

Christ Church Barnet

Welcoming Your Child to Church!

ccb
CHRIST CHURCH
barnet

Time to THANK God for a new life...

When a baby is born most parents are filled to overflowing with love for their child and have a real desire to thank God for them!

This leaflet looks at the ways in which we can help you as a family express your gratitude to God for the new life He has entrusted to you.

We believe every child is created by God, in His image. We, as parents, are called to express his love to our children and, in some ways, to be stewards of them as they grow up and mature, until they become adults who can determine their own future and faith!

We recognise that parents want to express their thanks for a child and celebrate a birth. We also recognise the value of a social event which allows for this and gives an opportunity for friends and family to celebrate.

As a local Anglican parish church we are here to support and encourage you at all stages of life and so can help you express your thanks and give space for this form of celebration.

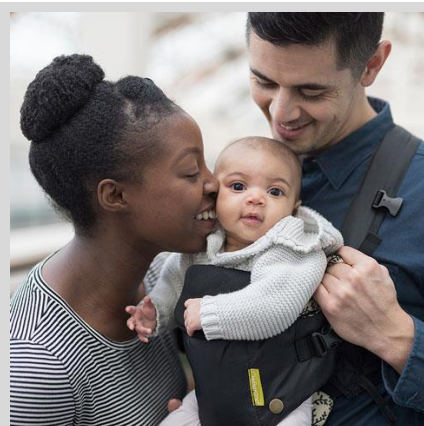
As a policy we do this during our normal pattern of services and indeed the words that are used assume this.

Andy Rimmer

Vicar, Christ Church Barnet



New babies are welcomed by their families and we as the Family of God also want to welcome them on a journey to faith in God!



Taking Time to thank God is the most natural thing in the world! We want to help you do this!



Words Matter!

**Our Words
reflect our
beliefs
which
dictate how
we behave!**

For many people the way to express their feelings and hopes is clear. The majority opt for the Naming and Thanksgiving Service. In it they

will use words that express a desire for God to help them to be good parents!

Godparents pray that they might be supportive and encouraging in the process. The child is formally named and the minister formally blesses the child and prays for both child and parents.

This will take place as part of the morning service at Christ Church and is a great opportunity for friends and family to come and be part of a worship service as well as enjoy this key social rite of passage! Most families arrange a lunch of gathering after to continue the celebrations.

Often families find thanksgiving begins a fresh interest in coming to church on a regular basis and enable their children to understand more of what it means to walk in relationship with God. We would love to support you in this both on Sundays and midweek.

Baptism is '*an outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible grace*'. Parents and godparents make significant promises during the service that state that they have a full understanding of what it means to be in relationship with God and part of the Christian family. Baptisms also take place in the context of a normal morning service where the church family stands with each family welcoming and promising to walk with them on the next stage of their spiritual journey.

In both cases when we visit to talk through Thanksgiving and Baptism options we look at the words and promises and look at the different ways forward.

It is vital you as a couple come to your own place on this. Sometimes we can feel a pressure from an older generation to have a traditional christening when not understanding the implications. The Thanksgiving service is not a 'second-class' service but can be more honest and real in not making promises that we are unsure about.

To help you in this understanding about faith we offer to spend 3 or 4 evenings looking at what faith really means through a short preparation course and then, if you'd like to continue with baptism or thanksgiving we can then arrange the most appropriate Sunday to do it.

If you would like a visit from a member of the clergy please contact the Church Office on office@ccbarnet.org.uk or 020 8449 0832

Thank You!



We love our children!
So does God! He wants
the best for them and
the best for you!
This is a tough job and
We want to support you
as best we can!

What are the next steps for you to take?

Once, all children were christened. We lived in a Christian culture where church going was common and babies were given their Christian names in a church ceremony!

This was a social occasion for most families. Things are a little different now in a culture which is more diverse, maybe more honest, and where children are given names formally at registration!

This leaves parents with a choice as to how they might express their gratitude to God (who they may or may not follow) and share that with their family and friends – for those who have a clear faith – the church!

The Church recognises this and has developed two strands to enable parents to express themselves clearly, openly and honestly without using words that they can't say with integrity!

The original service is one of infant baptism and this is for those parents who are both, people of clear Christian conviction, and are part of a local church where they intend to raise their child as a

Christian in a Christian family.

The concept of infant baptism only makes sense within this context and is reflected in the significant promises that are made.

The second route is one which is more accessible for many people as it is a Naming and Blessing service (in the context of a morning service) where much of the sense of 'christening' is captured and incorporated. This is also called a Thanksgiving Service since one of the predominant responses to the birth of a child is a sense of thankfulness to God for a new life!

In both services we encourage the presence of godparents or sponsors – those who will support and encourage the parents in their roles and responsibilities, be there through the future years. We encourage you to choose sponsors carefully, aware that they are taking on an important role in your child's life and future.





Choose those who have faith in you and in God!

Godparents or Sponsors are your choice. Contrary to popular understanding there are no requirements for the number or gender of Godparents. In both formats of service they

Godparents and Sponsors

Choosing godparents or sponsors is important – think about why?

have a key role but it's in the life of your child that they are so important. Their role is to support and pray for you as parents and also provide that help and encouragement to your child as they grow and mature. We encourage you to choose people who share some faith – indeed – with infant baptism they express the same

Christian commitment as parents and technically should be baptised. Mostly – choose those who will be around, are there for you, have a positive faith and will help you in the faith life of your family and your child! They will have specific words to say in the service so ensure that you pass these on to them prior to the event.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP AND ENCOURAGE YOU!

As parents and as a family!

We suggest you read through this leaflet and then do three things:

- **Check that you actually live in the parish or are a regular attender at Christ Church.** As an Anglican church we believe the local church is where the best support is so that's your first port of call. Our church office can help you with this.
- **Speak to Andy (the Vicar!) or one of the staff here at CCB** about the next step in welcoming your child. We normally arrange a visit to talk things through before any preparation and setting up times in our morning services.
- **Come along and see what the church is all about.** We have a variety of different styles of service here at CCB so it might be good to see what sort of church you are committing to being a part of.

Basically though we love children and young people and all ages stay for part of the service and then go out to special age-specific groups early on. We are also an informal church so our dress code is relaxed! If you do come please introduce yourself to one of the staff.

Welcome to Christ Church

Sundays

9am Traditional (followed by Refreshments)
10.30am Contemporary (with children's and youth work)
6.30pm Informal

Midweek Lots for all ages – see website – www.ccbarnet.org.uk

Church Office – office@ccbarnet.org.uk / 020 8449 0832

St Albans Road, Barnet, EN5 4L

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