

Ten or more things you could do for your next Christening

- **Identify** some 'adoptive grannies' from the congregation to be there, to offer practical help and a warm welcome.

- **Welcome:** Put Christening balloons outside and/ or a banner saying 'Welcome to the family of ---'



- **The order of service:** use the child's photo and name and then encourage the guests to take them home as a keepsake

- **Registers:** get the registers out and ask the parents, godparents or child to sign. Encourage families to look back at their own history as appropriate

- **Names:** use the child's name as much as possible. Find out what it means, why the parents chose it, any story or significance.

- **The symbols:** use the symbols to support the words, by getting everyone wet, reminding people that oil is used at the coronation, physically turning to the words 'I turn to Christ'

- **Involvement:** involve as many family and friends in the service as you can - readings, poems, prayers, holding the candle, holding the towels etc.

- **Godparents:** value the Godparents, get them up to the front, make a fuss of them. Make badges/stickers saying "I'm the Goddaddy"

CHRISTENINGS

- **Gifts:** give a gift e.g. a bible, sign it and a card “with love from your church family” and get the regular congregation to sign the card. Or give a ‘jar of prayers’: get each person to write a short prayer for the child on a paper heart, and collect them all in a jar, put the lid on and present it to keep.
- **Give permission:** encourage them to be happy, find out their story and be part of it -you are now in their lives (and their photos) forever
- **Collection:** offer to give 50 % of any collection to their designated charity
- **Celebrate:** text /tweet/ email in advance to ask if you can tweet a picture of the service or post it on the church website