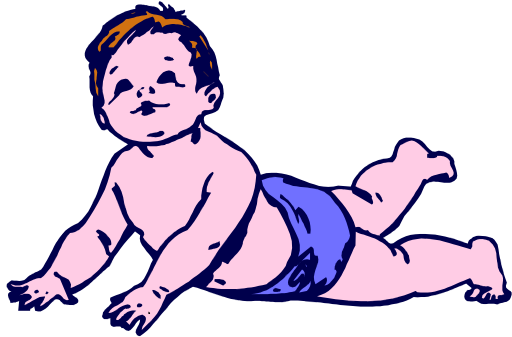


blessing – dedication – baptism

When any new person is born the Church wants to celebrate with the child's family by thanking God for this new life and by promising to help, support and pray for the whole family.



Parents who want to say thank you for their baby and to name their child in a public way often approach the church to arrange a 'Christening'.

However, this is not the only service the church offers to help families celebrate and say thank you.

We offer three variations of services which are all designed to help you celebrate the birth of your child, to publicly name your child and to say thank you. These services are:

- Blessing
- Dedication
- Baptism

All these services can form part of our regular 10.30am Sunday worship, or if you'd prefer a short service at 12noon.

Why three services?

We offer three services to all parents as each is suited to different stages of faith, and allow for the different levels of commitment that parents are ready to make.

Blessing

This service includes affirmations made by the parents thanking God for the gift of their child and promising to be loving parents. The congregation promises to support the family with prayer and friendship, and the child is then blessed.

Dedication

In addition to thanking God for the gift of a new child and promising to be loving parents, this service involves promises where the parents dedicate themselves to God and pledge to bring up the child within the church and the Christian faith. This service is not a substitute for baptism, but a commitment to help the child to grow in faith and to make their own decisions, possibly resulting in a future baptism.

Baptism

Baptism is the sign of welcome and belonging to the community of the Church. It is not only a family celebration, the whole church wishes to share in the family's joy and thank God for this new life.

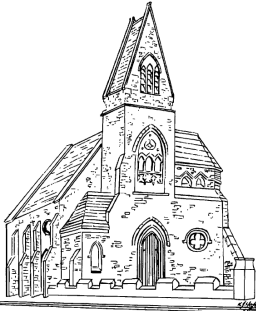
The United Reformed Church believes baptism is open to both infants and adults. When an adult is baptised the service will emphasize that person's own faith. When we baptise a baby, (christening) we rely on God's love and grace, and also the faith and commitment of the parents and the congregation.

The service of infant baptism therefore involves a commitment of faith by the parents and a promise to bring the child up within the Church. In addition the church congregation promise to support the parents in this task.

In making its promises to support the parents the church commits to providing teaching in the Christian faith and to pray for the whole family and offer help and friendship.

Parents may also invite particular members of the family and/or close friends to participate in the service by making promises to support the parents. These would be 'supporters' for Blessings and Dedications or 'Godparents' for Baptisms.

Baptism declarations and promises



When a child is baptised (christened) the parents are asked to make their own declarations of faith and to promise to bring their child up in the life of the Church.

We understand that some parents do not feel able to do this, which is why we offer the services of Blessing and Dedication.

Parents are asked to declare:

You have come for this baptism in response to the call of Christ and the leading of the Holy Spirit. Let us hear that you confess your faith in Christ.

Do you believe and trust in one God; Father, Son and Holy Spirit, maker of heaven and earth, giver of life, redeemer of the world? **I do.**

Parents are asked to promise:

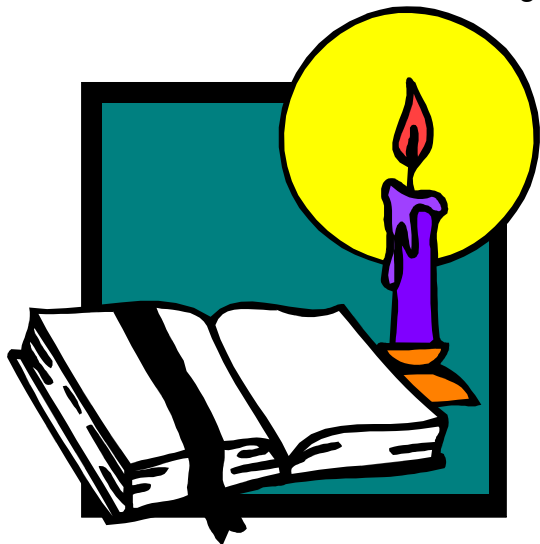
Tell *her/him* of *her/his* baptism that *she/he* may know *she/he* is baptized and may come to make *her/his* own response of faith and love. Do you promise to teach N the love of God and bring *her/him* up in the life and worship of the Church?

I do, with God's help

Godparents are asked to promise:

Do you promise to pray for N, and *her/his* home and family, and to support them as you are able as a minister of Christ's love?

I do, with God's help.



What next?

Please give some thought to which service you would like, and then complete the inserted request form and give it to our minister, church secretary, or one of the elders. Our minister will then get in touch to arrange a time to visit you and talk through your choice.

We share our minister with Penwortham URC which limits these services to one or two Sundays a month. Failing that it may be possible for a retired minister to be available.

On the day

We understand that some of your guests may not have been to church before but we want you to all feel welcome so please ask any questions you have.

We do not ask for a fee for these services but we would encourage you to mention to your guests that an offertory is taken during the services.

We would encourage you to arrive at least 15mins early to run through the service and to have your photograph taken.

At the end of the 10.30am service refreshments are offered in the hall, and if you choose the 12noon service you are warmly invited to share in them from 11.30am.

The 10.30am service lasts for about an hour. The 12noon service will last about 15-30 minutes.

During the hymn or music before the Blessing, Dedication or Baptism the minister will walk your child around the church.

It is possible that we may have communion later in the 10.30am service. This is a sharing of bread and wine remembering the meal Jesus celebrated with his first followers. We offer an open invitation for all to partake who wish to follow the way of Christ.

After the offertory in the 10.30am service children are encouraged to join in the Junior Church activities in the halls.

Request for a Service at Leyland URC

After you have given thought to which service you would like and completed this request form, please give it to our minister, church secretary, or one of the elders.

Child's Name:

Date of Birth:/...../.....

We would like to have a service of:

- Blessing
- Dedication
- Baptism

Preferred date:/...../..... or month:

Preferred service time: 10.30am 12noon

Number of supporters / Godparents:

Approximate number of guests:

Mum's name:

Dad's name:

Address:

.....

Post Code:

Phone Number: