



*inspiring people to say 'yes' to Jesus*

# WHAT IS CHILD DEDICATION?

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### **We demonstrate Loving by...**

Loving each other in God's love through spiritual, emotional and practical action. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another. John 13:34-35

### **We demonstrate Inspiring by...**

Spurring one another on, applying our gifts of service, inspiring others to express their Spiritual gifts. Let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds. Hebrews 10:24



### **We demonstrate Going by...**

Going and making disciples, inviting people into a relationship with Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations ... teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. Matthew 28:19-20

### **We demonstrate Living by...**

Devoting ourselves to Christ's way of living with other believers, through authentic discipleship. They devoted themselves to the apostles' teaching and to fellowship, to the breaking of bread and to prayer. Acts 2:42



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## WHAT IS A CHILD DEDICATION?

Child dedication is an opportunity for parents/caregivers to **present their child(ren)** before the church and for parents to **dedicate their own lives** to being the primary faith influencer in the life of their children, raising their children to love and honour our heavenly father.

Alongside this, it is an invitation for the church to **affirm and support the family** as appropriate. (A dedication/presentation is not a baptism or something that guarantees getting into heaven)

## WHY WE PRESENT CHILDREN PUBLICLY

Psalm 127:3 says “Children are a gift from the Lord; they are a reward from him.” (NLT). Children are a gift from God and thus it is our privilege and responsibility to exercise parental stewardship over these gifts and raise them in honour of him. So we thank God for them. In addition, we have the great responsibility to care for them as gifts from God, but also the privilege of enjoying the gift of children.

As part of the dedication, we will be **recognising and presenting this child publicly** and praying for God’s blessing over them. We can find precedent and examples of this in scripture. As we find in 1 Samuel 1, where Hannah presented her son Samuel to the Lord, and in Luke 2, where Mary and Joseph presented Jesus in the temple, we too bring our children before God to thank him for his gift and to affirm our commitment to raising them in honour of him.

## WHY PARENTS DEDICATE THEMSELVES TO RAISING GODLY CHILDREN

We encourage **parents to dedicate their lives** to raising their children to love and honour our heavenly father. This flows from their own personal and living faith in Jesus, setting an example at home of following Jesus and expressing God’s love, and allowing children to grow and mature and make their own decision of faith and baptism as they appropriately understand. (Luke 2:40-42)

Deuteronomy 6:4-7 reminds us of our responsibility as parents to live out our faith and to impress our faith on our children. It is important that we share our faith with our children and teach them how to live according to God’s word.

*<sup>4</sup>“Listen, O Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord alone.<sup>[a]</sup> <sup>5</sup>And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. <sup>6</sup>And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. <sup>7</sup>Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up. (Deut 6:4-7 NLT)*

## THE CHURCH FAMILY’S ROLE IN AFFIRMING THE FAMILY

The church is a family, a body of believers. In Ephesians 4:16 Paul writes “<sup>16</sup>*He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.*” The public presentation of a child and the dedication of their parents is also an opportunity for the **church body to affirm them**; to stand with the family, to witness the commitment and promises they make, and to offer their support and assistance in helping parents keep those promises.

