

*Train up a child in
the way he
should go;
even when
he is old
he will not
depart from it.*

- Proverbs 22:6

(ESV)



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Infant Baptism



Infant Baptism @ Our Church

Thank you for your interest in baptizing your child and may your family experience the fullness of God's blessings and His promise for eternal life.

What is infant baptism?

An act of infant baptism is a tradition that churches have developed to celebrate the birth of a child and to practice the continuing promises and covenants of God taught throughout scripture as signs of faith.

Infant Baptism is a church tradition. It is not specifically taught or commanded in the Bible, however it is similar to child dedication in its symbolic purposes.

It does not guarantee a child's salvation, however it is a public expression of the fact that your child belongs to God and you are making a declaration before God and those witnessing the ceremony of your commitment to raise your child to honor, respect and serve the Lord Jesus Christ.

What is the purpose of infant baptism?

It means to commit a child to God and God's purposes for that child. In one sense, this is what every Christian parent wants to do, but in another sense, parents can't actually make this decision on behalf of their children – as much as they might wish to!

Each child, as he or she gets older, will eventually have to make his or her own personal decision to respond to the gospel about whether or not to commit himself or herself to God. Parents can guide, teach, pray for, and lead their children, but parents cannot choose salvation for their child.

So even though we speak of the signs of faith that baptism represents, infant baptism is really a matter of the parents dedicating themselves to the Lord. With that in mind, we see two primary purposes for infant baptism:

1. For parents, joined by their church community, to celebrate the birth or adoption of a child, joyfully thanking God for this new addition to the family and to the church community.
2. For parents to commit themselves publicly to raise their child in the nurture and love of the Lord, and for the church to pray for them in their awesome responsibility as parents.

Who should have their infant baptized?

If we agree that infant baptism is primarily parents publicly dedicating themselves to raise their children in the nurture and love of the Lord, we'll agree that these three things should be true of the parents:

1. They should be committed Christians themselves. They should have reached a point of believing the Good News – that God invites them to be part of God's kingdom, family and mission in this world. They have confidence that Jesus lived and died to pay for their sins and rose from death to give them a new life, that God loves them, and that they can have a growing relationship with God as a free gift of grace. They shouldn't just be Christian in name – but rather, Christians from the heart, with a sincere personal, committed faith. (If you aren't sure how to become a committed Christian, please speak with one of our Elders— any of us would be glad to help you take this important step.)
2. They should be involved in the church – either as committed actively attending members or as people preparing for membership.
3. They should take seriously their responsibility to raise their children with a strong spiritual and biblical foundation. They should be committed to having their children in church, and even more importantly, to making God a part of their daily lives. There are two beautiful passages that describe this type of parenting, one from the Old Testament, and one from the New Testament: (*Deuteronomy 6:4-25*) (*Ephesians 6:4*)

Preparing for infant baptism

At our church, we generally have infant baptisms as a part of our regular services. You will be asked to meet with the pastor before for a time of study and review of the scriptures that provide us guidance to support the ideals of infant baptism and as part of your preparation to make six vows in the service.

You will also receive general counsel to allow and encourage believer's baptism in your child's future when he/she professes faith in Christ as an adult believer.

If upon study of the scriptures parents are not comfortable with the scriptural support for infant baptism, we encourage parents to pursue child dedication instead.

Our church considers the acts of infant baptism and child dedication as symbolic acts not saving ones and so they are interchangeable in our tradition based upon the consciences of our individual parents.

What does infant baptism involve?

You will be asked to join our Elders up front during a service. The pastor will introduce you and your child. After that, you will be asked to answer "We do" or "I do" after each vow is read to you. The infant baptism will conclude with a time of prayer and sprinkling of water on the child's head to baptize them in the name of the Father, The Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Scheduling and Confirmation

Upon approval, you will be contacted and offered several dates to select from for your infant baptism. We recommend that you not make travel plans for friends and relatives until your service has been confirmed.

Infant Baptism Vows

1. Will you do your best to raise this child to honor, revere, and love Jesus Christ?
2. Will you do your best to maintain a home where Jesus Christ is honored and obeyed, where the Word of God is the authority and Jesus Christ is the head?
3. Will you commit this child to God in prayer on a regular basis, trusting God to override your mistakes and make up for your shortcomings?
4. Will you actively rely on the Holy Spirit to raise this child and to incline his or her heart to the Lord?
5. Will you do your best to release this child to the will of God, whatever that might be, without bitterness or resistance?
6. Will you do your best to be fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ, so that this child has godly examples to follow?

These vows are based on the principle of Hannah's dedication of Samuel: *"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."* 1 Samuel 1:27-28

"And the Lord was gracious to Hannah. She conceived and gave birth to three sons and two daughters. Meanwhile, the boy Samuel grew up in the presence of the Lord."

1 Samuel 2:21