



WHAT IS BABY DEDICATION?

Since ceremonies involving infants and children differ widely from church to church, let us explain baby dedication at Trinity. It is not a Christening service or a baptism, neither is it the child's confirmation or the public recognition of godparents. It is, as the name suggests, a dedication. The parents, in the context of the church family, dedicate their child to the Lord and themselves as parents to the raising of the child to the glory of God. In turn, the church family commits themselves to share in the task of nurturing the child "in the discipline and instruction of the Lord."

Church dedication of a child is not a formally commanded or described Biblical practice. It is, however, fully consistent with Scriptural principles and practices. Old Testament believers did engage in formal dedications of children, as Hannah dedicated Samuel in 1 Samuel 1:21-28. Scripture calls us to see our children as a God-given assignment (Psalm 123:3); the Lord Jesus blessed children (Matthew 19:13-15) and warned against causing them to sin (Matthew 18:6); and parents are commanded to "*bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord*" (Ephesians 6:4). Since Christians are to live supportively and accountably in the context of the church as God's family, this act of dedication is very appropriate in a congregational setting.

Baby dedication then presupposes the following:

1. That the parent or parents have a personal faith in and commitment to Christ.
2. That the parent(s) are committed to raise their child in accordance with God's standards. This involves a desire to see one's child come to faith, and this implies a responsibility to pray, teach, and model the life of a Christ-follower.
3. That the parent(s) have, on their own, recognized their child as God's gift and assignment and prayerfully entrusted their child and themselves to the Lord.
4. That the parents are committed to active participation in Trinity Church life for themselves and their child. For this reason, we do not dedicate the children of non-participants at Trinity, except in exceptional circumstances.

If you are interested in scheduling a baby dedication please fill out the Baby Dedication Request Form online. Dedications are scheduled based on the pastor's availability and service programming. If you have more questions, please contact worship@trinityonline.org.

(No dedications are scheduled from Thanksgiving through the end of the year.)