## THE DEDICATION SERVICE

1. Introduce the Child Dedication and invite family to the stage.
  - a. Speak about what Child Dedication is and why we do it (summary of above)
  - b. What is “Child dedication”, why we present the child, dedicate the parents, and the church family’s role (Presentation, Dedication, Affirmation)
  - c. Today there is a: Presentation, Dedication and Affirmation.
  - d. Whether parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, or friends, we each have a role to play in providing and creating a loving environment for our children to grow in and discover how to love one other and to know that are loved by their heavenly Father.
2. PRESENTATION: Introduce the family & present the child
  - a. Welcome \_\_\_\_\_, born \_\_\_\_\_
  - b. Acknowledge any family both present and online
  - c. Today we present you here before our church, before family and friends.
  - d. We recognise that all children are a gift and a blessing from God. So we thank God for you, for who you are and who you will become.
  - e. We welcome you here officially today as your parents present you before this congregation.
3. Reading of the blessing (if desired, by whomever the family has chosen)
4. DEDICATION OF PARENTS: Asking parents the dedication questions:
  - a. Do you thank God for the gift of \_\_\_\_\_, and do you trust God to help you as parents to care for them? **Yes, we do**
  - b. Do you promise to teach \_\_\_\_\_ about God and all He’s done for us, with the hope that \_\_\_\_\_ will one day make his/her own decision to follow Jesus? **Yes, we will**
  - c. Do you promise to provide a home that is loving and honouring to God, where \_\_\_\_\_ can grow in faith, hope, love and obedience to God? **Yes, we will**
  - d. Do you promise to bring \_\_\_\_\_ up within the community of the local church, and to encourage \_\_\_\_\_ throughout his/her journey to obediently follow God’s purpose and to exercise the gifts entrusted to him/her? **Yes, we will**
5. AFFIRMATION: Invite the church to stand, to affirm their commitment to the family
  - a. I ask you all to stand, and if you agree to affirm this family and stand with them as they raise their children, to respond with the words on the screen
  - b. Do you, the family, friends, and community of Como Baptist Church, promise by God’s help, to be faithful in your calling as members of the body of Christ to help this family to be faithful to God, to offer your love and care, and support this family as they raise \_\_\_\_\_ in Christian love? **With God’s help, we will**
6. Pray over the family
  - a. \_\_\_\_\_, you are one of God’s beautiful children. A gift to your parents. Every part of your life is known by God and he has great plans for you. May the blessing of God be with you today and always.....[continue with spontaneous pastoral prayer for this child]
7. Give the family their Dedication Certificate

## EXAMPLES OF CHILD BLESSINGS

Writing a blessing for your child is a special opportunity for you to express something very specific to them and to God. Pray about what you could say to them and try it out. It doesn't have to be long! Typically a prayer of blessing bestows hope and a future. Here are some suggested steps:

1. Pray about what to say.
2. As you start writing, describe the future, a hope and even a destiny for your child.
3. Integrate scripture that you want to pray over your child.
4. Write in your own voice, how you would say it, not how you think it should be said "in church"!
5. Aim for about 100 words.

Below are some example blessings and verses that parents have used. Feel free to use any part of this that you feel might be appropriate for you and your child - but equally feel free to use any other appropriate verse or material.

1. My son Jackson, I bless you in the name of our king Jesus. And I pray Proverbs 3:5-6 over your life, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him and he will make straight your paths." May God grow you into a mighty man for his kingdom, with a lion's heart for his truth and his ways. Jackson, may you always remember that you were made to worship God. We love you son.
2. My daughter Eden, your name means "delightful", and you certainly are delightful. Your smile and your bright spirit lights up our home. We love you and bless you today, praying that you will always know that you are loved as our daughter, but also that you are a daughter of the King. May God grow and bless you into a woman who brings glory to his name. We pray 1 Samuel 1:28 for you today, "Now I am giving you to the Lord, and you will belong to the Lord your whole life".

### Sample Scriptures:

*(these are merely examples - you can choose any scripture you like)*

Joshua 1:9  
Jeremiah 29:11  
Colossians 1:9  
Ephesians 3:16-19  
1 Samuel 1:27  
Proverbs 22:6  
Proverbs 3:5-6  
Psalm 139:13-16



*Scan the QR code to open and read all these verses at once*

## PRE-DEDICATION CATCH UP WITH THE FAMILY

- Confirm the full name and date of birth for the child(ren) to be dedicated
- Talk about the child. Ask about their character and personality and uniqueness

Full name: \_\_\_\_\_

DOB: \_\_\_\_\_

- Discuss what a child dedication is and why we do it (see below texts)
- Walk through the dedication service
- Confirm the date of the upcoming dedication
- Offer parents chance to write a blessing they can read over their child at the dedication. This blessing can be read by the parents or by another person they choose (e.g. grandparent, close friend, godparent etc) (examples below)
- Ask parents to
  - Invite their family and friends
  - If people cannot attend they can join the service via zoom. The link is on the front page of our website [comobaptist.org.au](http://comobaptist.org.au)
  - Send through 2-3 or up to 10 good quality photos to show rotating on the screens during the dedication
  - Write a blessing (if they wish to)
- Remind them the blessing (if desired) and the photos are required 1 week in advance. Send them to Ben or the Office email addresses.
- Pray over the child, the family, and their household



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