**Baptism @ CCB**

**Infant Baptism**

This is an opportunity for believing parents, – committed Christians, – to exercise faith that in due time their offspring will come to an understanding of Jesus’ message for themselves, and that they as parents will do everything in their power to further this process. They will demonstrate the importance they attach to this step by coming with their children to church, by living in the light of the Bible’s message, and by praying with them as they grow up.

The service unfolds this in the following way:

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**“Parents and godparents, the children whom you have brought for baptism depend chiefly on you for the help and encouragement they need. Are you willing to give it to them by your prayer, by your example, and by your teaching?”**

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Parents and godparents: “I am willing.”

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In addition the service requires a full confession of faith, a belief in God Father Son and Holy Spirit, and a recognition of key aspects of Christian revelation: God as Creator, the historic fall of mankind and the entrance of sin into the world, and the redemption brought about at great cost by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

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Infant baptism is a special occasion and takes place within the public worshipping life of the congregation.

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God’s blessing upon babies: thanksgiving for the birth of a child and infant baptism.

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The birth of a child is a wonderful moment for any parent and often there is an instinctive sense of the given-ness of life and a desire to express gratitude to God at the arrival of a precious new life within the family. Psalm 139 puts this so well:

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**“For you created my inmost being;**

**You knit me together in my mother’s womb.**

**I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made;**

**Your works are wonderful.”**

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**Thanksgiving for the birth of a child.**

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The Church of England provides a beautiful opportunity to give thanks in the service of thanksgiving for the birth of a child. The prayers that form the heart of this service are the following:

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God our Father, maker of all that is living,

we praise you for the wonder and joy of creation.

We thank you from our hearts for the life of this child,

for a safe delivery and for the privilege of parenthood.

Accept our thanks and praise through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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The parents pray:

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God our Father,

in giving us this child you have shown us your love.

Help us to be trustworthy parents.

Make us patient and understanding

that our child may always be sure of our love

and grow up to be happy and responsible;

through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

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No personal promises are made by parents in this service, and it fits in well with Jesus’ own desire to bless children. He was indignant with his disciples for barring the approach of little children to him.

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**‘Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.’ And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them.’**

Mark 10 vv.14-16.

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**Adult Baptism**

Over the years we have seen many baptised who have answered promises for themselves, and have requested baptism as a sign that they have accepted Jesus Christ and are living in the light of the benefits won for them by Jesus at the cross.

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These are always moving and joyful occasions. They provide opportunity for open testimony before the church, family and friends. In New Testament terms it is the funeral service for a previous life lived without reference to God, without hope, without God’s grace and without forgiveness. Emerging from the water becomes a powerful representation of being raised up to live a new life in the power of God’s Holy Spirit.

Romans 6 verse 4 explains this:

**“We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.”**

Baptisms usually take place in our own baptism pool…

**Reaffirmation of Baptismal Vows by means of Immersion.**

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There are times when God profoundly changes lives and it seems right to mark this in a particular way. Infant baptism may have taken place, but there is now a fresh opportunity to repeat and declare baptismal vows with joy and conviction.

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Effectively this is the reaffirmation of vows, and immersion underlines the profound nature of becoming a member of the family of God, and God’s child by adoption and grace.

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As a church we are in full agreement with this practice and welcome enquiries to this end.

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**The Church of England does not believe in baptismal regeneration**, a false assumption that because a baby is baptised he or she automatically becomes a child of God. In fact many rest on a false assurance that they are right with God because they were baptised as a child. Baptism is only an outward sign of an inner change that God alone can bring about supernaturally through Jesus by his Holy Spirit. The Bible calls this regeneration, which is made evident when there is conversion and a yielding of the life to Jesus Christ.

**Confirmation**

Every year we also give opportunity for those who would like to be confirmed into the Church of England.

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