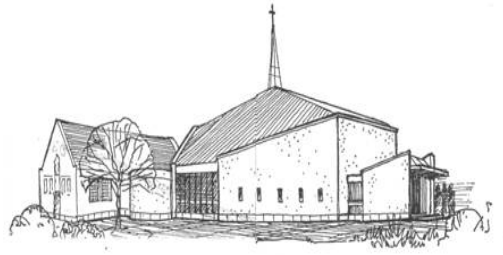


Welcoming your child to Bennochy Church: Baptism and Thanksgiving, a guide for parents



You are probably reading this leaflet because you have recently had a new baby or are now giving some thought about a special service for your child. As a parent you will want the best for your child and we would be delighted and privileged to help you think through both the sacrament of baptism and the thanksgiving ceremony. Both acknowledge the newborn child as a gift of God.

“Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely...For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother’s womb.” Psalm 139: 4, 13

This leaflet outlines these two ceremonies that take place in Bennochy church. We hope that it

will help you and your family decide which ceremony would be most appropriate for you and your child.

You may be wondering why we do this. The bible tells us that Jesus had a special place for little children in his life and ministry. On one occasion he took them in his arms and blessed them, on another, he even challenged adult followers to be more childlike in their faith!

Please contact us if you’d like to talk further about either of these services or if you would like to arrange a baptism or a thanksgiving service.

Service of Baptism

This service is designed for those who are members of the church, participating in its life and worship.

It is for those who wish and are able:

- to testify their faith in God and their personal commitment to Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord
- to continue their commitment to being active within the life of the church
- to bring their child up as part of the church family teaching them about the Christian faith so that they too might grow up to follow Jesus Christ

The Promises that are made in baptism are:

Do you present your child to be baptised, earnestly desiring that he / she may be grafted into Christ as a member of his body the Church?

I / WE DO

Do you believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit and do you confess Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord?

I / WE DO

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

I / WE DO

After the vows are taken, the child is then presented to the minister and baptised in the presence of the congregation with the words:

“..... (Names of child) I baptise you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. The blessing of God Almighty, Father Son and Holy Spirit rest upon you and remain with you now and always”

For the local congregation, baptism is special too. For us it is a sign of welcome, the way in which we can celebrate a new young life in the midst of God’s family. It also reminds us of the example of Jesus own baptism in the Jordan river where his public ministry began, near the end of his ministry his command to the church to baptise, and that the life death and resurrection of Jesus is for all, no matter how young or old we may be, to begin again in new life.

Some Practicalities:

- Baptisms are normally carried out for parents who are members of Bennochty church or who have an association with the church and who wish to find out more about the Christian faith
- One or other of the parents need themselves to have been baptised, but don’t worry if this is not the case, this can be arranged
- If you are not members of the church, we think it is a good idea to come along and experience our worship and meet some of the congregation, since this is the place where the baptism will take place. You will also be invited to our next Alpha course where you will find out more about the Christian faith.
- To meet with the minister, our order of service / intimation sheet will let you know when the next ministers “contact time” is or see our contact details at the end of this leaflet
- The minister will talk with you about both baptism and thanksgiving services to help you decide which service is most appropriate for you and your child.
- A date for the service will be set. Baptisms are normally held on the first Sunday of the month.
- A short time before the service the minister will visit you to go through the details of the service with you

Other points to note

- Baptisms always take place during a Sunday morning service. This is at 11.00 am and last for about an hour. There is a separate sheet that gives an outline of the service with additional practical notes/
- The baptism or thanksgiving is free, although you will be asked to make a donation to the church. This can be given to the minister or during the offering
- You will be given a certificate of baptism / thanksgiving for your child. This can include a picture of your child.
- You might have a favourite hymn. Please let the minister know to see if this can be sung before or after the baptism
- Please let the minister know if you wish a picture of your child shown during the baptism on the large screen. This to be supplied by email

The promises that are made in the Thanksgiving service are:

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

Do you promise to guardfrom danger, to cherish his safety and to set him an example by being honest, kind, careful and generous in your dealings with him and with others.
WE DO

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

- if you wish seats to be reserved for your family and friends, please let the minister know, along with approximate numbers

A Service of Thanksgiving or blessing for the Gift of a Child

The birth of a child is a happy and life-changing occasion. It is certainly a reason to celebrate. Many people are overcome by a sense of awe at the creation of a new life and want to express their thanks to God.

The Service of Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child offers you, your family and friends an opportunity to give thanks for the birth (or adoption) of a child and to join together to celebrate and pray for family life.

We offer this service to everyone who asks as an expression of God's unconditional love for you and your child.

In the Service of Thanksgiving we:

- Celebrate the birth of your child
 - Enable you to thank God for your child (or children)
- Publically acknowledge the name you have given your child
 - Pray for God's blessing upon your child

- Pray for you as parents and for your family life.

This service also enables you to recognise the role of friends in your child's life and if you wish, for them to stand at the front of church with you as supporting friends.

After the vows have been taken, the child is then presented to the Minister and blessed by him in the presence of the congregation with the words:

".....(Names of child) we here with and(names of parent) to rejoice in your birth, dedicate you to God, 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 the Spirit will lead you to know Him for yourself."

Some practical points

- We encourage these ceremonies to take place in the context of the Church's worship and with the presence of the local church, on the regular Sunday service. However the ceremony may also take place, in the church at another time, at another venue, by arrangement with the minister, such as in the family home or at a hotel.
- If you are not members of the church, we think it is a good idea to come along and experience our worship and meet some of the congregation. You will also be invited to our next Alpha course where you will find out more about the Christian faith.
- To meet with the minister, our order of service / intimation sheet will let you know when the next ministers "contact time" is or see our contact details at the end of this leaflet
- A short time before the ceremony the minister will visit you to go through the details of the service with you

Contact details

Bennochty Parish Church, address: Elgin St. /Meldrum rd., Kirkcaldy KY2 5HR

Church office: t 01592 201723 e: liz_steedman@hotmail.com

For further details see our website w: bennochtyparishchurch.org.uk

Minister: Rev. Robin McAlpine, t: 01592 643518

e: robinmcalpine@blueyonder.co.uk

Bennochty is part of the Church of Scotland. For further details see www.churchofscotland.org.uk

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