday before the baptism, the candidate for baptism (and parents) will be introduced to the congregation, and a prayer of preparation for baptism will be said.

Children and adults are christened at their local parish church in the Church of England. If you live in the parish of All Souls, then your child or you may be christened at this church. If you don't live in the parish, but you were married here, or your wider family live in the parish and this is your 'home' church, then you can still have your child christened here. It is our joy to welcome your baby into the Christian family.

We also believe that we are responsible for baptising the children of those who regularly worship with us. Godparents will also be invited to participate in this when possible. We believe godparents have an essential and often neglected role in teaching their godchild the Christian faith. We wish to encourage both parents and godparents in their undertaking.

In the case of adults, the usual practice is to administer baptism at the same time as confirmation.

Those with past connections with this church – *they used to worship here* - often ask if the baptism of their children can take place in All Souls' even though they no longer live in the parish or worship here. However, we believe baptism is not about a family's past, but about the child's future with God. We would, therefore, wish to encourage past members of this church to have their children baptised in the parish church where they now live and where they will live out the baptismal vows with their children.

We understand this causes some disappointment, especially to grandparents. We hope that people in this position will understand that we have formulated this policy to affirm the new family that is being created and to encourage them to be involved with their new parish church and its ministry.

We have asked our clergy not to make exceptions to this practice.

Baptism is an outpouring of the Holy Spirit of God: we ask you to pray for those who have been baptised in our church and those seeking this Sacrament.

If you are considering baptism in our church, please contact **Jean Lewis**.

All Souls' Parochial Church Council

Signed: *Revd Dr Adam Dobrzynski*