

Dedication of Children

Presenting their children for dedication this morning:

(Name of parents) (Name of children)

Jesus was presented by His parents in the Temple. In turn, He took young children in His arms and blessed them. In the act of dedication, we covenant together, as parents and as a church, making promises before God for the sake of these children.

Here we share joy over the gift of these children and praise God, the Giver of all life. We acknowledge that children are not the property of parents but are persons with whose welfare and nurture we are entrusted. Concerned for the challenges they will face in this world, and honestly aware of the sinfulness which will soon mar their lives, we here pray in trust that God will bless and protect them.

And we celebrate the importance of community and the truth that parents and children need not be alone. Here we confess and proclaim that all our hope rests in Jesus Christ and the best we can want for our children is that they become His true disciples.

Scripture calls us to see in children a sign of the kingdom of God. These children are a living sign that God welcomes us without condition, lavishing love and grace on all who come to Him with empty hands and open hearts.

Readings

Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might. Keep these words that I am commanding you today in your heart. Recite them to your children and talk about them when you are at home and when you are away, when you lie down and when you rise. Bind them as a sign on your hand, fix them as an emblem on your forehead, and write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

Deuteronomy 6:4-9

People were bringing little children to him in order that he might touch them; and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, 'Let the little children come to me; do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.' And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them. Mark 10:13-16

Promises

Pastor addressing the parents

Thanking God for the gift of your children,
do you accept the joys and duties of parenthood?

Parents: Yes, we do.

Pastor: Do you promise to bring your children up
within the Christian community,
nurtured by Christian love, so that, by God's grace,
one day they will come to confess
Jesus Christ as their Lord and Saviour?

Parents: Yes, we do.

Addressing the congregation

Gathered here as members of this congregation
and as representatives of the wider church of God,
do you promise to offer these children and their families
your love and support, and, being faithful in prayer,
will you share your faith with them
by word and example?

All: **Yes, we will.**

Blessing

Addressing the parents

What name have you given to the child?
Parents introduce child

Addressing the child

We welcome you into the community of God's people.
We rejoice, for you are God's gift to us.

The Lord bless you and keep you;
the Lord make his face to shine upon you
and be gracious to you;
the Lord lift the light of his countenance upon you
and give you peace, this day and always. Amen.

Prayer by the Congregation

All: Loving God, we thank You
for the gift of these children,
who have been made in Your image,
and now pray for their full human flourishing.
We know that we live in a broken world
and so we ask that
You will keep them safe from harm.
We pray for these parents and ask for Your help
in the care and nurture of their children.
We pray that their children might know
Your love through their love,
discover Your guidance through their guidance
and come to trust in You
and become disciples of Jesus.
This we ask in the name of our Saviour Jesus Christ.
Amen.

Every Mother, Every Father

Every mother, every father
called to raise up son or daughter:
May your heart be patient,
may your mind be clear,
may our God be with you
and calm your fears.

Words & music by Andy Bast and Bruce Benedict © 2017 Hymns from the Porter's Gate CCLI #7097861

Presentation of Gift