



**THE CHURCH  
OF ENGLAND**

DIOCESE OF LEEDS  
St Bartholomew, Armley  
with St Mary of Bethany, New Wortley



## **LIFE EVENTS AT ST BARTHOLOMEW'S**

**Baptism**

**Confirmation**

**Marriage**

**Marriage Blessings**

**Banns of Marriage**

**Funerals**

# Baptism at St Bartholomew's

## The Baptism of children

During a service of Baptism for a child we thank God for his gift of life and we pray for the child who at Baptism begins her/his own journey of faith but with the support of their parents, godparents and the Church itself. We also ask for God's blessing upon the child and for the guidance of the Holy Spirit to anoint them, this is symbolised when the child is anointed with oil. We also pray that the Light of Christ will shine in and through them, the light of Christ is symbolised by the giving of a Baptismal candle, which is lit from the Paschal candle, this is a special candle which the Church lights for the first time at Easter and which represents Jesus Christ, the Risen Lord and light of the world. In Baptism the child being baptised is washed clean from sin, this is symbolised by the pouring of water over the child's head. When anointed, the sign of the cross is made upon the child's forehead as an invisible mark which will stay on the child for the rest of their life and it shows that the child now belongs to Jesus Christ.

## Parents and Godparents

Parents and godparents play a central role in the Baptism of a child for they make promises on behalf of them. You and they will have to declare publicly your faith in God, that you renounce evil, turn from sin and intend to bring your child up to follow Jesus as Lord and Saviour. These promises are made before the entire congregation, and it is a good idea that you check that your chosen godparents feel able to make these promises and declarations before others in a public. You can read the promises and declarations here.

Godparents are normally two of the same gender as the child and one the opposite gender. They need to be baptised themselves and they not only need to be able to genuinely make the declarations and promises on behalf of the child, but they should also be people that you can rely on to take a genuine interest in your Child's spiritually, and in you and your child during life's ups and downs.

The whole congregation then promises to support you and your family in helping you bring up your child in the Christian faith, and to pray for you.

Some people also mistakenly think of Baptism as a thanksgiving service for the safe arrival of a new child, whereas it is actually an initiation rite into the Christian Church.

The Church now has a special service for the Thanksgiving of a Gift of a Child and this may be more appropriate in some cases and it may well be that Baptism follows at a later date.

## Adult Baptism

Adult Baptism normally takes place when a person who has not been baptised or 'christened' as a child subsequently decides that they would like to be baptised. Baptism in this case marks their own personal turning from darkness to light, and their decision to follow Jesus Christ; Baptism as an adult is the first step of Christian Initiation and is very often followed by Confirmation.

Jesus Christ Himself was baptised, he asked John the Baptist to baptise Him in the river Jordan. When John pointed out that he was "not worthy to stoop down and untie the thong of his sandals". (Mark 1:7) Jesus insisted saying "Let it be so now; for it is proper for us in this way to fulfil all righteousness

The main difference between Infant and Adult Baptism, is that adults make their own declarations and promises instead of godparents and parents. Adults normally have two sponsors who will act as prayer supporters and friends. They will often be more mature Christians who have played a significant part in their journey to faith.

## **The Baptism Service**

Because Baptism is a service of initiation into the Christian Church it normally takes place during one of our Sunday morning Masses.

Alternatively you can arrange your Baptism as a standalone service which take place following our Sunday Masses. at around 12:30.

Full details of your Baptism service time will be provided with confirmation of your Baptism booking.

Whichever option you choose, we do also ask that you attend at least three Sunday Services in the Parish before your Baptism takes place and one of our Priests will contact you to discuss your Baptism in the days leading up to the service itself.

If you would like to arrange a Baptism or if you wish to speak to a Priest about Baptism please come to the Parish Office, see calendar for full details.

Further information about Baptism can be found by following the link below.

<https://www.churchofengland.org/weddings-baptisms-funerals/baptism.aspx>

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# Confirmation at St Bartholomew's

From time to time classes are arranged for those in the parish who wish to become full members of the church and be confirmed by the Bishop.

