

# Child Dedication



## Congratulations!

Children are a gift from God and are precious to Him. Dedicating our children to the Lord is an important covenant we make before God. It is through baby and child dedication that parents make this covenant and publicly proclaim their faith in Christ and their commitment to pass their faith on to their children.

Raising children is an awesome privilege and responsibility. Through the Bible, God commands parents to love God with all their heart, soul, mind and strength, and by doing so, set an example from which their children can learn to love and follow God, too. While the duty of teaching children belongs to parents, **turningpoint** wants to be a trusted partner with parents in their journeys ahead.



**Deut 6:4-9** Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the LORD your 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 hearts. 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. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of your houses and on your gates.

## What are Baby Dedications?

We are so glad that you have decided to investigate dedicating your child unto the Lord! Dedication is about you making a promise before God to raise your child in a Godly home. While we understand no one is perfect, we encourage you to model Godly character for your children by living according to the Scriptures.

Our children are a gift from God. Luke 2:21- 40 Jesus was brought to the temple by Mary & Joseph to be prayed over and dedicated back to God.

Dedication is also an opportunity for parents to be prayed over for wisdom and God's blessing as they honour Him in raising this child.

To dedicate your child back to God is to declare that you will train this child in the ways of the Lord. You are placing this child in God's hands and trusting that He will be guiding you as you have asked Him to. It is acknowledging that this child is safer in the hands of the almighty God than trying to do it alone without Him.

## What is dedication?

The word "dedication" means "to consecrate" or "the act of setting apart people or things to serve God". In the Old Testament, we see how Hannah prayed for a child and promised God that the child, Samuel, would be given to the Lord all the days of his life. (1 Samuel 1:11, 28). In the New Testament, we see how Mary and Joseph took Jesus to the temple to "present" Him to the Lord (Luke 2:22).



These parents took this act very seriously and were making a commitment in presenting their children to the Lord. Bringing a child before the Lord is not a secret formula for keeping them from ever experiencing harm or pain. It is a commitment that the parents make to do their part in raising the child before the Lord. Just as the Nazarite children in the Bible had set boundaries and lived their lives set apart to God from birth (Judges 13:5), parents today, through baby dedication, commit to a lifestyle of raising their children separated from the world and its values.

## What kind of commitment am I making?

As parents, you begin by publicly acknowledging your personal relationship with Jesus Christ. As you present your child to God in the presence of the pastor and congregation, you are recognizing that he or she belongs to God and has been born to experience His love and to serve Him.

You are committing, as Christian parents, to teach the truths of God's Word in your home and participate in regular worship with your children. You are also committing to being a Christ-like example who seeks to lead your children to a personal faith in Christ as soon as they are ready.

## What age should my child be?

We recommend that children be dedicated during the first 9 months of their lives. As parents come to understand the need for dedication we recognize they may already have children that are older than 9 months.

We see from scripture that a child is viewed as a child and under the parent's spiritual covering till the time they are old enough to make an informed and heart decision to accept Jesus for themselves. Therefore up until that time it is right for the parents to make the vow of dedication.

## Are there any requirements?

Only those parents who are Christians can present their children to the Lord. Parents must be actively involved in the life of the church through regular attendance. Because of the nature of the commitment being made at a child dedication, a non-believing parent would be unable to make this commitment as they, by their non-believing, don't know who they would be dedicating the child too. The Bible clearly teaches what each person must do in order to receive eternal life. We must agree with God that we are sinners, we must repent of our sins, and we must receive, by faith, Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour.

This requires belief on our part that Jesus died for our sins, and faith that He was raised from the dead and has given us eternal life. It is clear then, that this is a decision that must be made by someone old enough to understand the commitment they are making to the Lord. For some this may be at a very early age, or later in life, but salvation is a choice that must be made by each individual and cannot be made for them. There are no rituals or anything else that we can do for another person to ensure their eternal destiny. There are however, many things we can do as parents to teach our children about the Lord and to instruct them in His ways, in the hope that they will someday choose to follow Him, and accept Jesus as their personal Saviour.

We do not perform "baptism" on infants or very young children; we simply bring them and their parents before God and His people for prayer, and to make a vow to raise them according to His will. That is why we view this as more of a "parent" or family dedication than a baby dedication.

As the parent we are vowing to commit our child to the Lord, to instruct them in His Word, to nurture and discipline them according to scripture, and to be a Godly example for them to follow. If you yourself are not a born again Christian, and have not yet made a commitment to the Lord in your own life, then you will not be able to keep this vow.

