

Other Activities

At ABC we also provide a number of other regular activities for children, young people and families.

Sundays– 10:30am Morning service with a crèche, a children's club and a youth group.

Mon/Wed/Fri– 9am to 12pm Café Connect. A drop-in café and toddler group.

Fridays– 5:30pm Friday Club for Infant and Junior Age Children

Fridays– 7:30pm Youth Café for those in Secondary School

Saturdays (1st of the month)- 10am Fun Club for Infant and Junior Age Children.



Further Information

For further information on thanksgiving, dedication or baptismal services, or any other issue, please contact the Rev Stuart Filby or Clive Bennett (the Church Secretary) on 01243 268020 and we would only be too happy to help.

For further information on any of our other regular activities for children, young people and families, please contact Ben Lander (Children, Youth and Community Worker) on 07445 534080 or benlander81@gmail.com

Aldwick Baptist Church

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Thanksgiving for a Child



A Bit of Background

Aldwick Baptist Church is a family church open to people of all ages and walks of life. As a Church we believe it is important to help children and adults alike to grow in faith, both growing in the discovery of faith, and in the experience of faith.

In the Bible, children are regarded as a blessing from God. God gave the command in the Garden of Eden to Adam and Eve, 'Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it' (Genesis 1:28). Children were seen as a gift and a heritage from the Lord (Psalm 127:3-5) and daughters gave birth to and nurtured the next generation (Psalm 1:8 and Ruth 4:11-12 for example).

It was the duty of parents to pass on their faith and its ways to the next generation, and this was done by a process of story-telling and instruction (Deuteronomy 6:4-9). Children were regarded in Israel as belonging to the covenant people by virtue of their birth into the nation. In the New Testament, the promise of salvation is clearly understood to be inclusive of all nations and people, not just Israel. It is 'for you, for your children, and for all who are far away, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to him' (Acts 2:39). The church is therefore open to all people, young and old, and the benefits of God's salvation are offered to all, not least to children.

Welcoming Children

Baptist churches welcome children into the community by means of special services known as 'thanksgiving' or 'dedication' services. The latter is where the church and the parents dedicate themselves to help bring up the child in a safe and nurturing environment before God, whereas the former recognises the wonder of the gift of children and is an opportunity to give thanks to God.

The presentation of children is based on the story of Jesus where He said "Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them (Mark 10:13-16).

Infant presentation does not claim to make the child a Christian. But the service celebrates the fact that children belong within and are embraced by a wider community. It provides an opportunity to publicly express something of the wonder and mystery of the birth of a child and to give thanks.

Aldwick Baptist Church is sensitive to the varying circumstances in which people come, whether as single parents, cohabiting couples, or those of, as yet, uncertain faith. We are more than willing to adapt it so that it fits your particular situation in the belief that the child's welfare and blessing before God is the most important thing. We will also ensure that no-one is asked to make promises that they are unable or unwilling to fulfil.

Why Not Baptism?

Infant baptism is sometimes justified on the basis that the children should be brought to Jesus for baptism and not hindered, as in Mark 10:13-16. But when the children were brought on this occasion Jesus did not baptise them, but blessed them, and this was enough.

We believe that only the individual can make the decision to become a disciple of Jesus for themselves, and the New Testament teaches that we do not become members of God's people through birth but through new birth (John 3:3). The occasion for baptism should not therefore be when we are born but when we are born again as believers in Christ and choose to follow Him and own His name.

However, it is a real privilege for children to be in the Christian community: the community has the blessing of young lives growing in wisdom and stature (Luke 2:52) and children have the benefit of being surrounded by a worshipping community, hearing of Christ and being in an atmosphere of faith and encouragement.

(wording adapted from the BUGB publication 'Children in the Church' © 2009).