If you are interested in being confirmed please contact the Parish Priest who will then be able to let you know when the next session of classes will take place.

This is an important step in the Christian Life when you affirm the promises made for you as a child at Baptism to the Bishop. He will then lay hands on you to confirm you. Once confirmed you are able to receive Holy Communion at the Mass.



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# Marriage at St Bartholomew's

St Bartholomew's offers Marriage in church to those who wish to bring their relationship before God to be blessed.

Marriage is a gift of God in creation through which husband and wife may know the grace of God. It is given that as man and woman grow together in love and trust, they shall be united with one another in heart, body and mind, as Christ is united with his bride, the Church. The gift of marriage brings husband and wife together in the delight and tenderness of sexual union and joyful commitment to the end of their lives. It is given as the foundation of family life in which children are born and nurtured and in which each member of the family, in good times and in bad, may find strength, companionship and comfort, and grow to maturity in love. © Archbishops Council 2000.

Marriage is a way of life made holy by God, and blessed by the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ with those celebrating a wedding at Cana in Galilee. Marriage is a sign of unity and loyalty which all should uphold and honour. It enriches society and strengthens community. © Archbishops Council 2000

No one should enter into it lightly or selfishly but reverently and responsibly in the sight of almighty God. The couple enters into this way of life. They each give their consent to the other and make solemn vows, and in token of this they each give and receive a ring. The Church prays with them that the Holy Spirit will guide and strengthen them, that they may fulfil God's purposes for the whole of their earthly life together. © Archbishops Council 2000.

If you wish to book a Church wedding, in the first instance please contact the Priest in Charge - Fr Michael who will then make arrangements to discuss your wedding plans.

If you would like some further general information about Church of England weddings please follow the link below. <http://www.yourchurchwedding.org/>



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# Marriage Blessings at St Bartholomew's



At St Bartholomew's we are happy to bless civil marriages between a man and woman and there is no reason this cannot happen immediately following your civil service or if you prefer even a few days later. However, this will need to be planned, therefore, it is important that that you contact us as soon as possible as part of your wedding preparations.

A Marriage Blessing is an option for those who those for whatever reason have been not been able to or have chosen not to be married in church. A blessing is sometimes chosen when one partner is a Christian and the other is of another faith or none, or it may be undertaken years after the ceremony if a couple who, having married under Civil Law, have since come to faith and wish to ask God's blessing upon their marriage.

The promises are slightly different to the marriage service as the couple are already married.

For some people this is a short service, without ceremony and for regular known members of the congregation it can be included as part of the Sunday Mass. For others, the Civil Ceremony will be a formality, and they will wish the service of Blessing to bear as many of the hallmarks of a Church wedding as possible.

However simple or extravagant you wish the Blessing of your Marriage to be, please contact the Parish Priest, Father Michael who will then arrange to meet with you to discuss your plans.

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# Banns of Marriage at St Bartholomew's

The Calling of Banns is a very old practice and is the process of formally making it known that a couple is to be married and gives people the opportunity to make an objection, but it must be a legal objection. Banns must be called in the church where you are to marry and in the church of the parish where you live, this means you could possibly have them read in three places.

If you are to be married in one of our churches this will happen automatically, usually for the first three Sundays in month before you are to be married.

If you are to be married in another parish but live in Armley please telephone Fr. Michael on 01977 529929 Ext. 2 eight weeks before your wedding day, this means they can be read for the first three Sundays in the month prior to the wedding. After the banns have been read you need to arrange to collect a certificate to pass on to the person who will be conducting the wedding.

The image shows two versions of a 'Banns Certificate' form. The left form is a blank template with the following fields: 'Banns Certificate' (title), 'Banns of Marriage between' (line), 'and' (line), 'Published' (line), 'Register entry on' (line), and 'Certificate given by' (line). The right form is a filled-in sample with the following text: 'To the Officiating Minister at the church of \_\_\_\_\_ parish of \_\_\_\_\_', 'THIS IS TO CERTIFY that Banns of Marriage between \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ were published in the church of \_\_\_\_\_ parish of \_\_\_\_\_ or in the parish centre of worship of the parish of \_\_\_\_\_ on Sunday \_\_\_\_\_ and two Sundays following, and no impediment was alleged.' A large red 'Sample' watermark is overlaid on the right form.

