



blockhouse bay
community church

CHILD DEDICATION



UNDERSTANDING CHILD DEDICATION AT BBCC

Child Dedication at BBCC is a **public testimony by Christian parents** who commit themselves to raise their children according to Christian teaching and principles. It is an outward expression of an inward desire that their child comes to know God and follow Him throughout their lives. It's not compulsory, or commanded in the Bible, but it is supported by the Bible and Christian tradition and we see a number of good reasons to encourage its practice in our church family.

Child Dedication **does not make a child a Christian**, or promise future salvation to the parent or child. It is, however, a **commitment by parents** to create an atmosphere at home which encourages children to welcome Jesus into their life as Saviour and Lord.

As a Church we practice **Child Dedication rather than Infant Baptism or Christening** and its meaning and significance may be completely different depending upon the church background you are from. It is important that parents fully understand what Child Dedication at BBCC is, and further questions can be discussed with the Pastors.

Some people choose to ask a close Christian friend to be a **Spiritual Guardian (or God Parent)** for their child, although this is not a requirement of the dedication process. This person would be a mature Christian who is a close friend of the family and their responsibility is to support the family and the child in their spiritual development.

FOUR GOOD REASONS TO DEDICATE CHILDREN

Firstly, children are a precious gift from God and in the act of dedication we offer our children back to the Lord's service. **Secondly**, children are a vital part of the church family and should be cared for with dignity and respect. Dedication is a reminder of this responsibility shared by the church family. **Thirdly**, parents are responsible for the nurture of their children which includes their spiritual development. Child Dedication allows parents to affirm this responsibility in a public church setting and to seek God's wisdom and guidance for this important role of parenthood. **Finally**, there is good Biblical support in the examples of Samuel (1 Samuel 1:21-28) and Jesus (Luke 2:21-40) who were both dedicated as children.

AT WHAT AGE ARE CHILDREN DEDICATED?

There are no strict rules about the age, however, as a guideline, we encourage parents to dedicate their children **within the first 12 months of the child's life**. This helps keep the parents focused on providing a Christian upbringing from the very start. If you have questions about the suitable age of your child, please talk to our Pastors.



WHEN AND HOW ARE CHILDREN DEDICATED?

Child Dedications usually take place during the Sunday morning service. These can be scheduled at any time throughout the year but it is helpful to give us four weeks notice to assist with our planning.

The first step is for the parents to advise the Pastors. We'll arrange a meeting with the parents to further discuss the meaning of Child Dedication, the specific details of the service, and to answer any questions.

On the day of the dedication, the entire family, and any other guests you would like to be involved, will be asked to come on to the stage at the front of the church and participate in the Dedication ceremony.

The Dedication ceremony takes approximately five minutes and involves an explanation of the meaning and significance of Child Dedication to the congregation, an introduction of the family involved, the reading of a Bible passage, a challenge to the parents, and a prayer of blessing. Each family will be presented with a Dedication Certificate and you are welcome to take photos or video during the ceremony.

Some families like to organise special refreshments after the service so their guests can stay for a while and meet with the church family, however this is purely optional.

For further information, or to arrange a Child Dedication, please contact one of our Pastors.





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info@bbcc.org.nz



09 626 6284



76 Dundale Avenue, Blockhouse Bay, Auckland 0600



bbcc.org.nz