

Child Dedication Information Sheet

Because Pine Grove Community Church is comprised of people from many faiths and cultural backgrounds, we want to be sure that your questions about the meaning of child dedication and the difference between child dedication and baptism are well explained.

What is child dedication? Child dedication is a ceremony in which parents stand before their church family and God to seek God's blessing on their child and family. Through child dedication parents acknowledge that their child is a gracious gift from God to their family. It is a time for parents to ask God's blessing and protection on their child. And it is a time for parents to commit to raising their child in a Christian home by instilling biblical truth and values with the hope that their child will make a personal profession of Christ as Savior.

Child dedication is a family spiritual tradition that goes back centuries. It finds its biblical roots in the Old Testament. In 1 Samuel 1 we find the story of Hannah, a godly woman who for many years was infertile. She made a promise to God that if He would enable her to get pregnant, she would dedicate her child's life to the Lord. We read her testimony in verses 27-28: *"I prayed for this child, and the Lord has granted me what I asked of Him. So now I give him to the Lord. For his whole life he will be given over to the Lord."* And he worshipped the Lord there. In the New Testament, we find Mary and Joseph dedicating Jesus to the Lord as an infant: *When the time of their purification according to the Law of Moses had been completed, Joseph and Mary took Him to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord.* (Luke 2:22)

In many ways child dedication is more accurately a parent commitment service. It's the parents' promise to offer their child to the Lord and to dedicate themselves to rearing the child for the glory of God. Parents cannot decide their child's salvation. Each person must make the decision to have a personal relationship with Christ. When children are old enough to understand the concept of sin and the responsibility for that sin, then they are ready to make the decision to accept Christ as their personal Savior and assure eternal salvation.

Parents must, however, lay a foundation through teaching and example that will help children to make that decision at the right time. The same is true of marriage. We cannot decide when or if our children will marry and we cannot guarantee them a happy marriage. But through positive example, we can lay a foundation for making good decision when the time comes.

Dedication is not baptism. It is not a sacrament of any kind. It does not impart salvation on the child. Dedication is the parent's commitment to God to raise the child in His ways. The dedication ceremony is a time to publicly make that commitment to pray for the child, love the child and guide the child toward a personal relationship with Christ.

The difference between child dedication and baptism. The Bible tells us in Acts 8:12-13 that all believers are to be baptized. Baptism does NOT get you to heaven. Only faith in Christ makes a believer and only by accepting Christ do we secure salvation and eternity in heaven. Jesus asks us to be baptized and modeled this to us by being baptized as an adult. At PGCC we do not baptize children until they are old enough to articulate their understanding and belief.

The Bible tells us that baptism is a symbol of Christ's burial and resurrection. It is a symbol of new life in Christ and tells others that you are a believer. Much like a wedding ring, it is an outward sign of an inward commitment. Baptism does not make you a believer_ it shows that you are a believer. Salvation comes by grace through faith alone not through works. For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith... it is the gift of God, not by works, so that no one can boast. (Ephesians 2:8-9)

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Child(ren)'s Name	Child(ren)'s Birthdates	Place of Birth

Father's Name _____

Mother's Name _____

Home Address _____

Phone # _____ Email Address _____

Please return this section to the church office via the offering plate or by handing it to Pastor Bob.

Your Commitment to Your Child(ren):

- To experience consistent growth in your personal relationship with God.
- To model a Christ-like lifestyle before your child(ren).
- To pray regularly for your child's salvation and spiritual growth.
- To evangelize and disciple your children.
- To instill Christian principles and values by raising your children in a Christian home and involving them in the ministries of a local church.

Our Commitment to You:

- To provide a safe place for children to grow spiritually, socially, emotionally, and physically.
- To provide love and nurturing for each child entrusted to your our care.
- To provide quality Christian education to each child so that he/she might know biblical content and possess biblical values.
- To provide fellowship, support, encouragement, and education with other parents on issues such as discipline, parenting skills, and family values.
- To provide opportunities for you to serve the Lord through our ministries to model servant hood and ministry as part of a vital Christian life.

VOWS OF DEDICATION

Recognizing the responsibility you have as parents of this child, I ask you to make the following commitments:

Parents, do you recognize this child as a precious gift from God entrusted to your care for their nurture and upbringing?

And do you desire to dedicate this child to the Lord, seeking His will and purpose for your child's life?

Do you commit yourselves to pray for this child and instruct him/her, through your words and example, the way of salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ?

Do you commit yourselves to train your child in the way that he/she should live in accordance with biblical values and principles?

Do you commit yourselves to use your home than the church to provide a knowledge of the bible and a loving, obedient attitude toward God and His Son, Jesus Christ?

Do you commit to constant growth in your personal relationship with Jesus Christ?

Do you promise to model a Christ-like lifestyle in public and in private?