

Welcoming your child into the family of St Philip's, Kelsall

Connecting our Community with God

An introduction to
services of
Thanksgiving
and Baptism
also known as Christening



Congratulations...

You are probably reading this after the birth of a child and because you are thinking about having a service in church for her or him. Congratulations on the arrival of your child. We are also pleased that you are thinking of bringing him or her to church. Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these." (Mark 10.14)

*God our creator,
we thank you for the gift of this child,
entrusted to our care.
May we be patient and understanding,
ready to guide and to forgive,
so that through our love
this child may come to know your love;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

First steps

To start planning your service – or services – please contact the Vicar of Kelsall, the Revd Peter Mackriell, by e-mail at vicar@kelsallparishchurch.org.uk or by phone, 01829 752639, if you haven't done so already. He will arrange to visit you. The rest of this leaflet explains what happens after that visit.

Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child

It is natural to want to say 'thank you' for the birth of your child. Christians believe that the person to whom we should say the biggest 'thank you' is God the Creator of the world and our Heavenly Father.

Our policy at St Philip's is to invite you to a Family Service where we will say thank you to God for you child and ask for his blessing on her or him. We will use a prayer like this one:

We encourage all families to share in this service. For some people, this says what they want to say – thanking God for a safe delivery and asking for his continued blessing on their child. The service is focused on the child and parents. Our Family Service is usually on the last Sunday of the month at 10.30 a.m. The Vicar will be able to give you the dates of the next few services so that you can choose which one to come to.



Although Thanksgivings normally take place during a Family Service, we can also plan a special service

for you at a different time if you decide not to have your child baptised.

Celebrate!

You may be planning a family party. The birth of a child is a great excuse for a celebration! Think about whether you are going to have that party on the day of your child's Thanksgiving service or when/if your child is baptised. It is helpful to know

Parents and godparents, the Church receives these children with joy. Today we are trusting God for their growth in faith. Will you pray for them, draw them by your example into the community of faith and walk with them in the way of Christ?

With the help of God, we will.

In baptism these children begin their journey in faith. You speak for them today. Will you care for them, and help them to take their place within the life and worship of Christ's Church?

With the help of God, we will.

how many people to expect at each service, so please give us an approximate number of guests who will be coming to church.

After Thanksgiving

Jesus said, "Go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." (Matthew 28.19)

In response to this command, the Christian church has offered baptism to all those who want to be

disciples (followers) of Jesus. Since early days, Christians have brought their children for baptism, in the belief that they are part of God's family and praying that when they are older they will make their own decision to follow Jesus. When that time comes they may wish to be confirmed by a bishop.

The Baptism service is focused on a decision to follow the Christian faith, which parents make on behalf of their child or which adults make in their own right. You can be baptised at any age.

If you want your child to be baptised, following Thanksgiving, we will ask a church member to call and see you. She or he will go through the baptism service with you and explain it more fully. We think it is important that you know what promises you are making before you have your child baptised.

This is part of the service:

Holy Baptism

Baptisms at St Philip's are held during a Family Service (at 10.30 a.m. on the 4th or 5th Sunday of the month) or at 12.30 p.m. on the 1st or 3rd Sundays of the month. The Vicar will agree a date with you. The person who visited you will be at the service to welcome your child into the church family. You can choose godparents to support you and your child; they should have been baptised themselves (and, preferably, confirmed). There is a tradition that you have two godparents of the same gender as your child and one of the opposite gender, but you

can have as many as you feel appropriate. Godparents have no legal status (e.g. as guardians)

Keeping in touch

Following a Thanksgiving or Baptism at St Philip's we will keep in touch with you. Your child will receive anniversary cards and you will also receive invitations to services and events from time to time. Information about services is published in the Parish News, on noticeboards and on-line. We have groups for children meeting most Sundays, or we make provision for children within the morning service at 10.30 a.m. If you do not live in the parish of Kelsall, or not near enough to attend church regularly, we encourage you to get in touch with a local church so that they can support you in helping your child take her or his place within the life and worship of Christ's Church.

We hope that you and your child will find a welcome at St Philip's

St Philip's, Kelsall

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