

Infant Baptism  
in the  
Exe Valley Mission Community

Calverleigh Cruwys Morchard Loxbeare Oakford  
Rackenford Stoodleigh Templeton Washfield Withleigh

People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it. And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.

Gospel of St Mark 10: 13-16

**About baptism and Christianity**

Baptism is the beginning of a lifetime's journey with God. Something to be explored, enjoyed and lived throughout life.

It takes place in our main church service as we believe that this is a journey best done in friendship

and community. At the most basic level, this is what the church is: a community of people seeking to follow Jesus Christ.

Christians believe in God who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit. This is known as the Trinity. We believe in God who is Creator, and also our heavenly Father; God who is intimately present, all around us and with us now (Holy Spirit); and God who lived in human form (Jesus). Jesus showed us what God is like in how he lived, and what he taught, reuniting heaven and earth in his own person, and bringing that work to completion through his death and resurrection.

We believe in the spiritual dance of the Trinity, with community and relationship at the heart of God and therefore at the heart of the spiritual life. It's all about relationship with one another and with God.

### The Baptismal Promises

The minister says to the **Parent/s and Godparents**:

Minister: God knows each of us by name and we are his. Parents and Godparents, you speak for this child

today. Will you pray for them, and help them to follow Christ?

Parent/s and Godparents: We will.

Minister: We all wander far from God and lose our way: Christ comes to find us and welcomes us home. In baptism we respond to his call. Therefore I ask:

Do you turn away from sin?

Parent/s and Godparents: I do.

Minister: Do you reject evil?

Parent/s and Godparents: I do.

Minister: Do you turn to Christ as Saviour?

Parent/s and Godparents: I do.

Minister: Do you trust him as Lord?

Parent/s and Godparents: I do.

### Keeping the baptism promises

This is not a definitive list but some suggestions and ideas! You may have more of your own.

Parents

- Be learners yourself, seeking a Christian spiritual path in life. Children learn best from example.
- Bring them to church—so that you and they can feel comfortable being in church with the church family.
- Read bible stories with your children at home. Use a good children's version with pictures!
- Talk about the ways God is present in the wonder of creation, bringing life and growth all around us.
- Pray simple prayers of thanks, or blessings on family members. You may find a book of children's prayers helpful, though feel free to make it up and pray in your own words.
- Explain the festivals to them, especially Christmas and Easter.
- Pass on God's unconditional love by loving unconditionally yourself. Think about whether your parenting choices express this kind of love.
- Learn from your child—some spiritual things they grasp instinctively, Jesus often used

children as an example of how to live a spiritual life.

### Godparents

Your role will depend on how local you are. What applies to the parents may also apply to you, particularly if you live nearby. And it is true of all of us that it is good to be seeking a spiritual path both for our own sakes, for the sake of those around us and so that we are in a better position to pass this on to the next generation.