

About Child Dedication

Christian traditions differ regarding infant baptism. At Bethany, we believe in baby dedications and base this view on Biblical example. We are told in 1st Samuel 1 that Hannah presented her son Samuel to the Lord. In Luke 2:22 we read that Mary and Joseph brought their baby, Jesus, to the temple in Jerusalem in order to present him before the Lord.

At Bethany we defer water baptism for children until they reach what we refer to as the "age of understanding" – specifically the time when they can consciously and independently choose to make a public declaration of their faith in Jesus Christ and their desire to serve Him as their Lord.

Note: We do not believe that a child's dedication and/or baptism is a guarantee of "salvation" (going to heaven) for the child; only a confession of faith in Christ does that. Before the age of accountability we believe that all children are the Lord's.

While we dedicate children to the Lord, in reality this ceremony is a dedication of the parents. Through this act, parents are presenting themselves before the Lord and committing to the Lord to raise their child in a loving Christian home and to teach them about Jesus Christ, both directly and through the example of their lives.

Deuteronomy 6:4-7 tells us: "Hear O Israel: The Lord our God is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. Impress them on their children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up."

The parents are also asking the community (the church) to help support them as they raise their child. Thus dedicating one's baby to the Lord is also a commitment on the parent's part to ongoing participation in the Christian community.

And finally, a baby dedication is an opportunity for parents to publicly express their gratitude to God for the blessing of their child.

Bethany Community Church is committed to supporting parents in their responsibility to disciple their children (Deut. 6:4-7). As your church community we are also joining with you to commit your child to the care of Jesus Christ and are praying a blessing over your life and that of your child.

Recognizing grace for unique and extenuating circumstances, we believe it is best if both parents fully support and participate in this dedication. A baby dedication is a wonderful opportunity to gather with family, friends, and your church family to celebrate the gift of your child and your commitment to Christ to serve the child as Christian parents.

**Bethany Community Church
Northeast Child Dedication Form**

Baby's Full Name: _____

Date of Birth: _____ Gender: Male

Female Mother's Name: _____

Father's Name: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ St. _____ Zip: _____

Mother's Cell: _____ Mothers Email: _____

Father's Cell: _____ Fathers Email: _____

Requested Date of Dedication (3rd Sunday): _____

NOTE: Dedications (typically) occur on the third Sunday of the month and should ideally be scheduled one month in advance (though we can be flexible.) There are no dedications during the month of December.

Family Commitment

Below are areas of responsibility that BCC feels burdened by God to review and assist you as you parent and raise your child before the Lord.

1. I/We are followers of the Lord Jesus Christ and have dedicated our lives to our Heavenly Father, asking Him to lead us and help us raise our child.
2. I/We have re-affirmed and re-committed ourselves to our marriage vows – to love and uphold one another before our community and God, thereby providing stability in the life of our child.
3. I/We are committed to raising and training our/my child in a godly way (Deut 6:4-7).
4. As a parent, I recognize my own personal need to be part of a Christian church family as a support system in my life and parenting.

I/We have read the above "Marriage and Family" and "About Baby Dedications" and accept my God-given responsibility to my child.

Signed: _____ Signed: _____