# Funerals at St Bartholomew's

Funerals are very important occasions which give people an opportunity to express their grief, and to celebrate the life of someone they have loved and lost, and to commend their loved one to God.

They also allow the Priest taking the funeral service an opportunity to speak of the hope and promise of eternal life, which Christians believe we are promised through Jesus Christ our Lord. It is also an opportunity to seek the reassurance and comfort of a God who said, 'Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.' (Matthew 5:4)

The Church of England funeral service can be adapted to suit the simplest and most intimate of gatherings, a funeral can be a very small family affair with personally chosen music. But it can also be a large gathering with hundreds of mourners, or it can be a full Requiem Mass. All of these options are possible at St Bartholomew's.

A funeral can take place in our church or at the crematorium. The liturgy for funerals in Armley is taken from Common Worship.

The makeup of the service including hymns, songs, poems, or a eulogy etc. can be discussed when the Priest who will conduct your service visits to arrange final details.

Funeral services contain both sorrow and joy, as grief weaves alongside happy memories of a life well lived. But there are times when death can seem untimely and tragic. Sorrow then becomes the overwhelming emotion, particularly in the case of accidents or the death of a young person. The funerals of children can be particularly harrowing as we expect children to have their whole lives ahead of them. The Priest of St Bartholomew's will be happy to offer any support he is able to in the event of such a tragedy. This might include praying with you or for you and your family, or it may be a case sharing a cup of tea while you talk, whatever you need to do the clergy of the team will offer support in any way in which we are able..

On the other hand, there are also times when a funeral can only be a beautiful celebration of the long and happy life of a 'good and faithful servant', a Christian believer who has live as long full and happy life, having spread the love and light of Christ to their family, friends and community, in thought and word and deed.

## Eternal Life

Funerals services by their very nature cause all who attend to question life, death and what comes next. A Christian funeral service reminds us that Jesus Christ lived, died and rose again to show us the way to eternal life by following in His footsteps.

Jesus' said, 'For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved.' (John 3:16-17) This gift of grace, completely undeserved by any one of us, is ours to be as freely received, as it is freely given.

Naturally, this leads to thoughts about what heaven might be like, and we know little about it except that we are promised, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be His peoples, and God himself will be with them; He will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away." (Revelation 21:3-4) This, with the promise of the restoration of creation through Christ's saving grace

leads us to believe that those rare moments in which we glimpse something of God's glory in the beauty of the earth or one another, we are seeing a glimpse of heaven.

## **The Funeral Service**

As the coffin enters church unless music is chosen, the service begins with some words of scripture that speak of the Christian belief in the resurrection of the dead and the gift of eternal life.

As the funeral service continues there can be a Psalm which can be sung and there will be a Gospel or New Testament reading, this is designed to give comfort and hope to those who mourn. After the readings there will be a short address, which will say something about the deceased person's life and the hope, which the Christian faith offers. This may be followed by a family eulogy or some poetry which speaks of the deceased's life and faith.

Prayers for the deceased and for those who mourn will normally follow. Where the funeral is to be a Mass of Requiem the Eucharist will begin after this and those present who are confirmed or who normally receive Holy Communion in their own church may do so here.

NB: A Requiem Mass is the best possible way for anyone to be sent from this world to the next.

## **The Committal**

The committal is where the deceased is entrusted to God's safekeeping. It can be an intensely and emotional moment, marking the end of our earthly relationship with them. The Committal may take place in the Crematorium, in a cemetery or a churchyard. It is brief and the words most associated with funerals are said by the minister, 'earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; in the sure and certain hope of the Resurrection to eternal life.' Some people also opt for the ashes of a loved one to be buried at a later date.

Finally, the Priest will conclude the service by Blessing all of the people present.

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