

A SERVICE OF THANKSGIVING

The birth or adoption of a child is a cause for celebration. Many people are overcome by a sense of awe at the creation of new life and want to express their thanks to God. The service of Thanksgiving provides an opportunity for parents and families to give thanks for the birth (or adoption) of a child and to pray for family life. It may be a private celebration at home or in hospital, or it may be a public celebration in church, sometimes shared with a number of other children.

This service is not the same as Baptism (sometimes called Christening), which is the sacrament of initiation into membership of the Church, the Body of Christ. No promises are made to bring the child up in the Christian faith, no godparents are involved. The child may at any stage of their lives chose Baptism for themselves. Some parents see Thanksgiving as the first step towards dipping their toe in the Christian water to see, cautiously, what it might entail. Good idea!

The service will usually involve a welcome and some prayers, some readings (at least one from the bible) and a sermon, thanksgiving and blessing and the giving of a gospel. Music, and/or singing can be involved if you wish. The whole thing would normally last about half an hour (the same sort of length as a Christening).

The Service of Thanksgiving is ideal for parents who are not sure about their Christian commitment, or don't want to make promises they know they can't keep, or who are under pressure from other family members to "do something religious"!

If you have further questions, please contact one of the clergy.