

Child Dedication

Child dedication at Bethel Church is a joyful recognition that every child is a gift from God; it is a celebration of the wonderful privilege and blessing it is to be a parent!

God has entrusted you with a new life - one that will live eternally! He has chosen you to be a tangible expression of His love, character and values for your child. During the dedication you publicly acknowledge that your child ultimately belongs to God and that you desire His plan for his or her life.

We also believe that the people of Bethel Church have a responsibility to partner with you as you raise your child. The congregation will be challenged to pray for your family and to be godly examples for your child to follow.

While there is no mandate in scripture that we ceremonially dedicate our children, there are examples of those who have publicly acknowledged that their child ultimately belonged to God and that they were dependent on Him to raise their child in a way that was honoring to Him:

1. Hannah gave her son Samuel to the Lord - 1 Samuel 1:27-28
2. Mary and Joseph presented Jesus at the Temple - Luke 2:21-39

Family Covenant

Writing a family covenant is not required to dedicate your child at Bethel Church but we do see it as a great way to "mark" this time in the life of your family and to give your child a tangible reminder of the commitment you are making to God on this day. We believe that you will find that the time and effort you put into writing your covenant will reap a great blessing for you and your child.



Is dedication the same as infant baptism?

We believe that baptism is a public declaration of an individual's decision to follow Christ. Since infants are not capable of making that decision, we reserve baptism for a time when an individual is old enough to understand their decision to accept Christ as their Savior.

May my child wear a christening gown?

Your child may wear whatever you prefer.

Does dedication make my child a “Christian”?

The Bible is clear that salvation can only be found in relationship with Jesus Christ. Faith is not passed on to a child through dedication; parents make a commitment to model a life of faith in Jesus with the hope that one day their child will accept Christ as their personal Savior.

Who should we invite to the dedication service?

There is no limit to the number of guests you may invite! We encourage families to invite extended family members, friends and neighbors to attend this special time for your child. When the time comes for the Pastor to pray for the children, he will invite all the extended family and special guests to stand, recognizing the special roles they will play in the lives of these children.

Do we need to select “Godparents” for our child?

We do not use the term “Godparents” at Bethel Church, however we certainly support your choice of significant individuals to offer support, encouragement and to hold you accountable to the commitment you are making.

I am a single parent. May I still dedicate my child?

Absolutely!

Do I have to be a member of Bethel Church to participate in child dedication?

No, participants need not be church members. We only ask that you be regular attendees with a sincere desire to raise your child in a godly, Christ-centered home.

Being a new Christian, I am a little nervous about all of this.

We are delighted to be a part of this important step in your newly found walk with Jesus. Our intent is to come alongside you and to help ensure that Child Dedication is a non-threatening process that will be a time with deep significance for you and your family.

Example Dedication Verse List

Following are verse suggestions from which families can choose a dedication or life verse for their child. The verse chosen does not have to be from this list; these are given only as suggestions for those who have not already chosen a verse for the dedication ceremony.

Deuteronomy 4:9-10; 6:4-9; 11:18-21

1 Samuel 1:26-27

Psalms 8:1-2; 22:9-10; 71:5-6, 17; 78:4-7; 127:3-5; 128; 139:13-16

Proverbs 1:2-7; 22:6

Isaiah 49:1

Jeremiah 1:5

Matthew 18:1-6; 19:13-15; 21:16

Mark 9:33-37; 10:13-16

Luke 2:40; 2:52; 9:46-48; 18:15-17

Galatians 1:15-16a

Ephesians 6:4

2 Timothy 1:5-7; 3:14-15

Family Covenant Worksheet

What is a Covenant?

Webster's Dictionary defines a covenant as an agreement or pact, a promise. A family covenant is an agreement or a pact before God of how you will raise your family and is not conditional in nature. It is what you as a parent or parents are promising to do.

