

## WE LIVE IN DIFFICULT DAYS ...

I'm sure you'd agree with me when I we say these are difficult times in which we live, especially for our children and young people, who continually find themselves subjected to many unhealthy pressures. They certainly need all the spiritual resources available to them if they are to become the mature, and wholesome, personalities God desires them to be.

We want to urge you, as your child grows older, to make use of the opportunities for them to learn more about the Christian faith through our Sunday School and the many Children & Young Peoples groups we offer. But most importantly, be willing to pray for your child (see the prayer below); pray with your child; worship in Church Sunday by Sunday with your child and encourage your child to know Jesus for themselves and to become an active member of the Christian Church.

If you have any further questions please do not hesitate to contact us. May God's blessing rest upon you, and your family, at this most exciting time.



Revd Paul A. Carr (Team Rector)

## A PRAYER FOR YOUR CHILD

Heavenly Father,  
In your love you have called us to know you,  
Led us to trust you and bound our life with yours.  
Surround our child with your love;  
Protect our child from evil;  
Fill our child with your Holy Spirit;  
Receive us into the family of your Church;  
Walk with us as we seek to follow Jesus  
And help us to grow in the knowledge of your love. **AMEN.**

The Church of England website has more information about the meaning of Baptism.

[www.cofe.anglican.org/lifeevents/baptismconfirm](http://www.cofe.anglican.org/lifeevents/baptismconfirm)



Emmanuel is part of the Billericay and Little Burstead Team Ministry in the Diocese of Chelmsford. We are part of Basildon Deanery and a member of 'Churches Together in Billericay'.



## emmanuelchurchseekstobe

### a praying church

Where individual and corporate prayer is a priority.

### a church of preaching and teaching

Where God's word brings us to a closer relationship with the Lord Jesus, which enables us to be Active Christians able to demonstrate Biblical morals and ethics in our daily lives.

### a church of praise and worship

Where we bring people of all ages into the presence of God (using contemporary and traditional styles) through which the Holy Spirit may flow in His refreshing power.

### a church where God's gifts are given and used

Where the church family of all ages are encouraged and empowered to develop the gifts the Holy Spirit has given them and where we allow Him freedom to do His work.

### a church of compassion concern and care

Where we seek to minister to, and care for, the needs of those in our church and community.

### a committed church

Where meeting together regularly throughout the week, is a priority.

### a family church

Where we are committed to making everyone, from the youngest to the oldest, feel welcome.

### a growing church

Where we are committed to growing:

*Spiritually:* Through maturing in our faith and becoming active disciples of Jesus;

*Numerically:* Through developing new and meaningful relationships to bring others into the church family;

*Financially:* Where we are committed to resourcing the mission and ministry of Emmanuel and the wider church.

### a church with a vision

Where we seek to find new, and more effective, ways of serving God and sharing the love of Jesus in words and actions.

### a church who are outward looking

Where we play an active part in the life and community of Billericay and where we are committed to engaging with the mission of the Christian church, at home and abroad, through active participation and through regular financial support.

### a witnessing church

Where our life and actions reflect the new life we have found in Jesus.

### a church in partnership

Where we recognise our involvement in the worldwide Church

### Jesus' church

Where HE reigns supreme!



## emmanuelchurchbillericay



## thanksgivingandbaptism



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Dear Parents,

May I offer my congratulations to you on becoming a parent. Every child is a very precious and special gift from God and we are delighted to be able to share something of your joy, to encourage you in your parenting and to enable you, and your families, to celebrate the safe arrival of your child through our Thanksgiving and Baptism services. This leaflet offers some suggestions, that you will need to consider, as you make arrangements for one or both of these services.

### **VISITING CHURCH & A HOME VISIT**

After you have attended a couple of our services read through this leaflet myself, or one of my colleagues, will make arrangements to visit you in your home. This will be an opportunity for you to raise any matters you may wish to discuss and help you get to know a little more about how to become part of the church family here at Emmanuel.

