

## Baby Dedications

It is the privilege of The Harbor Church to encourage and assist parents and grandparents in the training and development of their children through our children's and youth ministries. This baby dedication is actually a promise of the parents to offer their children to God and to dedicate their own lives to bringing up their children in the glory of God.

### What is a baby dedication?

A baby dedication is not a sacrament; it does not impart salvation to your child. It recognizes that the life of a child is a gift from God and it is also an acknowledgment that their physical and spiritual lives belong to God. The dedication of children is a tradition that many historians believe came out of Luke 2:22 which says, *"Joseph and Mary took him to Jerusalem to present him to the Lord."*

In your dedication, there are three things that we want to get accomplished. First, we are to give thanks to God for the creation and birth of your child. Second, you are to make a promise as parents and grandparents to provide guidance in the ways of the Lord for your child in the form of teaching and involvement in kids and youth ministries. Third, the church will pray for God's blessings upon you and your child in the power of the Holy Spirit, presenting him or her to God, remembering how the Lord Jesus Christ took little children and blessed them and said in Matthew 19:14, *"Let the little children come to me."*

### What will be said at the Baby Dedication?

The parents are encouraged and challenged to follow the wise words from what is called the "Shema" in the Old Testament. It says this:

*Deuteronomy 6:4-9*

*4 Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. 5 Love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. 6 These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your hearts. 7 Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. 8 Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. 9 Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates. (NIV)*

What is this scripture saying? It is saying that you are to make God the number one priority in your lives. Let your relationship with Jesus Christ be seen by your children and make your home centered on the love of Christ. Make your home protected by the power of Christ.

You will be asked during the service to commit yourself to teach your child the truths of the Christian faith, to be a Christian example to your child, to instruct your child in the ways of the Lord by being an active participant in the children's and youth ministries. You will be asked if you will commit yourself to encourage your child to accept Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord



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under the guidance of the Holy Spirit? You will be asked by the pastor if you agree to these things by saying, “We do” (both parents) or “I do” (single parent).

The pastor will ask the church, “Do all of you promise to join these (parents or parent) in prayer for (the child’s name) so that he or she may trust Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior. If you accept this responsibility, will you indicate it by saying, I do.”

The pastor will pray over the child and the parents.

After the prayer, the pastor will ask the church to give you a hand.

### **What do I receive at the Baby Dedication?**

You will receive a certificate that will commemorate the date of your child’s dedication. You will also receive a small Bible that you and other family members will sign. You should give this Bible to your child when they are old enough to understand and explain your commitment to them and the Lord.

### **When can the Baby Dedication take place?**

We perform Baby Dedications during our Sunday morning services. You will need to tell the office staff which service you will be attending.

### **How should I and my child dress?**

The Harbor Church is a casual place so most people dress in jeans and shorts. You can dress in comfortable clothes or formal. It is up to you. However, you want to look for pictures.

### **Is there a payment for having my child dedicated?**

No. Nothing in the Bible speaks of paying for a baby dedication. We want you to enjoy this time with your child.

### **How do I schedule a baby dedication?**

Email the church office at [office@theharborfl.org](mailto:office@theharborfl.org) or call at 813-920-9922 to schedule a date.