

# Baptism or Blessing

Congratulations! How wonderful to have a new child!

We are delighted to hear your news, and this leaflet is given to you as a guide if you are thinking of asking us at St Leonard's to celebrate the birth of your child with you during worship.

Your baby is a precious gift from God – and so we offer two ways of marking the joy of this event within the context of Sunday morning worship.

Firstly, there is the opportunity to come as family and friends, to give **thanks** for your baby, to ask for your God's **blessing** and to pray for God's helping in raising your child.

Alternatively, for those who are a part of a worshipping community of God (here at St Leonard's, or elsewhere), we are able to offer **baptism** as a form of initiation into the church, supported by the family's commitment to raise your child in the knowledge and love of God. The Church of Scotland expects at least one parent or other close family member either to be a member of the Church or willing to become a member.

The decision between whether Blessing or Baptism is more appropriate is one to be made in conversation with our Minister, and we ask that *no firm* booking is made with any outside venue until arrangements have been confirmed with the Minister.

## *Thanksgiving and Blessing*

This part of a service is for parents who either are not actively involved in the life of a church, or who would like their child to be involved in making a choice to be baptised when older. So we will share with you in acknowledging with joyful gratitude God's goodness in the gift of your child. We will seek God's blessing upon your child, and your family. And we will give you the opportunity to commit yourself to being a loving and responsible parent.

The Promises you will be asked to make are:

Do you commit yourself to love and care for ....., surrounding her/him with love and affection and teaching her/him to love what is good, to do what is right and to enjoy what is best in life?

I DO

Do you promise to guard..... from danger, to cherish her/his safety and to set her/him an example by being honest, kind, careful and generous in your dealings with her/him and others?

I DO

Will you do everything in your power to bring..... up as a confident, loving and trustworthy friend, helping her/him always to value herself/himself, to be secure in her/his identity and to love others as you love her/him, and as God loves her/him?

I WILL

Your child is presented to the Minister and blessed by her in the presence of the congregation -

....., We who are gathered here today with your parents, ..... and ....., rejoice in your birth, give thanks to God for you, and in the name of the church of Jesus Christ declare that God the Father loves you, God the Son died on the cross for you, and pray that one day God the Spirit will lead you to him.

## *Sacrament of Baptism*

This part of a service is for parents who are members of a Church, and who are actively participating in a worshipping congregation. So you will be asked to confess your common faith with us, using words such as the Apostle's Creed. You will be asked to commit yourself to raising your child in the Christian faith and within the fellowship of a worshipping community. And you will be asked to keep alive within your family an example of Christian discipleship that inspires your child as they grow.

The questions you will be asked during the baptism are:

In presenting your .....for baptism, desiring that she/he may be grafted into Christ as a member of his body, the Church, do you receive the teaching of the Christian faith which we confess in the Apostle's Creed?

I DO

Do you promise, depending on the grace of God, to teach ..... the truths and duties of the Christian faith; and by prayer and example to bring her/him up in the life and worship of the Church?

I DO

Do you promise, depending on the grace of God, to raise .....in an environment of tenderness where she/he is nurtured with love, warmth and encouragement in the Christian faith, so that she/he in turn may grow to love and care for others and live in openness to the grace of God?

I DO

Your child is presented to the Minister and baptised by herin the presence of the congregation –

....., I baptise you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.



## When and Where?

All services are held at St Leonard's, and baptisms and blessings both form part of our service of worship at 10.15am on a Sunday (unless there are exceptional or urgent circumstances). The chosen Sunday is a matter for discussion between the Minister and parents, and all family and friends are welcome to join us for worship (and children for Sunday School) on the Sunday decided. The point during the service when the blessing/baptism takes place is dependent upon the service plans for that particular Sunday.

## Contacts:

**Minister:** Rev. Monika Redman

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