

# [CHURCH NAME]

## POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

### Baby/Child Dedication Policy and Information

"Children are a heritage of the Lord; and the fruit of the womb is his reward!" – Psalm 127:3

#### Purpose

It's our desire that every child be blessed. A Baby/Child Dedication is a commitment by the parents and the church to provide opportunity for the child to know and experience what it means to follow God. For this reason, A Baby/Child Dedication is defined by the following criteria:

#### Why do we do Baby/Child Dedications?

The dedication of a child is a voluntary act in which believing parents publicly present their child and themselves to the Lord as an outward expression of their commitment to God regarding the raising of this child. The parent(s) are essentially committing themselves to raising this child, with God's help, in a way that demonstrates an example of Godliness, discipling according to God's ways and prayerfully training that child in God's teachings until that child can make a decision on his or her own to follow God. At the time of dedication, the family at [Church Name] is also committing themselves to participate in raising of this child through our children and youth programs as well as to encourage this child in such a way as to be a positive witness and influence so that the child can grow up to one day accept Christ and live for Him.

#### Why do we do Infant Baptism?

Baby/Child Dedication is not be confused with infant baptism, viewed as an ordinance of the church, and does not import salvation in any way. At [Church Name], we dedicate, rather than baptize, children. We believe that baptism is an outward expression of an inward reality that has already taken place. Just like a wedding ceremony is a public proclamation of the couple's commitment to each other and to their family and friends, so baptism is an outward declaration of one's desire to follow Jesus. According to the Bible, the one requirement for baptism is belief in Christ. We believe that children are wonderful but they are not yet able to make that decision for themselves. Therefore, we do not baptize children until they are old enough to understand and believe. Until that time, we dedicate these wonderful gifts back to the Lord and ask for His blessing.

#### Parental Promise

Because the child is a gift from God, the parents promise, as God's stewards, to bring up the child entrusted to them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Col 3:21). In dedicating one's child in the presence of fellow believers, parents are publicly dedicating themselves to the faithful fulfillment of their parental responsibilities (Deut. 6:6-7; Proverbs 22:6) and are acknowledging their need of prayerful support and encouragement of those fellow believers (Eph 6:18; Hebrew 10:24-25). The dedication is more than a service – it's

a commitment of parents to honor the will and the Word of God. In Jesus Christ's example in Luke 2:22 it says, "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."

### **Church Promise**

As a church we recognize that this child is a gift from God also and that the parents presenting the child need support and encouragement in their role as parents. We at [Church Name] commit to providing programs and activities that will help parents guide their children to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

### **Setting a Date**

Baby Dedications are done by schedule on the third week of the month.

Dedication forms are available upon request. A completed and signed Baby/Child Dedication Application must be submitted at least one month prior to the scheduled date of dedication and confirmation must be received from the Church Administrator before the date can be considered firm. If you have any questions regarding the Baby/Child Dedications or Baby Blessings, please contact [Contact Name] or call [Contact Number].

### **Once the Date has been Confirmed**

Once the date has been confirmed by staff, feel free to make arrangements with family and friends to save the date. You will be contacted two weeks prior to the event for confirmation of how many family members you'll have attending.

### **Day of Dedication**

On the day of dedication, participants should arrive 15 minutes prior to the start time, and check in with Head Usher for introductions and instructions. All attendees should be present at [Time] for the blessing. We request that you remain for the entirety of the service. We request a follow up visit to our Sunday School as the child grows.

### **Do we Bless Children of Married and Single Parents?**

We believe in the sanctity of marriage and followers of Christ should raise their children where the parents are committed to Christ and to each other. Yes! Both parent(s) of the child will be invited onto the platform along with God parents, family and friends. In the case of a single parent home, please bring family and friends. All other family and friends are more than welcome to attend and are encouraged to sit with the family in the seats allocated by the usher.

### **Acceptance of this Policy**

When you can submit your application wholeheartedly willing to embrace the aforementioned requirements, for your sake, as well as for your child and our church family, we encourage you to continue in the process as outlined below. In keeping with the spirit and standard of excellence in ministry, the following guidelines must be followed to ensure a smooth and timely Baby/Child Dedication.

## **Scripture References for Parents (KJV)**

**Deuteronomy 6:6-7:** “And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up.”

**Ephesians 6:4:** “Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”

**Colossians 3:21:** “Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.”

**Proverbs 22:6:** “Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”

**Hebrews 10:24-25:** “And let us consider one another to provoke until love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching.”

## **SIGNATURES**

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*Senior Pastor*

Date Revised: \_\_\_\_\_