Baptism

Leeds
South & West
Methodist Circuit

Baptism

It is the policy of the Methodist Church to baptise all who come seeking baptism, trusting in the love of God and in the power of the Holy Spirit. Baptism however is a very serious undertaking and if you are thinking about requesting baptism either for yourself or for your child please take time to consider the following.

Trusting in God's Love

In the service of baptism we celebrate the love that God has for the one being baptised and seek God's blessing upon their life. This means firstly that Baptism is dependent solely on the love of God. Baptism is not dependent on our knowledge or how good, or otherwise, we perceive ourselves to be.

The service therefore assumes that those coming for baptism believe in God, trust in God's love, and are seriously committed to working out this belief in their lives. You will be asked the following questions in the service.

- **"Do you turn away from evil and all that denies God?"**
- **"Do you turn to God, trusting in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, and in the Holy Spirit as Helper and Guide?"**

Please think carefully about these questions. If you do not understand them please talk about them with your minister. If however you simply do not believe or cannot answer them with integrity please consider carefully whether Baptism is the right option for you.

Please note that it is not usually considered appropriate to seek baptism as a way of getting a child into a school with a religious basis.

Commitment to God

While baptism celebrates God's love for us, we recognise that we are only able to grasp the nature of this love as we are rooted in the Christian story and surrounded by a Christian community. Therefore in response to God's gift of love we are asked to make some very serious and profound promises and commitments. These promises are threefold and linked.

- **"Will you love your child, committing yourself to care for him/her in body, mind and spirit?"**
- **"Will you, therefore, ensure that they are nurtured in the faith and life of a Christian community?"**
- **"Will you set before them a Christian example that through your prayers, words and deeds they may learn the way of Christ?"**

Please take time to think through these promises carefully. Such promises are made before God just like wedding vows and are just as serious. If you are an adult you will be asked to make similar commitments.

If you have no serious intention of coming to Church or encouraging your child to come to junior church, then again, please consider if baptism is the right choice for you.

Baptism is a very joyous and wonderful thing, but it is also a very serious thing. To make these promises carelessly or without any serious intention to fulfil them is to disrespect God and the Church.

Godparents

There is no official limit to the number of Godparents a child may be given. However it is usually between two or four people. The Godparents promise to support the parents in the Christian upbringing

of their child. Therefore whilst it is preferable it is not necessary that the Godparents express a Christian faith. It is necessary however that they understand the nature and seriousness of the promises being made by the parents. To be a Godparent is not an honorary title but a real and serious responsibility. Please think carefully about the choice of Godparents you make.

It is also important to note that the appointment of Godparents is not a legal act. If you wish to appoint a Guardian for your child then this must be done separately through your solicitor.

Dedication

Whilst the Methodist Church affirms the importance of infant baptism it recognises that some Christian parents will seek a service of dedication rather than baptism. In such cases the Church is happy to offer a short service of dedication after appropriate consultation with the minister.

Contact

If you wish to be baptised or to have your baby baptised please contact the minister of the Church who will make arrangements with you.

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