



Baptism and Thanksgiving at All Saints Church Halifax

We're delighted that you've enquired about involving God and the Church in celebrating the arrival of your child. This sheet gives you some idea about the choices you can make, the practicalities and the difference between a thanksgiving service and baptism service. If you have any questions please do get in touch, we are always happy to take the time to talk it through in person.

Both baptism and thanksgiving services can happen in the morning service at 10:30am at All Saints and there is no cost for either service. If you have a lot of guests we can arrange to hold a service at lunchtime on a Sunday, if that's the case we will always ask that you attend a normal service in the week or two that follows so you and your child can be formally welcomed by the church.

Our 10:30 service is informal and often lively, you'll find a range of ages and families in the service and a warm welcome from those who gather. We're used to noise from children and really don't mind, but there is a creche you can use too (but honestly, we feel blessed at the noise little ones can make!) and groups for children of all ages. If there is anything you are not sure about just ask, you'll find everyone came for the first time once and will be happy to help you out.

Over the page explains a bit more about the two types of service you can choose from.

A Service of thanksgiving

During the service you (as parents) will be asked some questions. Don't worry though, they are straight forward and you don't have to learn the answers – they will be on a sheet that you will have in your hand and on the screen at the front of church.

Do you receive this child as a gift from God?

We do.

Do you wish to give thanks to God and seek his blessing?

We do.

What name have you given this child?

His/her name is N.

The minister leading the service may then hold the child and say a prayer.

God our creator, we thank you for the wonder of new life and for the mystery of human love. We thank you for all whose support and skill surround and sustain the beginning of life. We thank you that we are known to you by name and loved by you from all eternity.

We thank you for Jesus Christ, who has opened to us the way of love.

We praise you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. **Blessed be God for ever.**

As Jesus took children in his arms and blessed them,
so now we ask God's blessing on (*child's name*).

Heavenly Father, we praise you for *his/her* birth;
surround *him/her* with your blessing that *he/she* may know your love,
be protected from evil, and know your goodness all *his/her* days.

The Minister will anoint the child with oil making the sign of the cross (an ancient symbol of Christian blessing) and pray for you as parents, and for any sponsors (Godparents) you have chosen – there are no rules in a service of thanksgiving about who can be a sponsor. Your family will be given a Bible and a certificate to mark the occasion and to help start your child out on the journey of discovering more about Jesus. This service allows your child to make their own decision on their faith in the future.

A Service of Baptism

If you choose a baptism service for your child, you are saying that you believe in God (and know him through Jesus), want to follow him in all you and your family do, commit to pray for your child and to raising your child as an attending member of the church. You will be required to make vows which reflect this and we ask that you take these vows as seriously as you would do in a wedding.

Godparents must have been Baptised themselves (although parents don't have to have been). Each child must have a minimum of 3 Godparents (2 the same gender as the child), but can have more.

In the service parents and Godparents will be asked the following questions.

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.

Parents and Godparents are then asked 4 more questions. 2 questions about what they choose not to do and 2 which affirm their faith in God and commitment to follow him.

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? **I do**

Do you reject evil? **I do**

Do you turn to Christ as Saviour? **I do**

Do you trust in him as Lord? **I do**

The minister makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of each child,

Name, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

The minister makes the sign of the cross on the forehead of each child, saying

Christ claims you for his own.

Receive the sign of his cross.

Do not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified.

Stand bravely with him

against all the powers of evil,

and remain faithful to Christ to the end of your life.

May God, who has received you by baptism into his Church,
pour upon you the riches of his grace,
that within the company of Christ's pilgrim people
you may daily be renewed by his anointing Spirit,
and come to the inheritance of the saints in glory. **Amen.**

There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism

Name, by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body.

We welcome you into the fellowship of faith;

we are children of the same heavenly Father; we welcome you.

Whether you would like to discuss these options more, or have decided whether you would prefer a thanksgiving or a baptism, the next step is to get in touch. One of the team will come and visit to talk through your options, allow you to ask any questions you might have and talk about how we will prepare you for the service. We look forward to hearing from you.

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