



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 a couple 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

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

Frequently Asked Questions:

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.

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.

I am a Christ follower, but my spouse is not. Can we participate in Child Dedication?

The dedication is actually an adult affirmation that you both know Christ personally and desire that same faith for your child. We would not encourage you to publically declare that, if it is not true of you. Contact Pastor Gary if you want to process your situation further and explore alternatives.

My partner and I are living together but are not married. Can we publically dedicate ourselves and our child at Bethel?

Dedication is actually a public statement that you, as parents, know Christ as your Saviour and want your home to honor Him. We believe the Bible teaches that couples should not live together unless they have made the commitment of marriage first. Because of this biblical principle, we would not be able to have you participate in the public dedication service. Pastor Gary is willing to talk with you and help you process your situation in light of this biblical teaching. Please contact him to arrange a visit.