

Christian Baby/Child Dedication

Firm Foundation Christian Church, Woonsocket RI, 2019

Folks often call us to see if we are willing to baptize their baby. However, the Bible does not teach infant baptism. Rather, it teaches believer's baptism. Believer's baptism, which is the Bible way, means that someone has to understand, believe, and be willing to confess the Christian gospel in order to be baptized (Acts 2:37-38, 8:36-38; John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4).

What we offer instead is that which is scriptural—namely, dedication. What is a dedication? (Reading: Matthew 19:13-15; NKJV): *“Then little children were brought to Him that He might put His hands on them and pray, but the disciples rebuked them. But Jesus said, “Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven.” And He laid His hands on them and departed from there.”* A dedication is a reflection of the faith and commitment of the parents and/or others to the Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ, when they bring the child to Christ for an oath and a blessing. The church and the witnesses to the ceremony pledge to come alongside the family in prayer, and to publicly express a willingness to aid the family in bringing up the child in a godly way to the end that he/she may become a believer at a young age.

The preferred time and place for this ceremony is integral to (that is, part of, within the time of the) weekly church service, when the entire congregation is present, but we will also offer this service at another time or place before witnesses when those making the vow are present. There is no fee for a baby or child dedication. Below is a sample order of service.

Sample Baby/Child Dedication Order of Service

(Estimated time of service: 10-20 minutes)

1. Welcome (parent(s) and/or other(s) making the vows are at the front)
2. Opening Prayer
3. Reading (Matthew 18:19-20)
4. Acknowledgment of those making the vows (by name and relationship to the child)
5. What is a dedication? (Reading: Matthew 19:13-15). A dedication is a reflection of the faith and commitment of the parents and others to the Lord, God, and Savior Jesus Christ.
6. **Dedication Vows** (There are 3 vows highlighted to be responded to.)
 - a. Reading (Deuteronomy 6:5-9)
 - b. **Do you vow to love God and raise this child in the ways of the Lord?**
 - c. **Will you set a good Christian example for this child to follow?**

- i. Things to consider (I will mention them, and challenge you to take them to heart, but not put you “on the spot” here. But remember, you are speaking these vows before the Lord.)
 1. Do you know the doctrines of the Bible? (beginning with the gospel)
 2. Do you read the Word of God daily?
 3. Do you pray daily?
 4. Do you have “couples/family time” during which you engage in Christian spiritual disciplines together?
 5. Will you be faithful to consistently set an example of private and public devotion to God (in the home, in the community, and by faithful fellowship with a Bible-believing church)?
 - d. Will you pray for and teach this child the truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ, that this child may be saved at an early age? (Reading: Proverbs 22:6)
7. Opportunity for the parent(s)/vow makers to speak a few words (optional)
 8. Prayer of Dedication
 9. Presentation of Certificate
 10. Benediction