



Celebrations of

Baptism & Thanksgiving

Bloomfield Presbyterian Church

'To know Jesus ...'

As a church family at Bloomfield
Presbyterian, our desire is ...

'To know Jesus and share His love'

'Sharing His Love' means that we are committed to welcoming everyone into church, including children. Once, when some parents brought their children to Jesus, His disciples scolded the parents for bothering Him.

In response, Jesus said:

"Let the children come to me. Don't stop them! For the Kingdom of God belongs to those who are like these little children." Luke 18:16

Children were special in Jesus' eyes; their simple trust and faith were essential characteristics of those who belonged to the Kingdom of God. In the same way, we also believe that children are special, and we want to share your joy in the birth of your baby. We have two different types of celebration to mark such a happy occasion.

Celebration of Thanksgiving

We would love to have your family and friends at Bloomfield for a very special Sunday morning service. You will be invited to stand at the front of the church with your child, and with your permission, we will publically give thanks to God for his/her birth. We will pray for your baby's development and welfare and offer you the help and support of the congregation in the important task of nurturing your child. Also, we'll pray that he/she comes to know and love Jesus, and be baptized.

In the years ahead, we very much hope that you and your family will feel right at home as part of the wider church family in Bloomfield; there are lots of opportunities to get involved. We meet every Sunday morning at 11.00 am for worship; we'll even take the kids off your hands for a while, with a crèche for babies and infants, and a dedicated 'Kidzone' programme for the older children. 'Parent and Toddlers' meet at 10.00 am every Wednesday morning, and 'Dads and Tots' meet over bacon butties on the second Saturday of each month at 10.00 am.

Sacrament of Baptism

Baptism is a 'sacrament' (or 'sacred ceremony') of the church, involving the symbolic use of water. The other sacrament of the church is Communion or the 'Lord's Supper', which makes use of different symbols - bread and wine - to help us remember the sacrifice Jesus made for us at the cross.

For some parents, they will want to go beyond the Service of Thanksgiving, and instead take part in the Sacrament of Baptism.

Although the Sacrament of Baptism includes all the same components as the Service of Thanksgiving, it also requires more from parents. In preparation for the baptism of your child, you will be invited to attend some preparation classes led by the minister.

During the Baptism service, the parents are asked to respond to two questions.

Sacrament of Baptism

The first question is:

“Do you confess your faith in God as your Heavenly Father; in Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord, and in the Holy Spirit as the purifier of your lives?”

This question is simply asking, ‘Are you a committed Christian?’ In fact, it is the very same question we ask of those who want to become full members of our church.

The second question is:

“Do you promise, depending upon the grace of God, to teach this little one the truths and duties of the Christian faith, and by prayer and example bring him/her up in the life and worship of Christ’s church?”

This question is really asking if you are willing to pass on your faith in the Lord Jesus to your children.

Sacrament of Baptism

In other words, are you willing to play an active part in the church and live as a follower of Jesus, both at home and in the world? The congregation will then make a commitment in promising to do all they can for you and your family by way of prayerful and practical support.

Before your child can be baptized, the minister makes sure that parents are comfortable with the serious promises about to be made and helps clarify any issues or questions.

Contact

If you would like to talk about arranging a Celebration of Thanksgiving or the Sacrament of Baptism, please contact either:

Rev Frank Sellar (028 9065 3322)
or the Church Office (028 9047 1103)

This brochure should be used in conjunction with the Presbyterian Church in Ireland's Board of Christian Training leaflet entitled 'Baptism of Children'.