The following worksheet is not intended to be an outline or formula for the "perfect" covenant. However, our desire is that you would use these questions to direct and organize your thoughts before you write your covenant. We encourage you to spend some time praying and thinking about the promise you are making. If you are married, discuss the questions with your spouse.

Be creative, original and authentic – if the meaning of your child's name is significant to you or you have chosen a special verse of Scripture we encourage you to include those in your covenant. Your covenant is between you, your child and, most importantly, God.

Writing your covenant

As a parent, what do you desire most for your child?

What are your priorities for your family?

What does it mean to love unconditionally?

Love is not a feeling; it involves a decision and commitment of your will. Deuteronomy 6:5-7 says to love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your strength. It then says to impress these commands on your children and to teach them to love God. God's love is a beautiful picture of what a perfect love relationship can be.

What will your actions teach your child/children?

Your relationship with Jesus makes an impact on your child's spiritual development.

How are you doing? List a few aspects of your walk with Jesus that need strengthening.
Ask God to help you in these areas.

How can you always be an encourager for your child/children?

God blesses each one of us with special gifts and talents. What are some ways that you can encourage your child to use their gifts to honor God?

Are you willing to make a lifelong commitment?

Choosing to dedicate your child to God is a lifelong commitment; it should be taken very seriously.

Dear Jordan,

You are such a precious gift from God; words cannot describe how much you mean to us. Spending one day with you is more than we could ever deserve. God has blessed us so much. From the moment God started to knit you together you have brought so much excitement and joy to our lives. It is out of this joy and excitement that we want to share this covenant with you.

First of all Jordan, we want you to know that our love is unconditional. Throughout the years ahead you will sometimes make mistakes, and so will we, but we want our love to model the love of Christ. This means that whatever happens in the future our love for you will never change.

Secondly, we are committed to making our home a safe and secure place for you to live. We want you to know that your Mom and Dad are committed to their marriage covenant. We do not want you to ever worry about our love for each other. We desire for our relationship to be one that you can learn from. We are also committed to protecting you and caring for you. We always want you to feel like nobody else, besides Jesus, cares for you more than your Mom and Dad.

Last and most important of all we desire to raise you in a home where the love of Christ is demonstrated daily. We know that the greatest love you will ever know is the love that Jesus has for you. We want nothing more than for you to know Jesus as your personal Savior and friend. Part of our responsibility as parents is to teach you about his love by our words and most importantly by our example. Proverbs 22:6 tells us that if we train you up in the way you should go you will not depart from it. This is an awesome responsibility, but with God's grace we will do the best we can. We love you very much and we look forward to watching you grow...

We Love You

Mom and Dad

Our Family Covenant

We know that Kate is a gift from God.

James 1:17 says, "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down for the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning."

It is our pledge that we will raise Kate up in a Christian home, teaching her about Jesus and His love for us, and praying everyday that she will come to know Him as her personal Lord and Savior.

We will strive to be good examples for her, always putting Christ in the center of our lives, and along with our family and friends, continue to love, encourage, and support one another in building ours and her relationships with God.

We will strive to always be growing in our faith, sharing God's word with her, reading and examining the Bible, and instilling God's word deep into her heart.

When we look at Kate, we will remember our Creator.

When we see our daughter smile, we will remember God is love.

When we see her little feet, we will remember to follow Jesus.

When we see her tiny fingers, we will remember the joy of serving Jesus.

When we see her soft lips, we will remember to tell others about Jesus.

When we hear Kate coo, we will remember to praise our Lord.

When we see her softness, we will remember God's compassion.

When we see our daughter drinking milk, we will remember God provides.

When we hold our daughter in our arms, we will remember God also holds us tight.

When we see Kate go to sleep, we will remember to rest in the Lord.

When we see Kate each morning, we will remember God was with us through the night.

And as we watch Kate grow, we will remember God is faithful.

We feel very blessed that God has entrusted us with another one of His greatest treasures. It is our family covenant to always look to Jesus for guidance and trust in God for His grace to raise Kate up the way in which He desires.