Thank You for Your Baptism Enquiry
at St Chad's Irby or St Bartholomew's Thurstaston

Baptism is about saying that you as parents affirm the Christian Faith and that you are willing to make promises to bring up your child within the Christian Faith. If you are not ready to do this, the alternative is to have a service of Thanksgiving for the birth of your child, leaving the opportunity of baptism at a later date when you feel ready to make these commitments or when the child is old enough to make these decisions for themselves. Please speak to the Rector for more information about Thanksgiving services.

You are entitled to Baptism for your child at St Bartholomew's or St Chad's if you live in the parish, or if you are on the electoral roll of the parish (ie you have been regularly *(at least two Sundays each month)* attending one of the churches for 6 months and have filled in a form to say that you consider this to be your church). If you cannot fulfil either of these criteria, you will need to speak to the vicar of the parish in which you reside, or you will need to attend either St Bartholomew's or St Chad's for 6 months before we can accept your booking.

In addition, in order to have your child baptised, the expectation is that you as parents should have been confirmed (ie have affirmed for yourself the promises made on your behalf at you own baptism). In reality so long as you are committed to bringing up your child in the Christian Faith and your Godparents have all been baptised (see below), we will baptise your child, and would encourage you to consider coming to church services and exploring faith for yourself and thinking about whether confirmation is something you'd like to consider.

When considering godparents, you need to know that a godparent MUST have been baptised themselves, so please check before asking them.

Baptisms take place at 3pm at St. Bartholomew's on the fourth Sunday of the month. These afternoon services at St Bartholomew's are informal and user-friendly for people who are not used to being in church services (often many of your baptism party won't have been to church for a long time). Due to the size of the building, we are only able to do a **maximum of two baptisms at a time** at St Bartholomew's and therefore these services can book up very quickly. **It is critical that you invite no more than 50 guests (including children) to your baptism unless you have agreed it with the rector first.**
For Church members (i.e. those already regularly attending services for six months or more) it will be possible to arrange a baptism within the main morning service at either of the two churches during the normal morning service on the 5th Sunday (only four a year – usually January, March, July and December) of the month.

To book a baptism, please contact the Rector who will arrange to visit you and fill out the appropriate paperwork.

Once the baptism is booked, you may be invited to attend a baptism preparation session, to look at what baptism is all about and what is being asked of you as parents within the service. You will also be encouraged to begin attending services (if you don't already). You don't sign your child up for anything else in life without intending to support your child's development. If you join the library because you want to help your child to read, you will take them regularly to get books. If you sign up for a sport activity because you want your child to learn the sport, you will take them to the sessions. The same is true of the Church. In Baptism you are saying that you want your child to know about the Christian faith and that involves being a part of the Church Fellowship and coming to services.

Following the afternoon baptism service, you will be required to attend a family service (1st Sunday of the month 9.30am at St Chad's) so that your child can be welcomed into the family of the church and we can present you with your child's baptism certificate.

Baptism is a joyous occasion. We look forward to meeting you and celebrating baptism with your family.