

Canning Vale Anglican Church
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Dear Parent(s)

Becoming a dad was one of the most amazing things that happened to me. It changed me in a way I never could have imagined, and I know other people who have had a similar experience.

It's not surprising that following such an amazing event people start thinking about God, I know my wife and I did. So thank you for connecting with us at this exciting time of your life.

There are a couple of options for you, so please look through the two different services that accompany this letter. One is a service of baptism and the other is a service of thanksgiving for your child or children. As you can see, in the service of thanksgiving for a child, the emphasis is on thanks to God for your child or children and it doesn't require any vows or promises from you or from us. The thanksgiving service also requires very little preparation so can happen on any normal Sunday. The service of baptism, on the other hand, contains vows and promises that you will need to make, and that we as a church will likewise need to make in relation to your child or children.

For people who decide to baptise their kids, it's often the first chance they've had in a long time to check out God and church. So we normally take about three months before the baptism to give you the opportunity to work through some of your questions about God, as well as to work through the details of the baptism itself. This also allows you the time to connect with the church to double check and make sure you want church to be a part of your own family life.

I would be more than happy to meet up with you to talk about baptism or a thanksgiving service and hope you feel free to join us at one of our Sunday gatherings (please check our website for details) to connect with me there. If this isn't possible, you can call me on 0427 118 148 so we can arrange another time to meet.

Kind regards and God's blessings on your lives,

Nicholas Lockwood
Priest

Baptism

Baptism is the gift of our Lord Jesus Christ.

When he had risen from the dead, he commanded his followers to go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

We have come together today to obey that command.

Baptism with water signifies the cleansing from sin that Jesus' death makes possible, and the new life that God gives us through the Holy Spirit.

In baptism, the promises of God are visibly signed and sealed for us. We are joined to Christ, and made members of his body, the Church universal.

Children are baptised in response to God's all-embracing love. Parents and godparents who have responded to that love come now to bring their children for baptism. Before this congregation they must express their own trust and commitment to the promises of God, and their intention to bring up their children in the faith and practice of the Church. In due time these children should make their own response to God, and be prepared for confirmation.

In light of this, will you make the following vows:

Will you accept the responsibilities placed upon you in bringing *this child* for baptism?

I will

Are you willing to answer on behalf of *this child*?

I am

By your own prayers and example, by your friendship and love, will you encourage *this child* in the life and faith of the Christian community?

I will, with God's help.

Before God and this congregation, you must affirm that you turn to Christ and reject all that is evil:

Do you turn to Christ?

I turn to Christ.

Do you repent of your sins?

I repent of my sins.

Do you reject selfish living, and all that is false and unjust?

I reject them all.

Do you renounce Satan and all evil?

I renounce all that is evil.

Almighty God deliver you from the powers of darkness, and lead you into the light of Christ to his everlasting kingdom. **Amen.**

Will you (the one/s answering on behalf of this child) each, by God's grace, strive to live as a disciple of Christ, loving God with your whole heart, and your neighbour as yourself, until your life's end?

I will, with God's help.

You (the congregation gathered) have heard *these our brothers and sisters* respond to Christ. Will you support *them* in this calling?

We (the congregation) will.

The baptism with water then follows:

Pour out your Holy Spirit in blessing and sanctify this water so that those who are baptised in it may be one with Christ in his death and resurrection. May they die to sin, rise to newness of life, and continue for ever in Jesus Christ our Lord through whom we give you praise and honour in the unity of the Spirit, now and for ever. **Amen.**

I now ask you (the parents and godparents) to affirm as yours the faith of the Church.

Do you believe in God the Father?

**I believe in God, the Father almighty,
creator of heaven and earth.**

Do you believe in God the Son?

**I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord,
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
he descended to the dead.
On the third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and is seated at the right hand of the Father
from there he will come to judge
the living and the dead.**

Do you believe in God the Holy Spirit?

**I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.**

This is the faith of the Church

This is our faith:

We believe in one God:

Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Name, I baptise you in the name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

Name, I sign you with the sign of the cross to show that you are marked as
Christ's own for ever.

Live as a disciple of Christ:
fight the good fight,
finish the race,
keep the faith.

**Confess Christ Crucified,
proclaim his resurrection
look for his coming in glory.**

God has brought you out of darkness
into his marvelous light.

**Shine as a light in the world
to the glory of God the Father.**

God has called you into his Church.

**We therefore receive and welcome you
as a member with us of the body of Christ,
as a child of the one heavenly Father,
and as an inheritor of the kingdom of God.**

Thanksgiving for a Child

We have come together to celebrate God's gift of a child.

Let us thank God for his goodness

and pray for *the parents names* in *their* role as parent/s

Gracious God,

giver of life,

we praise you for the wonder of creation,

for the privilege of parenthood,

and for the gift of this child.

Thank you for your goodness and love to us;

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The family hand the child to the minister who says

What name have you given this child?

The parents respond

We have named *her/him name(s)*

The minister may invite the parent(s) and others to lay their hands on the child.

The minister prays

Name(s), may God be gracious to you and bless you.

May the Lord lead you to know and love him,

experiencing the fullness of life

that is in Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

The minister, after handing back the child, prays for the child's parent(s)

God our Father, thank you for blessing *name(s)*

with the gift of a *daughter/son*.

Give them wisdom, love and patience

in their relationship with each other

and with their children.

Guide them with your word

in the fellowship of your Church

and fill them with your Holy Spirit,

so that they may serve you

and give you praise and honour;

through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

The parents may say

Loving God,

thank you for entrusting *name(s)* to *our* care.

Give *us* calm strength and patient wisdom,

as *we* teach and lead *her/him* in your way.

May *s/he* always be sure of *our* love

and grow up to know your love;
trusting in Jesus Christ your Son. **Amen.**

Further prayers may be used

The minister concludes the prayers, saying

Let us join together in the prayer that Jesus gave us.

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.,

Save us from the time of trial

and deliver us from evil.

For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours

now and for ever. Amen.

The minister says

May the Lord bless you and keep you.

May the Lord make his face shine on you

and be gracious to you.

May the Lord look upon you with favour

and grant you peace. **Amen.**