

# Recognising and celebrating the birth of your baby



*The*  
United  
Reformed  
Church



# Congratulations!

## Celebrating the birth of your child in the United Reformed Church

All life is a gift from God and it is natural to want to give thanks for this gift of your baby. Even if your little one is keeping you up through the night!

This leaflet will help you to plan your celebration, knowing that you're dealing with feeding, changing nappies, sleeping, changing more nappies, washing, bathing and even more feeding and nappies, either as a parent for the first time or as one who's done this before.

The United Reformed Church (URC) is here for you whether you're married, not married, living together, a single parent, a married single parent, divorced, engaged to be married ... if you want to give thanks for the birth of your child in a Christian church, then read on to see how your local URC can help.

You're a parent! Know that our prayers are always with you, as is the love and support of God.

As you read through this leaflet, remember to take a moment for yourself, to have a moment of calm, to pray and to have a conversation with God.



The United Reformed Church (URC) offers three different types of service, depending on how you want to celebrate the birth of your baby.

## **Baptism**

Baptism is a service in which one or both parents, who declare themselves to be Christian, bring their child to worship on Sunday to be anointed with water and welcomed into the life of the Church.

This is based on the parents' promise to bring the child up in a Christian home and within the life of the Church.

The local congregation makes a promise to support the parent/s to care for the child, and to share the journey of faith together. All look forward to the time when the child will make their own public declaration of faith and be confirmed.

## **Thanksgiving Dedication**

A Thanksgiving Dedication is an alternative service, also held during a Sunday worship service. This service offers parents who do not wish to have their children baptised, the chance to give thanks to God for the birth of their child, to dedicate themselves to providing a Christian home life and to bring the child up within the family of the Church.

As with Baptism, the congregation promises to support the parents to care for the child and the minister prays for God's blessing upon their child.





The whole congregation share in the journey of faith together and look forward to the day when the child responds to God's love in faith and asks to be baptised and make his/her own declaration of faith in church.

## **Thanksgiving Blessing**

This is a service for parents who do not share regularly in the life of the local church, but who would like to celebrate the birth of their child in an act of worship.

With the whole church gathered, the parent/s and congregation give thanks for the birth of the child and the minister asks for God's blessing on the child.



The congregation promises to provide a Christian example and teaching about God’s love shown in Christ whenever the child and their family participate in the life of the church.

As with the Thanksgiving Dedication service, the Thanksgiving Blessing service provides the child with the opportunity to make their own response of faith when they are older.

The Minister of the church or one of its Elders (a group of people who help with the spiritual oversight and wellbeing of the church) will be delighted to discuss these options with you, to help you decide which URC celebration is best for you and your child.

We look forward to talking to you.



[www.urc.org.uk](http://www.urc.org.uk) 



**'We worship God, ever present in the Holy Spirit;  
who brings this Gospel to fruition, assures us of  
forgiveness, strengthens us to do God's will,  
and makes us sisters and brothers of Jesus,  
sons and daughters of God.'**

*The United Reformed Church Basis of Union*

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