

# Thanksgiving for the Gift of a Child ↑

## Introduction ↑

*The minister welcomes the people.*

*A hymn or song may be sung.*

We are here today to give thanks for these children, with their family and friends, and to support their parents in their responsibilities with prayer and love. God became one of us in Jesus, and understands all that surrounds the arrival and upbringing of children. It is God's purpose that children should know love within the stability of their home, grow in faith, and come at last to the eternal city where his love reigns supreme.

*The following may be used*

The works of the Lord are great:

**All** his mercy endures for ever.

Mary gave birth to a child and called him Jesus:

**All** he will save his people from their sins.

He will be called the Prince of Peace:

**All** his kingdom will last for ever.

*The minister says*

Loving God,  
you hold all things in life  
and call us into your kingdom of peace;  
help us to walk the path of your truth  
and fill our lives with gratitude and faith,  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.

**All** Amen.

## Reading(s) and Sermon ↑

*A suitable passage from the Bible is read (see here).*

*A sermon may be preached.*

*A hymn may be sung.*

## Thanksgiving and Blessing ↑

*Where parents wish to recognize the role of supporting friends it may be appropriate for them to stand with the parents at the thanksgiving. One of them may present the children to the minister, and informal words may be said.*

*The minister says*

Do you receive these children as a gift from God?

**We do.**

Do you wish to give thanks to God and seek his blessing?

**We do.**

*The minister says*

God our creator,

we thank you for the wonder of new life

and for the mystery of human love.

We thank you for all whose support and skill

surround and sustain the beginning of life.

We thank you that we are known to you by name

and loved by you from all eternity.

We thank you for Jesus Christ,

who has opened to us the way of love.

We praise you, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**All Blessed be God for ever.**

*The minister may say for each child*

What name have you given this child?

*A parent or supporting friend replies*

*His/her name is N.*

*The minister may take the child. The minister says*

As Jesus took children in his arms and blessed them, so now we ask God's blessing on *N*.

Heavenly Father, we praise you for his/her birth;  
surround *him/her* with your blessing  
that *he/she* may know your love,  
be protected from evil,  
and know your goodness all *his/her* days.

*When all the children have been prayed for*

**All** May they learn to love all that is true,  
grow in wisdom and strength  
and, in due time, come through faith and baptism  
to the fullness of your grace;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*The minister prays for the parents*

May God the Father of all bless *these parents*  
and give *them* grace to love and care for *their children*.  
May God give *them* wisdom, patience and faith,  
help *them* to provide for the *children's* needs and, by their example,  
reveal the love and truth that are in Jesus Christ.

**All** Amen.

## Giving of the Gospel ↑

*A copy of a Gospel is presented, with these words*

Receive this book.

It is the good news of God's love.

Take it as your guide.

*The minister may address the supporting friends and say*

Will you do all that you can to help and support *N* and *N* in the bringing up of *N*?

**With the help of God, we will.**

*The minister may address the wider family and friends and say*

Will you do all that you can to help and support this *family*?

**With the help of God, we will.**

## Prayers

*This prayer may be said by the parents or by the whole congregation*

**All** God our creator,  
we thank you for the gift of these *children*,  
entrusted to our care.  
May we be patient and understanding,  
ready to guide and to forgive,  
so that through our love  
they may come to know your love;  
through Jesus Christ our Lord.  
Amen.

*The minister may say additional prayers, ending with the Lord's Prayer.*

Jesus taught us to call God our Father,  
and so in faith and trust we say

**All** Our Father in heaven,  
hallowed be your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins  
as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation  
but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power,  
and the glory are yours  
now and for ever.  
Amen.

## Ending ↑

### *The minister says*

The Lord bless you and watch over you,  
the Lord make his face shine upon you  
and be gracious to you,  
the Lord look kindly on you and give you peace;  
and the blessing of God almighty,  
the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,  
be among you and remain with you always.

**All** Amen.