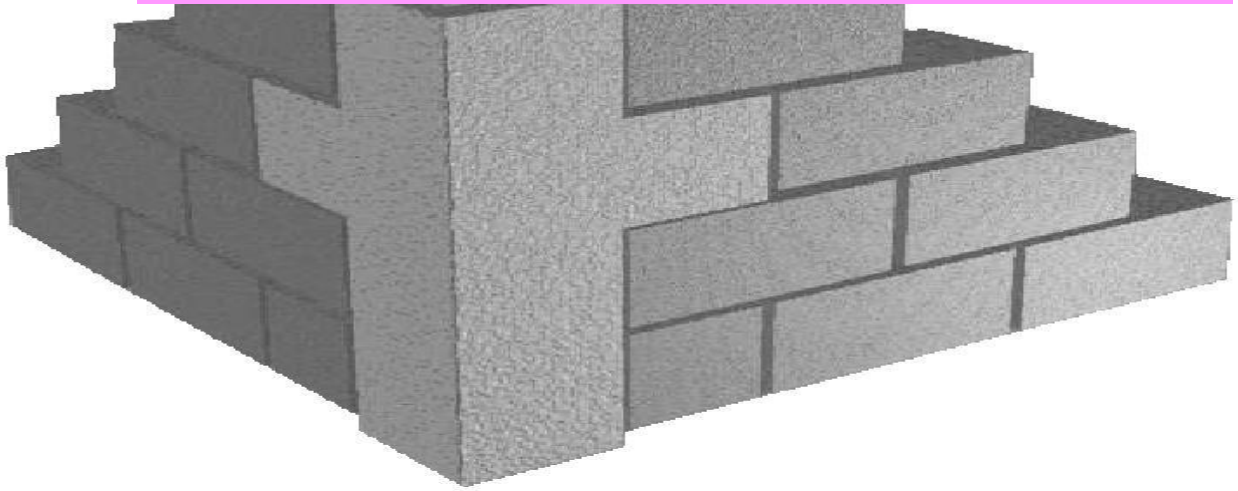




19th Sunday after Pentecost

4th October 2026

Baptism of Charlotte Ann Moore



New Life in Christ

This morning we celebrate the 19th day of Pentecost, today is also the day that we remember St Francis of Assisi. St Francis of Assisi is best known for giving up a life of wealth to live in radical poverty, caring deeply for nature, animals and of course the environment in which they live. He also founded the Franciscan religious orders. Saint Francis was born in 1181 or 1182. He was born to a wealthy silk and cloth merchant and was originally baptised as Giovanni. He died in October 1226.

However the most exciting thing happening today is the baptism of Charlotte Ann Moore, and she has brought her big sister with her, I wonder what her name is? And Evie was baptised in this very church about three and a half years ago and I can still remember it well. And so we welcome Charlotte and Evie with their Mum, Cassie; Dad, Lee, their family and cheer squad.

Baptism is a very important event in our lives, baptism is simply the beginning of our life of faith, our entry into the Christian faith and membership into the worldwide church.

Baptism is an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace, symbolising God's unconditional love, acceptance, and forgiveness of sin.

This ritual signifies new life in Christ, turning away from our past life and rising to a new life of discipleship following Jesus Christ. This is why we have Godparents when babies and young children are baptised. Godparents exist to provide spiritual support, guidance, and a lifelong link to the Church community for the person being baptised.

While historically godparents had a legal or protective role, today their purpose is entirely spiritual and relational. Godparents promise to help the child grow in the Christian faith. They serve as a role model showing the child how to live out Christian values, how to pray and engage with the Church community as they grow up.

Because infants and young children cannot speak for themselves, godparents, alongside the parents, stand before the congregation to publicly declare their own faith. They answer the baptismal questions, they promise to turn away from evil and commit to following Christ on the child's behalf.

Raising a child in a faith tradition can be challenging. Godparents act as a trusted support system for the parents, sharing the responsibility of the child's moral and spiritual upbringing. Godparents also represent

the larger global and local Christian community. Their presence shows that the child is not just joining a biological family, but is being welcomed into a much larger spiritual family.

At baptism we join God's family and become a baby Christian. As with most things in life, being baptised won't necessarily make much difference to us unless there is further input. Being baptised is the beginning of something. It is not an isolated event or magic moment which acts like a good luck charm for life. Jesus Christ asked us to baptise in his name so that parents, godparents and God can work together in a creative partnership throughout the crucial years ahead as we move towards maturity, both physically and spiritually.

God created us with great love. He wants us to exist, he wants us to be part of his creative life. Since our baptism, our beginning of life in and with Christ, we may have lost sight or perhaps forgotten God's creativity in our life. Whatever has happened to us, whatever the quality of our relationships with the Church and with other Christians, God continues to love us and to invite us into relationship with him; he is always near.

To build a relationship with Jesus, is like any other relationship. We need to spend time with Him, in meditation and in quiet time.

We also need to know Him, to read the Gospels, to have an understanding of how he lived and how he expects us to live.

Accomplishing this is a lifelong journey and it's important to be connected to a church community, a church family, so that we can share our journey together, to learn from each other and share our sorrows and our joys, just the same as our biological families. It is often said that you don't need to go to church to be a Christian, I guess that may be true at some level, however I guess it's like being a Knights player and never going to training. I don't think that would really work somehow.

The Christian story is a long one, we as a church condense it into a year long cycle, beginning with the season of Advent.

The word Advent comes from the Latin word *Adventus* and means coming. It has four Sundays during which we prepare for the coming of the birth of Christ. The prophets who speak to us about the coming of Jesus during this period are Isaiah and John the Baptist. Many churches have an advent wreath with its four candles symbolising the four Sundays of Advent and welcoming the approach of the King of Light.

This leads us into the season of Christmas, this is the second greatest feast of the year and celebrates with great joy the birth of Christ. Like any birthday, it is a time of great happiness and we give and receive gifts to show our joy and love. Jesus is a great gift from God. Jesus has come into our world to tell us about God and show us the way to him.

We then celebrate Epiphany, the Greek word meaning appearing or showing. Christ was born as an unknown child at Bethlehem, but through the Wise Men who came to seek Him, and went back to tell people about Him, He was made known to the whole world. It is also known as the feast of lights because the star guided the Wise Men to Christ. We, too, must seek and follow Christ, the light of the world, and make him known to others.

Epiphany is followed by Lent. This is a time of 40 days beginning on Ash Wednesday, which recalls the 40 days that Jesus spent praying and fasting in the desert, before His death on the cross. We then come to the season of Easter, where Jesus is crucified, and rises from the dead, we no longer see death as the end but as a new beginning. Easter is the greatest feast day of the whole church calendar, a day of great celebration and joy.

Easter is followed by the Ascension of Jesus and Pentecost. The Holy Spirit came to renew the disciples as they prepared to go out teaching and preaching God's message of love.

This is what should happen in our lives when we receive the Holy Spirit, given to us initially through our Baptism and Confirmation. We have now retraced the life of Jesus, very quickly. We are in the season of Pentecost now and we wear green as a symbol of growth and learning. Pentecost is about 25 weeks, and then we prepare again for Christmas.

So as we welcome Charlotte Ann into the family of Christ, we pray for all those who will support her on her journey, we pray that she will come to know the love of Christ in her life and become a faithful disciple of our Lord.

Amen