We therefore will not dedicate a parent to the Lord who does not know Him as their personal Saviour. It would be hypocrisy for us to allow a parent who does not know Jesus Christ as Lord to make a vow they cannot keep.

There are many examples in the Bible of people who made vows to God, and then did not keep them. They were dealt with very severely. We do not want to encourage you to take part in an "empty" ritual. We see this as an act of protection, rather than rejection, and hope you will understand our viewpoint. The dedication of your family to God is something far too serious to be entered into lightly. It is our hope that this will help you to recognize the extent of the commitment you will be making.

## Responsibilities of a Christian Parent:

Christian parents are to do all they can to “set apart” their child to God until that child can make his or her own choice regarding a relationship with Jesus Christ. By dedicating a child to the Lord, parents make a vow to raise their child in God’s ways, not their own way. They commit themselves to this promise and must do all they can to keep it. The responsibilities God has entrusted to Christian parents include continuously praying for their children (Job 1:5), instructing them in the way of the Lord (Proverbs 22:6), setting a godly example (Proverbs 20:7), and disciplining them as the Lord would discipline us (Proverbs 29:15,17; 13:24). These responsibilities can only be fulfilled in Christ’s strength (Philippians 4:13). As a parent, your devotion to God—or lack of it—will make a resounding impression on the next generation. May your legacy be a godly legacy!

## Are you ready to make this commitment?

As you prepare for this dedication, there are several questions which will help you in considering how you can best commit and dedicate yourselves to be the parents God desires you to be.



First, Baby Dedication is an act of faith in God. It is a covenant with God and His church to teach and nurture your child. So, the first question to ask is, “Am I a Christian?” To dedicate your child to God, you must first be dedicated to Him and possess a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

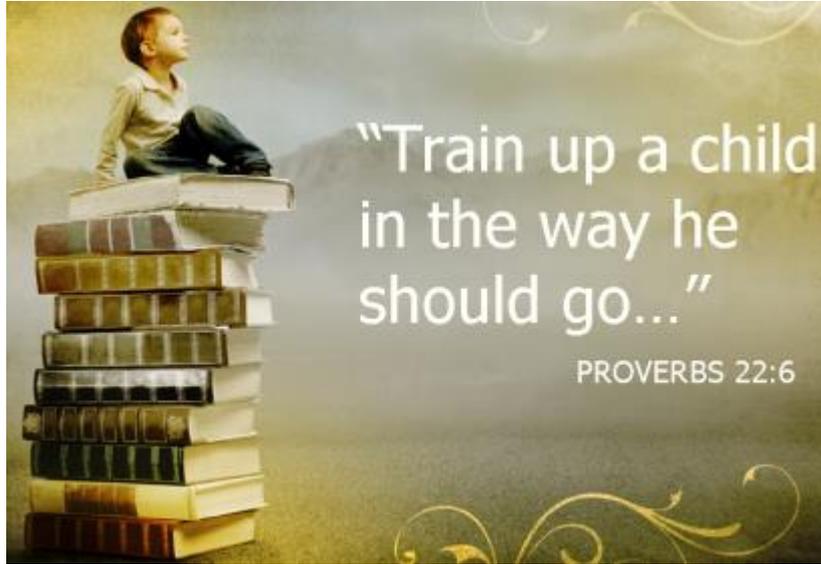
The next question is, “Are we serious about this dedication?” You should ask yourselves if you truly want to see your child serve God. If not, it’s better not to make such an oath before God.

The third question is, “Are we willing to oversee our child’s spiritual development?” That is God’s call on your life as a parent, and no one has more influence over a child’s spiritual development than a parent, for good or for bad. So, you must be dedicated to modelling a growing relationship with Christ, living a holy life, and worshiping and ministering through involvement in a church family. It means giving your child opportunities and encouragement to grow in knowledge and in faith in God and to become the person God intends for him or her to be.

It does not mean, however, that you will or you must do it perfectly, because you will not. Nor will your family or **turningpoint** or its leaders be perfect partners. As we make this commitment together, we recognize wholeheartedly that we need God’s help. We need His grace.

## Pray constantly for your child.

A parent's responsibility to pray does not end at his child's dedication, but continues until the day he commits his own life to the Lord. We have an example of this in Job 1:5. In regards to his children, it says "Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all, for Job said, 'It may be that my sons have sinned and cursed God in their hearts,' Thus Job did continually."



