Family Community Church

BABY DEDICATION BOOKLET

Family Community Church
2434 E. Nees Ave.
Fresno, Ca 93720
Reverend Chester Lee McGensy, Senior Pastor

Considering Baby Dedication?

We are delighted that you, as parents, are interested in making a public commitment to raise your child in the ways of God. The Bible says, "Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him." *(Psalms 127:3)*

We believe that scripture exhorts parents to raise their children and train them up in the ways of the Lord *(Proverbs 22:6)*. Therefore, we encourage parents to publicly commit themselves to Godly parenting in a sacred ceremony called "Baby Dedication."

We believe that salvation comes through repentance and confession of one's faith in Jesus Christ alone as their Savior (Romans 10:9 &10). We also believe that "water baptism" is symbolic of our confession of sin and the profession of Jesus as Lord (Romans 6:1 - 11). Since an infant is not old enough to understand a commitment to Christ, baby dedication is not related to their personal or eternal salvation. Therefore, water baptism should not be administered until a child is old enough to account for their sin and commit their lives to Christ.

Therefore, the "Baby Dedication" ceremony is a mother and Father committing themselves to God, one another, and dedicating their infant to the Lord. They vow to raise their newborn infant in a Christian home and church. The ultimate goal is that the parents will lead their child to a personal relationship with the Lord as the child reaches an age of personal accountability.

RESPONSIBILITIES INVOLVED IN BABY DEDICATION

Christian parents who dedicate a child are making a promise to the Lord to do everything within their power to raise the child in a godly way, prayerfully until they can decide to follow God. Parents who make this vow of commitment are instructed to raise the child in God's ways, not according to their ways. Some of the responsibilities include teaching and training the child in God's Word, demonstrating an example of godliness, disciplining according to God's ways, and praying earnestly for the child.

BABY DEDICATION GUIDELINES:

1. Parents should be attending Family Community Church weekly for the past three months before requesting a baby dedication ceremony.

2. Only infants twelve months or younger will be considered for public dedication.

3. Only members of Family Community Church who are married & living together, saved, and baptized can have a Sunday morning worship dedication ceremony (some exceptions may apply).

4. When parents/s are not married, yet members of the church, saved and baptized, they can choose from options two (2) and three (3) as listed below, entitled: "Type of Dedication Ceremonies."

NOTE: Since the emphasis of this ceremony is on the commitment of parents to raise the child in a Christian and Godly environment, parents living together outside of marriage will not be eligible for a public dedication ceremony.

TYPES OF DEDICATION CEREMONIES

Option I: Ceremony during Sunday Worship Service
This option is for members of Family Community Church who are married & living together, saved, and baptized (some exceptions may apply).

Option 2: Private Ceremony at the Church
This option is for members of Family Community Church who are married where there is only one believing spouse or single parent/s, that is, saved and baptized.

Option 3: Private Ceremony at your Home
This option is for members of Family Community Church who are married where there is only one believing spouse or single parent/s, that is, saved and baptized.

CEREMONY PROCEDURES:

1. During the worship service, the pastor will ask the parents to bring their infant up front, where there will be chairs for the parents (to the right) and godparents (to the left).

2. Parents and their guests are requested to be seated with their infant in any of the first four rows of the sanctuary.

3. Due to the sacredness of this occasion, parents should wear proper attire in keeping with the reverence and dignity of coming to the Altar of God. Ladies are encouraged to wear items that do not expose cleavage and remember that they will be seated in front of the congregation.

4. The parents may, if they desire, request two other family members or friends (other than the godparents) to stand with them at the Altar, behind the chairs. These two individuals should likewise be Christians and be dressed in proper church attire.

DEDICATION CHARGE

At the dedication ceremony, the parents stand before the congregation with their child and may be asked the following questions:

- Do you today recognize this child as the gift of God and give heartfelt thanks for God's blessing?

- Do you now dedicate your child to the Lord who gave him/her to you, surrendering all worldly claims upon their lives in the hope that they will belong wholly to God?

- Do you pledge as parents that, with God's help, you will bring up your children in the discipline and instruction of the Lord, making every reasonable effort, with patience and love, to build the Word of God, the character of Christ, and the joy of the Lord into their lives?

- Do you promise to provide, through God's blessing, for your children's physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual needs, looking to your heavenly Father for the wisdom, love, and strength to serve them and not use them?

