

Infant Dedication Services

Neighborhood Church of Castro Valley

<http://www.3crosses.org/neighborhood/pages/7-infant-dedication-services>

What is infant dedication?

At Neighborhood Church, we view infant dedication as an act in which parents honor God publicly through acknowledging (1) that their child is a gift from God and (2) that they are committed as parents to partner with God in fulfilling His purposes for their child.

"...Bring [children] up in the training and instruction of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4b NIV).

Who qualifies for dedicating an infant?

Any parent or parents who believe in the Scriptural foundation for dedication of children, who wish to publicly acknowledge God as the giver of life, and who desire to raise their children to understand and experience a relationship with Jesus Christ. Parents do not have to be members of Neighborhood Church to dedicate their infants.

How old should a child be when he or she is dedicated?

Most children are dedicated as infants, but there is no age limit.

What is the difference between infant dedication and baptism?

Infant dedication is an act of parents who want to acknowledge God as the giver of life and to commit themselves to raising children in the training and instruction of the Lord. Baptism is an act of obedience on the part of an individual who has experienced salvation through Jesus Christ and desires to publicly testify of this experience. For more information on Baptism, please pick up our packet entitled, "In Over Your Head," located at the prayer room, Connection Central, or at the main office.

When are infant dedication services offered?

At least four times throughout the year at our special celebration of "new life" services where both Believer's baptism and baby/infant dedications are offered.

Where are infant dedication services conducted?

In the main auditorium during our Sunday Services (9AM or 10:45AM).

What will happen at the dedication service?

The pastor offering a prayer of dedication will invite parents who are wanting their babies or infants dedicated, to come to the front of the church. When all parents with children are present at the front, the pastor will go down the line where each parent will introduce the name of his/her child to the congregation. After all parents have introduced their children, the pastor will dedicate the infants to the Lord through prayer.

What is my next step in scheduling an infant dedication?

Call the church office 510.537.4690 and register so we can prepare for this service!

Next, send invitations to family and friends to join you for this special occasion. Afterwards, you may wish to plan a family gathering. We also encourage families to use these moments to introduce your guests to the worship services here at Neighborhood Church.

What does the Bible say about dedicating children?

1. Human life is a gift from God and begins at conception.
 - "Children are a gift from the LORD; they are a reward from Him" (Psalm 127:3 NLT).
 - "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you" (Jeremiah 1:5 NIV).
 - "You are the one who put me together inside my mother's body, and I praise you because of the wonderful way you created me. Everything you do is marvelous! Of this I have no doubt" (Psalm 139:13-14 CEV).
2. In response to God's gift of children, His people have honored Him by dedicating their children to His purposes.
The example of Hannah dedicating Samuel:
 - "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" (1 Samuel 1:27-28 NIV).

The example of Mary and Joseph dedicating Jesus:

- "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).

Question: "What is baby dedication? Is child / baby dedication biblical?"

<http://www.gotquestions.org/baby-dedication.html>

Answer: In the majority of Protestant denominations that practice it, child dedication is a symbolic ceremony undertaken by Christian parents soon after the birth of a child. Some churches perform these ceremonies en

masse and have several couples and children participating at the same time. The rite is intended to be a public statement by the parents that they will train their children in the Christian faith and seek to instill that faith in them. The congregation often responds through responsive reading or some other method to affirm that they, as a church family, will also seek to encourage the parents to bring up the child in the faith. There is no implied salvation in the ceremony and it varies from church to church.

The idea of dedicating a child to the Lord can certainly be found in the Bible. Hannah was a barren wife who promised to dedicate her child to God if He would give her a son ([1 Samuel 1:11](#)). [Luke 2:21](#) begins the account of Mary and Joseph taking Jesus to the temple after eight days in order to dedicate Him to the Lord. This was slightly more involved since it involved circumcision, but once again this ceremony did not indicate any level of salvation. It was establishing a future reminder for these children that there was a God who had set Israel apart and deserved to be served.

Child / baby dedication is not one of the two sacraments—baptism and the Lord’s Supper—required of Christians in the New Testament. A sacrament may be defined as “the outward symbol of inward grace.” As Christians, we are baptized and participate in the Lord’s Supper as outward and public signs of what Christ has done within us. While baby dedication is not an officially instituted sacrament of the church, there does not seem to be any conflict with Scripture as long as parents do not view it as assuring the salvation of the child.