## Instruct your child in the way of the Lord.

We are taught in Ephesians 6:4 to "bring them (your children), up in the training and instruction of the Lord." And Proverbs 22:6 adds, "Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it."

## Be a living example of Christ to your children.

It does not do any good to instruct your child in the ways of the Lord, if you do not "walk" what you "talk". Proverbs 20:7 says, "The righteous man leads a blameless life; blessed (happy) are his children after him." The reason for the blessed state of this man's children is that they have someone to look up to as an example for their own behaviour. We must strive to be an example to our children even as Christ is our example.

## Discipline your children as the Lord would have you do.

The book of Proverbs gives us many practical teachings concerning the discipline we are to provide for our children. Proverbs 29:15-17, 13:24, 19:18, 22:15. It is clear from God's word that by training our children we are showing our love for them. This brings us to the motivation for discipline. Any discipline you give to your child should always be done for his profit and not as a release for your own anger or frustration.

Remember, you are to discipline your child in the same way that the Lord disciplines you. God never strikes at His children in anger, but rather chastens us in love. Colossians 3:21 says "Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged." We are not to break the spirit, but instead are to encourage spiritual growth. Discipline should be used to instruct, rather than to simply punish.

## What Should We Expect at the Dedication?

After your request has been approved, and the date verified, you simply need to show up at the service that has been chosen. We recommend that you arrive 30 minutes early and check-in with the Pastor, so we know that you are here and ready. Baby dedications generally occur following the worship portion of the service and before the message. During the Sunday service the Pastor will call you to bring your child to the stage area. You are permitted to bring family members with you, as long as they are believers also. The Pastor will share about the importance of dedicating children to the Lord, and then pray over your child as well as yourselves. The ceremony lasts about 10-15 minutes.

## Who is invited onto the platform?

You are welcome to have any of your older children on stage with you for the dedication if you like. Typically, only the immediate family comes onto the platform or, as arranged, special guests. If you desire for other family members to stand with you, please indicate so on the application attached. We are limited for space on the stage. If you would like, we can arrange for the ushers to reserve seats for your family and friends who are invited for the dedication.

## Who do I bring my baby to for a dedication?

As Jesus was brought by His parents Joseph and Mary to the leaders of the synagogue to be dedicated, so can we bring our babies to the leaders of the church to be dedicated. In the context of **turningpoint** Church, this may be your Connect Group Leader or one of the Pastors to arrange a time for a dedication service.

## What is the process?

Let your Connect Group Leader or one of the Pastors know that you would like to have your baby dedicated and how you would like this special occasion to happen. If you are not in a Connect Group, please contact the church office, who will assist you with your arrangements.

## What Vows do I as a parent make?

- o Train up your children in the ways of God.
- o Be an example of Christian living both inside and outside the home.
- o Provide for, protect, and nurture your children.
- o Make them a part of your family, sharing with them your love, your time, your faith and your life.
- o Teach them to love the same Jesus that you love ... and to serve, obey and honour Him with all their heart.



## What commitment are I and the church making?

Parents: - Are you are willing to commit your children to God, and to dedicate yourself to raising them in God's strength, and for His honour and glory?

Church: - Are you willing to commit yourselves before God, and to dedicate yourself to helping these parents to raise this child before God?

## What format does a dedication take and can I choose my own date?

Baby dedications are only able to occur on certain weekends when our service schedule allows. The dedication is done as part of a Sunday Morning or Evening service. There may be friends or ones in your Connect Group that can be asked to pray and come with a scripture to share during this special time. Your child will also be presented with a Certificate of Dedication on this special occasion.

## What about video or photography?

You are welcome to photograph or video the baby dedication. Also, a CD or USB of the service, which includes the baby dedication, any words given or scriptures shared, is available for purchase at the Info Desk. Please remember the dedication is a public event and as such people may take photos and video and broadcast them widely which **turningpoint** church has no control over.



## What about after the service food/party?

As the **turningpoint** church family is involved in the dedication service, any church food/party needs to keep in mind numbers of people that would be in attendance. Also **turningpoint** runs many events after the services so any request to hold an after-service event at church would need to be arranged with the Head Deacon at least 2 weeks before the dedication.

Many parents wanting food/party find it easier to invite family and friends to a prearranged event at their home etc. At **turningpoint** it would also be possible to hire one of the halls on site to hold a food/party event. This would also need to be arranged at least 2 week before the dedication.