### **WHAT IS A THANKSGIVING SERVICE?**

A Thanksgiving Service is a celebration to mark the birth and naming of your child. In this service, we give thanks for your child's new life and commit both you, and your child, to God, asking for his help and blessing in the years to come. This is an opportunity for you and your child to be welcomed into the church family community into which your child is to be baptised.

### **2: HOW DO WE PREPARE FOR A THANKSGIVING SERVICE?**

#### ***a: Come and worship with us on a Sunday.***

In the first instance, we ask you to attend one of our 10.30 am services on a Sunday. A good one to attend would be our All Age Worship or Parade (Uniform Group) services which usually take place on the first Sunday of the month. You will also be able to see the facilities available at Emmanuel and where our Sunday School and other children's work takes place. However, children are welcome at all of our services (please see the 'Bring your children to church' leaflet for more information).

#### ***b: What if we have to work on a Sunday?***

We do understand that some of you may be compelled to work on Sundays through no choice of your own. We are very sympathetic to this - there are many different groups meeting throughout the week which help to meet this need for many of our church members, and we will help you to find the best way for you to be a regular part of our church family (please see our welcome leaflet, visit our website and read our weekly notice sheet).

#### ***c: What paperwork do we need?***

Please ask us for a Thanksgiving application form and, once a date has been agreed, return the reply slip and we'll take care of the rest!

### **3: WHEN CAN THE BAPTISM TAKE PLACE?**

Once you have had a Thanksgiving Service for your child, and you feel as though you are able to make a longer term commitment to attending Emmanuel, we will make arrangements for your child's Baptism service. However, this will include:

#### ***a: Preparation***

Parents are expected (and godparents within reasonable travelling distance are encouraged) to attend our Baptism Preparation Course, which takes place over three evenings. Many parents have found the course to be extremely helpful which enables them to understand the meaning of Baptism for their child as well as for themselves. We look at: Belonging & Believing; A Promise is a Promise; and Symbols of Baptism.

We ask you to attend this course, even if you already have prior knowledge of Baptisms. Not only is it beneficial to have a refresher, it also provides an opportunity to discuss some of the issues through with your godparents. A Baptism leaflet and application form will be given to you around the time of the preparation course and should be completed and returned to myself or the church office.

#### ***b: At what service will the Baptism take place?***

These take place on the first Sunday of the month as part of the 10.30 am All Age Worship/Parade services. It is our practice to Baptise children from two, or more, families within one service.

### **4: IS IT NECESSARY FOR PARENTS & GODPARENTS TO BE BAPTISED?**

Godparents must be Baptised and should be confirmed. They should be men and women of prayer and attend church regularly. Every boy should have at least two godfathers and one godmother. Every girl should have at least two godmothers and one godfather. If any godparents are not Baptised, we will be pleased to discuss this with you.

May we encourage you to consider asking a member of our church family (perhaps someone who you know who attends Emmanuel church; or has been involved on your Baptism preparation course (see 3a), or a Sunday school leader) to be a godparent?

### **Other questions parents often ask ...**

#### **1: WHAT IF I LIVE OUTSIDE OF THE PARISH?**

As a general rule, we can only Baptise children who live within the parish. However, if you live outside the parish boundary, we would need to receive (written) permission from your own parish priest to consider conducting the Baptism at Emmanuel if you do not attend worship with us. Alternatively, worshipping with us for six months makes you eligible to join the Electoral Roll. This wouldn't, however, apply to a Thanksgiving service.

#### **2: IS IT NECESSARY FOR PARENTS TO ATTEND CHURCH?**

It would be very helpful if you were able to do so - for a number of reasons! Firstly, a Dedication Service is about welcoming your child into the family of the church and we believe it is helpful for you to get to know us, and we to know you, and that you have a sense of belonging to the church when these services takes place.

Secondly, coming along will give you an idea of our style of church which will help you decide whether, or not, you'd want your child (and yourselves) to be part of our church family! It will also give you a general 'feel' of the type of service you will be inviting your family and friends along too.

Thirdly, it's always good for us (and for you) to feel as though we know each other in some small way - especially if we're going to be involved in one of the most special days of your life. The only way a relationship can be developed is to see each other on a regular basis.