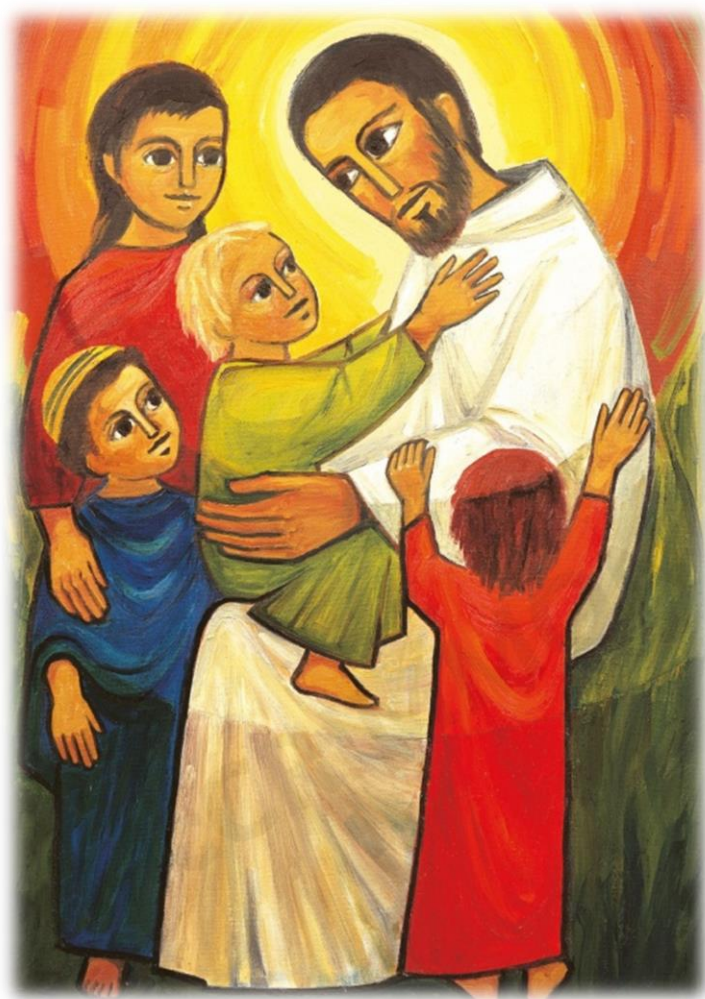


The Parish Church of St Lawrence Hatfield

Thanksgiving



For the gift of a child

An introduction to today's service.

The birth or adoption of a child is a cause for celebration.

Many people are overcome by a sense of awe at the creation of new life and want to express their thanks to God.

This service provides an opportunity for parents and families to give thanks for the birth or adoption of a child and to pray for family life.

It may be a private celebration at home or in hospital, or it may be a public celebration in church, sometimes with a number of children.

This service is not the same as Baptism (sometimes called Christening), which is the sacrament of initiation into membership of the Church, the Body of Christ.

If you are interested in exploring the Christian faith, or finding out more about preparation for Baptism, ask the minister taking this service.

Welcome

We are here today to give thanks for this child, with their family and friends, and to support their parents in their responsibilities with prayer and love.

God became one of us in Jesus, and understands all that surrounds the arrival and upbringing of children.

It is God's purpose that children should know love within the stability of their home, grow in faith, and come at last to the eternal city where his love reigns supreme.

Opening Prayer

Loving God,
you hold all things in life
and call us into your kingdom of peace;
help us to walk the path of your truth
and fill our lives with gratitude and faith,
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Reading & Talk

Thanksgiving & Blessing

The parents & supporting friends are invited to stand at the front.

Do you receive these children as a gift from God?

We do.

Do you wish to give thanks to God and seek his blessing?

We do.

God our creator,

we thank you for the wonder of new life

and for the mystery of human love.

We thank you for all whose support and skill

surround and sustain the beginning of life.

We thank you that we are known to you by name

and loved by you from all eternity.

We thank you for Jesus Christ,

who has opened to us the way of love.

We praise you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Blessed be God for ever.

What name have you given this child?

A parent or supporting friend replies

His/her name is N.

As Jesus took children in his arms and blessed them,
so now we ask God's blessing on *N*.

Heavenly Father, we praise you for his/her birth;
surround *him/her* with your blessing
that *he/she* may know your love,
be protected from evil,
and know your goodness all *his/her* days.

We say together

**May they learn to love all that is true,
grow in wisdom and strength
and, in due time, come through faith
to the fullness of your grace;
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.**

The minister prays for the parents

May God the Father of all bless *these parents*
and give *them* grace to love and care for *their children*.
May God give *them* wisdom, patience and faith,
help *them* to provide for the *children's* needs
and, by their example,
reveal the love and truth that are in Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Giving of the Gospel

A copy of a Gospel is presented

Receive this book.

It is the good news of God's love.

Take it as your guide.

The minister addresses the supporting friends

Will you do all that you can to help and support *N* and *N*
in the bringing up of *N*?

With the help of God, we will.

The minister addresses the wider family and friends

Will you do all that you can to help and support this *family*?

With the help of God, we will.

Parents & Supportive Friends are invited to return to their seats.

Prayers

Jesus taught us to call God our Father, and so in faith and trust we say

**Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation
but deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and for ever.
Amen.**

Ending

The Lord bless you and watch over you,
the Lord make his face shine upon you
and be gracious to you,
the Lord look kindly on you and give you peace;
and the blessing of God almighty,
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,
be among you and remain with you always.
Amen.

Our service is now over, please feel free to use the space to take photo's

*If anything from today has struck a chord with you,
the Clergy would be very happy to meet and carry on the conversation.*

Common Worship: Christian Initiation,
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