# Parent-Child DEDICATION

# Baby Dedication Questionnaire

Dear Parent, It is our desire at **turningpoint** for the parents of each child being dedicated to the Lord to have a Biblical understanding of what “Baby Dedication” signifies. This is why we have you answering a few brief questions below.

Thank You

Date: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Father name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Mother Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Father’s email \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Mother’s email \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile \_\_\_\_\_

Marriage Date \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_ Phone Home \_\_\_\_\_ Work \_\_\_\_\_

Full name of child to be dedicated: \_\_\_\_\_

Girl \_\_\_\_\_ Boy \_\_\_\_\_ Birth date \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

Child’s place of birth \_\_\_\_\_

Date you are requesting for your child’s dedication: \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_

*Are there any other things you would request for the dedication?*

- *Favourite song, item, Power Point*
- *Parents/grandparents on stage, people to honour etc.*
- *Seats reserved for your family and friends?*
- *A booking for a room or hall for a celebration/party (number of expected)?*
- *Do you require help with serving or cleaning up the booked room?*

## My Personal Commitment as a Parent.

- As Father have you accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour? \_\_\_\_\_
- If so, how long have you been a Christian? \_\_\_\_\_
- Date water baptised \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_ Date Holy Spirit filled \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_
- As Mother have you accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Saviour? \_\_\_\_\_
- If so, how long have you been a Christian? \_\_\_\_\_
- Date water baptised \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_ Date Holy Spirit filled \_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_\_
- As Father briefly describe your conversion experience

- As Mother briefly describe your conversion experience

- If attending **turningpoint** Church for less the six months, where did you attend church before? \_\_\_\_\_
- We commit to being a regular attender at **turningpoint**.
- As parents we commit to continue to grow in God.
- Our child will attend all available children's Ministry within **turningpoint**.
- We will share Faith, The Word and Pray with our child at home.
- We will give our child every opportunity to make a decision to follow Jesus.
- Please describe in your own words what having your baby dedicated means to you, and why you desire to do so.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed Father

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signed Mother

\_\_\_/\_\_\_/\_\_\_  
Date

## Is a Dedication a Substitution for Baptism?

This event is not infant baptism. We believe that when people are old enough to understand what it means to put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour, they should have the opportunity to make that choice for themselves. An infant is not able to understand sin, forgiveness, the sacrifice of Jesus, and what it means to have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

This event is about your commitment as a parent to lead your child into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ, so that as he gets older, you are able to guide him and to help him understand what that means. Child dedication is an act of the parents, whereas Baptism is an act of the individual before God.

Baptism is something that is done by a believer with the full understanding of what they are doing, making a declaration and a personal choice to take this obedient step in their walk with God.

A child dedication is done by parents for the child, where the parents are placing the child in God's hands, and this cannot be a substitute for something that is done by free will and choice of that child at a later date.

**Matthew 18:1-6** At that time the disciples came to Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" He called a little child and had him stand among them. And he said: "I tell you the truth, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. Therefore, whoever humbles himself like this child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoever welcomes a little child like this in my name welcomes me. But if anyone causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a large millstone hung around his neck and to be drowned in the depths of the sea.

Baptism is what is done to show that the individual has made a personal commitment and choice to run from anything that God would call sin, and to turn to God and vow to follow Him for the rest of their life. This is clearly something that children cannot do. So each child, at their individual time, must make their own decision to follow Jesus. The manner in which the Bible sets out to announce this decision is full immersion baptism.

**Acts 2: 38-39** "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. This promise is to you, to your children, and to those far away all who have been called by the Lord our God."



**turningpoint**  
CHURCH

# Sunday Services

## **CRANBOURNE**

Ps Phil & Ps Norma Cayzer  
1785 South Gippsland Highway  
Cranbourne East

## **URBAN FAITH**

Ps Julie Ohlson  
Factory 2  
151 Princes Highway, Hallam  
Seaford: Girl Guides Hall, Seaford

## **KOO WEE RUP**

Ps Sean La'brooy  
335 Rossiter Road  
Koo Wee Rup  
Sundays

## **MANSFIELD CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP**

Ps Nathan Bargerbos  
3 Sovereign Court  
Mansfield

## **LILYDALE**

Ps Joel & Ps Sieni Cayzer  
7 Hardy Street  
Lilydale

## **WILDPATH**

Ps David Owens  
Frankston Library  
60 Playne Street  
Frankston

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