

GUIDE FOR GODPARENTS AND SPONSORS

Congratulations on being asked to be a Godparent or a sponsor; you are very important people! It means that your friends or relations think you'll be a good example to their child. They trust you to pray for them speak to them about God and encourage them in their Christian faith.

What does being a godparent involve?

You will be expected to attend the child's baptism, where you will make promises to help to bring them up in the Christian faith. Even if you can't attend the service you can still be a Godparent or a Sponsor, please speak with us beforehand.

It's a role that will develop over time, as your godchild grows up and develops his/her own faith.

It feels like a big responsibility . . .

It is. Have a look at the questions you will answer in the baptism service and take some time to think through the commitments you make when you answer them. But don't forget that the Church can support you in encouraging and praying for your godchild.

What happens in the baptism service?

At Holy Trinity Meanwood, Baptisms take place in Church on a Sunday afternoon. One or two members of the congregation will be on hand to help. During the service they will welcome your child and commit to support and pray for the child, parents, godparents and sponsors on behalf of the whole Church family.

When it comes to the baptism itself, the minister asks the parents, godparents and sponsors to stand up to make their promises and later to gather around the font.

During the service, the minister asks you to declare that you intend to do your best as a godparent or sponsor.

Here is an extract from the service:

The minister will say to the parents, godparents and sponsors:

We all wander from God and lose our way:
Christ comes to find us and welcomes us home.
In baptism we respond to his call.

Therefore, I ask:

Do you turn to Christ as Saviour?

I do

Do you trust in Him as Lord?

I do

Remember, if you've any doubts you can always discuss them with us.



I'm not sure I can make these decisions. What if I've not thought much about my faith and don't go to church regularly?

Most people have doubts at some stage, and no one's asking you to be perfect! However, being asked to be a godparent is a good opportunity to think about your own faith.

Godparents should have been baptised themselves, and it's helpful if you have also been confirmed. Baptism or confirmation preparation can help you with your own questions about the Christian faith. It will also help you to support your godchild in developing their own faith. If you have any questions at all, please speak to us or another Christian you know. If you are not baptised, you can still take a full part by being a sponsor.

Does being a godparent mean I'm a legal guardian as well?

No. Your role as godparent is a spiritual one - to encourage and pray for your godchild. Perhaps you will be asked to be a guardian too, but that is separate from being a godparent.

I'm worried about doing the right thing on the day.

The minister will make sure the service goes smoothly and that everyone knows what to do and when.

What should I give as a present?

The most important gifts you can give your godchild are your time, presence and prayers, but you will probably also want to mark the baptism or confirmation by giving a special gift.

Godparents don't have to buy expensive gifts. A simple, meaningful present is a good choice - maybe something to be used at the baptism, or a gift to be kept for later. Here are some suggestions – Bibles, Books of Bible stories, Book of Prayers, a cross, a picture or poster depicting a Christian theme.

Building a relationship with your godchild

You're a godparent. Now what? Both you and your godchild will get far more out of this relationship if you can keep it alive. Children love to get letters, postcards and emails. Why not send a card or small gift on the anniversary of the baptism, to show you care about them and to remind you both of what's special about this relationship.

A prayer for godparents

Lord God, I pray that you will guide and support me in being a godparent/sponsor.

Give me your wisdom and your love. Help me to be a good example of Christian living and keep me mindful of my precious godchild [child's name]. Amen.

A prayer for your godchild

Heavenly Father, thank you for the gift of [child's name] and for all the joy he/she brings us. Be with her/him on her/his Christian journey so she/he may come to know our Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour and friend. Amen.

