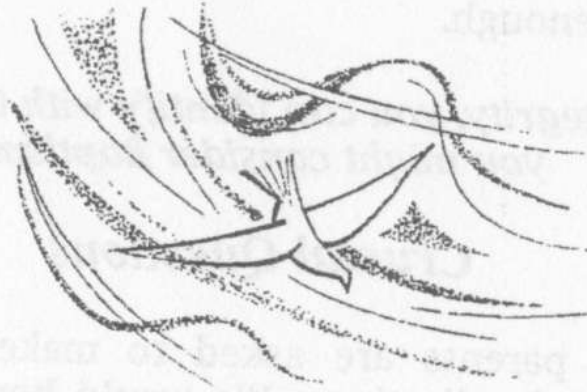


**Trinity Church**  
**Methodist & United Reformed**  
**CHEADLE**

***Baptism or Thanksgiving For the Birth of a Child***



***Crucial Questions***

In keeping with Methodist and United Reformed Church practice, Trinity Church offers two alternatives for you and your child. To help you decide which is most appropriate for you it is important to ask why you have made your request.

There are many reasons why parents consider coming to church after the birth of a child. A fuller outline is given in the leaflet "*thinking about ... BAPTISM*".

Do some of these reasons apply to you?

- I want to celebrate the birth of my child in church
- I want to gather together family and friends to celebrate with me
- I want to commit myself to the task of bringing up my child
- In all honesty I do not intend coming to church on a regular basis and
- I would not want to make binding promises in church which implied more than I intend

*(This is a particular challenge to those who have not returned to church since the last time they made baptismal promises to do so!)*

***If so, the Service of Thanksgiving for the Birth of a Child  
is probably the most appropriate and honest service for you.***

Or:

- I want to commit myself to bringing up my child in the Christian faith
- I acknowledge that to do so I need to be a part of the *weekly worship of the church*
- I want a church celebration of the beginning of a journey of faith for my child so that s/he may be encouraged to profess a personal faith when old enough.

*If, with integrity, you can identify with these reasons  
you might consider Baptism.*

### **Crucial Questions**

At both services, parents are asked to make promises. They are promises that have implications. We would hope that those parents who opt for Baptism are continuing - or at best beginning- a commitment to the life and worship of the Church. You might like to see examples of the two alternative sets of promises:

#### **At Baptism .....**

Parents are asked to answer "I do" to questions such as these:

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

*Do you promise, trusting in God's grace,  
that by prayer and example you will teach (name)  
the faith of the gospel and bring her/him up  
in the worship and life of the Church?*

Although these questions will be asked within the service in the presence of a congregation, your promises are made to God, and it is to God that you are responsible in the days ahead.

#### **At a Service of Thanksgiving for the Birth of a Child ... ..**

Those who are not members of the Church are invited to answer "We do" to a question like this:

*Do you promise, by God's grace, so to live that your child  
will be surrounded by love and goodness?*

Instead of Baptism in water, your child will be taken into the Minister's arms for a prayer of blessing. By choosing this service you **leave open the choice** for your child to be baptised later in life, as an expression of their own faith. Some "children" wait until they are 80 to do this but are as welcome then as they are now.

### *The Choice is Yours!*

It is our hope that you will take seriously the questions and promises that are involved in your choice of either Baptism or Thanksgiving. We do not prescribe conditions for your choice but have had many experiences where Baptismal promises are not followed up by committed involvement with the life of the Church. We hope that as you make this decision you will think carefully and act with honesty and integrity.

### *When?*

Both Baptism and thanksgiving take place within a Sunday service at Trinity Church.

Our weekly services are at 10.30 a.m. and 6.30 p.m. and the majority of parents opt for Morning Worship. Children and young people are in church for roughly 15 minutes and leave the congregation for Junior Church ("Sunday School") activities after the second hymn. Baptisms and acts of Thanksgiving take place within this first part of the service. After the children leave the service continues with hymns, Bible readings, prayers and a sermon. Junior Church and worship will end at the same time to enable parents to be reunited with their children!

On some occasions across the year the morning service is an **All Age Service** and is attended by those aged between 0 and 100. It is a more informal service which takes into account the varied needs of a wide age range.

**Very occasionally**, if the demand for Baptism and Thanksgiving is greater than we can accommodate within the regular worship times, an additional service may be arranged at 9.30 a.m. at which representatives of the regular worshipping congregation will be present to make the promises on behalf of the Church.

At all morning services there is a crèche so that parents may leave babies and under-3s in a place where they will be cared for and



entertained while you attend worship. If you and baby are happy and settled in worship you are not forced to take her/him into the crèche!

We look forward to sharing with you in the journey of faith ...  
a journey that extends to the end of each of our lives!

### *The Chance to Meet*

All those making enquiries about the possibility of Baptism or Thanksgiving will be asked to meet with the Minister at the next monthly meeting for such arrangements. (The covering letter gives details of date and time for this.) The meeting will also be an opportunity to meet our Children & Young Families Worker and a member of Church Council who will serve as the person to welcome you and your party on the day of your child's baptism/dedication.

If in the meantime you have any further questions please get in touch.

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