



Child Dedication Guide

From the day I was born, I have been in your care, and from the time of my birth, you have been my God. (Psalm 22:10 CEV)

“Sons are a heritage from the LORD, children a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are sons born in one's youth. Blessed is the man whose quiver is full of them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their enemies in the gate.” (Psalm 127:3-5)

The arrival of a new baby is a time of rejoicing for any family. The newness of life brings a special freshness towards all of life. Often, during this time, parents want to do something in the church to celebrate their joy with others and to present their child to God for blessing.

The joy of Jesus' birth was shared with the people in the house of God. Like most Jewish parents in that day, Joseph and Mary brought Jesus to the temple to be presented to God. Long before this time, godly parents presented their children to God. And to this day, the practice is still done also to ask God's blessing.

Some Christian churches baptize infants by sprinkling them with water. In those churches, the covenant of baptism is seen as being similar to the Old Testament covenant of circumcision. Other Christians don't baptize infants. Instead they dedicate babies to God. There are several reasons for this.

First, there are no clear incidents of infant baptism in Scripture. Baptism seems instead to be an evidence of Christian faith. Furthermore, while some groups suggest that baptism imparts a special grace to children, there is no real scriptural support for this. Finally, in our society, often adults who were baptized as children desire to be baptized again as an expression of their decision to receive Christ as their Savior and Lord.

For these reasons, Christian parents are encouraged to dedicate their children to God. During this Christian Child Dedication service, a beautiful and solemn promise is made before God and the Church to care for this child as unto God.

What is Dedication?

It is a **public vow** that you are making to God before His people. As you do so, I know it will bring God's smile of approval and that He will help you to fulfill your vows and that He will bless your child.

Child dedication boldly declares **three foundational truths** about the human condition.

1. That these young persons are **precious to God**, their lives are sacred because they are **created in God's** image to have the capacity of personally relating to Him.
2. In spite of the innocent beauty of these children, we recognize that will one day need to accept **Christ on their own**. When they come of age, they need to be redeemed for they, like all of us, are utterly helpless **to merit salvation**.
3. Dedication declares that **Jesus is the rescuer**. Jesus invited the little children to come because He knew, better than anyone else did, **that they needed Him**, too.
Acts 4:12 (NLT)

There is salvation in no one else! God has given no other name under heaven by which we must be saved.

Deuteronomy 6:6-7 (NLT) And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up.

This is the **commandment of God**, that we should diligently rear our children in our **most holy faith**. In obedience to this command, this is why we present our children and dedicate them to the Lord.

The example for the ceremony of baby dedication may be found in Scripture, as in the presentation of **Samuel by Hannah** and of Jesus by **Joseph and Mary**.

Paul reminded Timothy that "from a child" he had known the **sacred Scriptures**. Jesus considered "the little ones" infinitely precious, and he said *"Permit the children to come to Me, do not hinder them; for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these."* **The purpose of child dedication is really to be found in the purpose of the parents.**

Rightly understood, the ceremony is one of **parental dedication** as well as child dedication. You as the parents are **publicly pledging** themselves to **obey the command of Paul**, (Ephesians 6:4 NLT) *"... do not provoke your children to anger by the way you treat them. Rather, bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord."* This ceremony is meaningless unless parents dedicate themselves, as well as their child, to God.

4 things you need to commit to do in raising your children

1. Do not provoke your **children to anger** - includes building up a child's positive self image
2. **Bring them up** – this word also includes nourish and nurture
3. **Discipline** – this word also includes instruction & spiritual guidance – training
4. **Instruction** – this word also includes warnings & encouragements

COVENANT OF PARENTS

If it be your intention to present your child to the Lord, and to pledge yourselves to "*bring your child up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord*," please answer we do to the following promises:

1. Do you here this day recognize your child as the gift of God, and give heartfelt thanks for God's blessing?
2. Do you here this day dedicate your child to the Lord who gave him or her?
3. Do you here this day pledge as parents that you will bring up your child in the discipline and instruction of the Lord?
4. Do you here this day promise to give your child every possible benefit of home, of education, & of the church?
5. Do you here this day ask God's blessings upon your child's life, to guide, guard, and direct your child through all his or her years?

- If there are reasons Lakeside or you, as parents, see that fulfilling these areas of commitment for dedication at this time can't be completed, we will meet to discuss the reason/s. Sometimes assistance in this area is needed.

THE ACT OF DEDICATION

Parents will be acknowledging these words during dedication:

"Lord Jesus, _____ present our child _____ to you,
believing in _____
(parent's names) (child's name)
your loving care, and with the prayer that (name) would respond to the work of your
Spirit to bring
him/her to trust in you as Savior."

There is an important spiritual lesson that we adults are to learn from children, and that is simply to trust our souls to Jesus as a child would:

Luke 18:15-17, "Then people began to bring babies to him so that he could put his hands on them. But when the disciples noticed it, they frowned on them. But Jesus called them to him and said, You must let little children come to me, and you must never prevent their coming. The kingdom of God belongs to little children like these. I

tell you, the man who will not accept the kingdom of God like a little child will never get into it at all."

WHAT TO EXPECT ON THE DAY OF DEDICATION

1. Pastor Jason will briefly introduce each parent and child by ask you to come onto the platform and stand before the congregation. Once all families have been introduced, Pastor Jason will speak to what child dedication is and the importance of it. He will ask the parents and then the church if they will faithfully raise the child in the Christian faith. You will respond _ I will.
2. Once introduced you will be given a bible and certificate for your child/children.
3. Pastor Jason will then ask the church to join him in praying over the child/children.
4. Finally, once the prayer has concluded you and your family will exit the stage.

If you have any questions or would like to talk to someone about the process, please contact Kenny Heard, Kids Director, at kenny.heard@thelakeside.church