- Do you promise, with God helping you, to make it your regular prayer that, by God's grace, your child will come to trust in Jesus Christ alone for the forgiveness of their sin and the fulfillment of all His promises to them, even eternal life; and in this faith follow Jesus as Lord and obey his teachings?

WHAT ARE GODPARENTS?

The godparents are general1y composed of both a female and male member, not necessarily from the same couple. However, only one godparent is necessary. The godparent/s needs to be a practicing member of the faith to which the child is being dedicated. In addition, they must be sufficiently well-connected to the child's family to exercise the responsibilities they undertake in the service.

At infant dedication, godparents and the child's parents are required to make some statements together. The role of the godparent has become that of a "supporting friend" who assists the parents and takes a particular interest in the child but does not stand in for the parents or make up for any lack in their care. Your chief responsibility is to support your godchild in living a Christian life in fellowship with the church. You are promising to do all in your power to keep him/her in his/her life in Christ"The best way to do this is to help make sure he/she gets to church regularly. Setting an example by regular church attendance and being willing to take your godchild with you to worship service in the events the parent/s cannot. This is a great witness and an acceptable way to keep your oath as a godparent.

Are godparents also commissioned as guardians? Unfortunately, no. The church has no power to appoint guardians. Parents wishing to appoint guardians in the event of their deaths should specify this in their wills and seek legal counsel.

Christian Responsibilities of a Godparent

I. Pray for your godchild regularly
2. Set an example of Christian living
3. Help him/her to grow in the faith of God
4. Give every encouragement to follow Christ and fight against evil

Questions to ask yourself before agreeing to be a godparent

- Are your views on religion, spirituality, and morality similar to the child's parents? If they are, all well and good. If not, make sure the parents know your views before confirming you as their godparents.

- Are you ready to help the parents of this child in their duty as Christian parents?

- Are you ready for a relationship? Being a godparent involves developing a relationship with the child and helping the parents in his/her spiritual upbringing. There are many different ways of carrying out your duties as a godparent, but one of the most important things to do is build a relationship with your godchild. Make time to see your godchild as regularly as you can. Try to give them one-to-one attention: find out what makes them tick, what makes them happy or sad. Spending time with your godchild can be very rewarding (for you both).

- Do you have an interest in the child's well-being? If you really cannot tolerate children or have the time to invest in their lives, you should say no, rather than agreeing and then disappointing them later. But bear in mind that many godparents find they only begin to establish a relationship with their godchild when they reach a teenager.

SCRIPTURES FOR BABY DEDICATION

Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the watchmen stand guard in vain. In vain you rise early and stay up late. Toiling for food to eat for he grants sleep to those he loves. Sons are a heritage from the Lord, children a reward from him. Like arrows in the hands of a warrior are sons born in one's youth blessed is the man whose quiver is filled with them. They will not be put to shame when they contend with their enemies in the gate.

-Psalm 127:1-5

Honor your Father and your mother. as the Lord your God has commanded you so that you may live long and that it may go well with you in the Land the Lord yow• God is giving you. -

Deuteronomy 5:16

Hear, 0 Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord yo1rr God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength. These commandments that I give you today are to be upon your heads. 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.

-Deuteronomy 6:4-7

"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." And he worshiped the Lord there.

-1 Samuel 1:27,28

VITAL INFORMATION

1. If you understand and agree with the guidelines and procedures outlined, you should proceed to fill out the "Baby Dedication" Request Form.

2. The "Request of Baby Dedication" fom1 must be returned to the church office four weeks before the scheduled and approved dedication ceremony.

3. The information from this form will be used to provide the parents with a "Certificate of Dedication."

4. There are no charges or fees for the dedication of infants.

PHOTOGRAPH

Pictures can preserve your special day and bring back memories for years to come. Choose your photographers with care. Talking to your photographer in advance of all photo plans with the senior pastor is essential.

You and your photographer will be given maximum freedom to record your desired shots. Still, your photographers will not be allowed to interfere with the duties of the pastor or interfere with the sanctity of the ceremony.

If a videographer is used during the service, they will need to meet with the senior pastor to discuss appropriate placement and movement.

You may submit a photo of the child via email to (admin@fccfresno.com) to be shown on the overhead screen during the ceremony.

Thanks for considering Family Community Church as part of this memorable day!

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