



## Infant Baptism at St Luke's

We are delighted you are thinking about baptism for your child and this leaflet explains a bit of what is involved.

Baptism is an important step in following Jesus. It points to our need for forgiveness and a fresh start and marks the welcome into the family of Christ's church. We baptise the children of parents who trust and follow Jesus and adults when they come to faith in Jesus if they haven't been baptised as a child.

### Coming to Church

Baptism is the sign by which people are welcomed into the family of Christ's church and so baptisms take place during our Sunday services —so it is really important to be part of the church family life by coming to services regularly.

We ask parents enquiring about baptism to do this for about six months before the baptism takes place. We know that this is a big effort if it's not something you are used to. You are welcome at any of our Sunday services (8.45am, 10.45am, and 6.30pm). Most families attend the 10.45am service, which includes a creche, groups for children, and is an all-age service on the first Sunday of the month. There are other activities and events for children and families you can get involved with.

### Making a Commitment

Jesus told his disciples to baptise people who wanted to follow Jesus and join his church. The Bible tells us that whole households were baptised and soon parents wanted their children to be baptised. The baptism service recognises that children are too young to declare their faith for themselves—so the baptism of a young child takes place on two conditions:

1. Will you be an active part of the church family? Will you come to church regularly as a family, and encourage your child's faith by your words and your actions and by regularly praying for them? It says in the service, 'Children are baptised on the understanding that they are brought up as Christians in the family of the church.'
2. Are you, as Parents and Godparents, living in daily relationship with Jesus which makes a difference to your life? In the service you will be asked to affirm your faith, and you will make these public promises: "I turn to Christ", "I repent of my sins", and "I renounce evil".

Baptism is a significant occasion and not to be taken lightly. We will invite you to take part in baptism preparation to think about what baptism is all about and give you the chance to ask your questions. The last thing we would want is for parents or godparents to feel pressurised or uncomfortable when they discover what they are being asked to promise in bringing a child for baptism. If you decide to go ahead with the baptism, it must mean that you, and the godparents you choose, happily accept these conditions, and can make these promises readily and honestly.



## Godparents

Most people like to choose two or three Godparents who will support and encourage their child in their Christian faith in the years to come by their example of faith and by praying for them. Look for friends who you respect for their faith in Jesus, who are members of a church, and are baptised themselves.

## Thanksgiving

If you don't yet feel ready to take on the conditions of baptism; or you would rather wait until your child is old enough to decide about baptism for themselves then we would be pleased to arrange a thanksgiving as part of one of our Sunday services. A thanksgiving is a great opportunity to invite family and friends to come together to thank God for his blessings and to pray for your child.

## What to do next

The next step is to arrange to meet with one of the ministers here. The best thing would be to speak to them after a service, when you can also give them your copy of the attached form.

## Frequently asked questions

### **What is the difference between a baptism and a christening?**

There isn't a difference between a baptism and a christening. Some churches will use the word 'christening' and others 'baptism'.

### **How much does it cost?**

There is no charge for a thanksgiving or baptism service. At all our services there is an opportunity to give to the work of the church if you wish to.

### **What if I'm not baptised?**

This is not a problem for a thanksgiving. However, in the baptism service, you will be making promises about what you believe that are only appropriate for a Christian who trusts in Jesus. If that is you, but you haven't been baptised yet, we would be glad to discuss this with you when we meet.

### **What if we're not married?**

One of the promises you make in the baptism service is that you want to follow Jesus' teaching in every area of your lives. One of the things that Jesus taught was that people should either be single, or else be committed to the lifelong union of marriage between a man and a woman. Therefore, if you are living as a couple but not married, we would normally advise you to consider a thanksgiving.

### **Do the godparents need to be baptised?**

Yes. Since you are asking them to play a role in the spiritual upbringing of your child, they need to be trusting in Jesus for themselves, and baptism is the 'formal' way we express that trust.

### **Is there a limit of how many people we can invite?**

Not at all! A baptism or thanksgiving is a great time for family and friends to come together, and everyone is welcome.



## Baptism & Thanksgiving Enquiry Form (Infant)

If you do not already attend St Luke’s church, there is usually a requirement that you attend regularly on a Sunday for at least six months before children will be baptised.

The next step after completing this form will be to arrange a meeting with one of the ministers here.

Parents’ Names

Marital Status (Please tick appropriate box)  single  married  cohabiting  other

Contact Details

Address

Telephone number(s)

Email

Your connection with St Luke’s Church Please tick as appropriate	
<input type="checkbox"/> Members of the congregation (How long have you been attending? _____)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Live in the parish	
<input type="checkbox"/> Other (please give details)	
I am interested in <input type="checkbox"/> Baptism <input type="checkbox"/> Thanksgiving	
Child’s full name	
Child’s date of birth	
Notes	