

The Church of Scotland
Barry with Carnoustie



Celebrating Children in our Church

Children are a precious gift to our families—
and to the family of the Church.

This leaflet describes the services we offer to
welcome and celebrate their arrival.

Barry Parish Church is a Registered Scottish charity
registered as Barry Parish Church of Scotland
Charity Number: SC002545

Carnoustie Church is a Registered Scottish charity
registered as Carnoustie Church of Scotland
Charity Number: SC015146

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**“Let the little children come to me,
and do not hinder them,
for the Kingdom of heaven
belongs to such as these.”**

Mark 10: 14

Welcome



My name is Mike Goss, and I am the minister of Barry linked with Carnoustie. We have two churches, one at Barry right on the sharp bend North of east end of the bypass, and one at Carnoustie on Dundee Street opposite Linksfield Avenue.

New Arrivals

Many people want to mark the birth of their child by a special service in Church. They want to express their gratitude for the life of their child, and they want to ask for some kind of blessing on the new life. Christian parents want to bring their child into the life of the Church, to enjoy the nurture and fellowship they already enjoy. Such a service is often called '**Christening**', although this is not a term we use in the Church of Scotland.

In Barry with Carnoustie we have two kinds of service for new babies. One is called **Baptism**, and the other is called **Thanksgiving**. Both kinds of service take place during the normal Sunday morning worship of the Church; both of them involve naming the child, asking God's blessing, and the parents and congregation making promises to God.

However, they are different services, and this note is designed to help you understand what is involved in each and what is the best service for your family.



SOME NOTES ON THE SERVICES

Please, **no cameras or videos**. This is a service of worship, not a film set, and we ask you to respect this. If you would like photographs, then 'posed' photographs can be taken after the service, which will allow much better angles for the cameras. The use of video cameras has difficulties because of copyright on the recording of hymns and songs, and the organist's fees.

Some of your family and friends may want to bring **children**—they are very welcome! Some advance notice of numbers will help the Sunday School with preparation, but younger children may want to stay with their parents. They may find it helpful to bring colouring paper and pens or some books to keep them amused during the longer spoken parts of the service. There is a **creche** and a **WC** in the Church buildings.

Please make sure that you and your child, along with any godparents, arrive around 15 minutes before the service time to help make sure we all know what is happening when. The wider family and friends should arrive 5 minutes before the service time as the services start promptly.

Service Times during most of 2008:

Barry: Service starts at **9.30 am**

Carnoustie: Service starts at **11 am**

The services usually last just over an hour.

Evening services:

St Stephen's Chapel, Carnoustie Church starts at **6.30 pm**

During July:

One service only in **Barry** at **10 am**

During August:

One service only in **Carnoustie** at **10 am**

**Special services for Remembrance,
Christmas and Communion**

THE VOWS OF BAPTISM

To the Parents:

1. Do you present these children to be baptised, earnestly desiring that they may be grafted into Christ as members of His Body, the Church?
2. Do you believe in one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit; and do you confess Jesus Christ as your Saviour and Lord?
3. Do you promise, depending on the grace of God, to teach these children the truths and duties of the Christian faith. and by prayer and example to bring them up in the life and worship of the Church?

To the Congregation:

Do you as a congregation accept the solemn obligation this sacrament lays on the people of God's promising to be faithful to your calling as members of the Church of Jesus Christ, so that these children, and all other children among you, may grow up in the knowledge and love of Christ?

THE VOWS OF THANKSGIVING

To the Parents:

1. Do you promise to bring your children up with love and understanding, showing them discipline where necessary, and teaching them to take their place in society?
2. Do you agree within the fellowship of this Church to encourage your children to seek after God, and to enable them to join us in worship as they grew in understanding?

To the Congregation:

Do you as a congregation accept the responsibility to nurture these children in the Christian faith as far as you are able, promising to give them all the care and love they should expect from the family of God, and continuing to pray for their safety and growth?

Some common Misconceptions

There are many strange ideas about Baptism going around. Some people think that it's not 'lucky' for a child not to be baptised - but that's not true. The Christian Church does not believe in luck, because we believe in God; so luck has nothing to do with Christian Baptism.

Some people think that, if a child dies without being baptised he or she won't go to heaven - but that's not true either. Baptism on its own makes no difference as to whether we go to heaven or not. God loves all children, and will do what is right for every single one, whether or not they have been baptised.

Some people think that a child won't 'prosper' , or stay healthy, if the child isn't baptised - that's not true as well. Baptised children fall ill or worse just as often as those not baptised: God does not take special care of a child just because he or she has had some water sprinkled on their heads.

MEMBERSHIP

Not everyone who brings their children to the Church can make the promises of Baptism. These are promises to bring your children up in a living Christian faith, teaching them to believe and setting an example by your own Christian life. You will not be able to do this unless you yourself are a committed Christian, and are involved in the Church through membership.

If you want to find out more about membership of the Church, you are welcome to come along to Church

Membership classes. We call these **Start Groups**, because they are aimed at helping you to explore Christian faith and commitment. If you decide at the end that you don't want to take things any further in this direction at that time, then you're free not to join the Church, or to wait until a later time before coming to a decision.



BAPTISM

Baptism is a sign and a seal. As a sign it points to the commitment of God to his people and their children, and as a seal it confirms the commitment of Christians and their children to God. Its is made in the Name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, reminding us that it is the Christian God, and no other, who is involved in this Christian act.

There are no commands in the Bible to baptise infants, although it seems likely that some children were baptised in New Testament days. Instead, Baptism was first offered to adults, to those who became new Christians. It marked their faith in God, and what God has done for them through Jesus Christ. At that time, if the head of the house became a Christian, the whole family was baptised. As Christian families grew up in the faith, their children were baptised in turn, marking God's faithfulness to the next generation.

The water of Baptism points to the washing away of our sin - the salvation that Jesus offers each one of us, and that we receive through faith. Baptism itself is a mark of joining the church, of being part of the people of faith. Baptism is extended to the children of believers in anticipation of their own faith - it is worthless without a response from the children themselves, in fulness of time.

As a result, there are vows to be taken. They are vows of faith and commitment to God and His Church, vows which are based on the vows we take on becoming members of the Church. This calls for a lot of commitment - through support is also promised, because the Church congregation also makes a promise.



THANKSGIVING

Many people choose not to have their children baptised, or else feel they cannot commit themselves to the Christian faith. But this does not mean that they or their children are not welcome in Church.



Just as Jesus blessed children without baptising them, so we can bring them into the Church and ask God's blessing on them. In Baptism we talk about salvation, the forgiveness of sins, and membership of the Church. In Thanksgiving we talk about God's blessing and grace to all.

There are similarities between Baptism and Thanksgiving. The children are introduced to the congregation. We pray for them, their parents, and their homes. The children are named, and vows are made. But water is not used in the latter, and the vows are different. If the child wishes to join a Church in the future, then he or she will have to be baptised at that time. Thanksgiving itself is perfectly proper. It isn't a 'second-rate' option, but a real alternative for those who cannot yet take vows of Baptism honestly. If you decide to bring your child to the Church for Thanksgiving, you will be made welcome.

A NOTE ABOUT GODPARENTS

In the Church of Scotland, the Godparents are the congregation, which is why there is a vow for the congregation to make during the service. Many families also wish to bring their own Godparents - friends or family members whom they particularly trust. These are welcome to stand with the parents in either service.