



# Parent & Child dedication



"Children are a gift from the Lord."  
Psalm 127:3





# Parent & Child Dedication Pamphlet

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# PARENT AND CHILD DEDICATION

Welcome to Parent & Child Dedication,

It's an exciting time when God blesses you with the gift of a child. We rejoice with you.

In the midst of all the excitement and changes that a new child brings to a home, it's important to take time to focus on what matters most.

That's what Parent & Child Dedication is all about. It's an opportunity for you to commit to being the primary spiritual example for your child. It's a time to declare "I'm going to raise my child to love and follow Jesus."

We want you to know that your church family is here to partner with you. We want to be your biggest fans, your strongest supporters and your trusted guide.

Between now and the upcoming dedication we want to encourage you, as parents, to take time to read over, discuss, and think deeply on the Scripture passages, and pray about the information on the following pages.

We are honored to be a part of your family's spiritual journey. We pray God's blessings will be on you and your child as you enter this time of dedication. We love you.

Your GMB Church Family

Psalm 127:3 (NLT) says, "Children are a gift from the Lord: they are a reward from him."

Children truly are a gift from the Lord. They bring so much joy into our lives.

Parenting is a journey. And as a church family, we want you to know that we're going to be there for you each step of the way. From the cradle to college, we're here to partner with you to see your child love and follow Jesus.

So here we are at the beginning of the journey...Parent and Child Dedication. Parent & Child Dedication is an opportunity for you to take some time at the beginning of the journey to really think about what will matter in the life of your child. It's a time to talk about and decide what you value and what you can do to have the greatest spiritual impact in your child's life.

There are 2 questions I want you to consider.

Question #1: What do I want most for my child? \_\_\_\_\_

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~ Academic success?

~ Athletic success?

~ Social success?

~ Financial success?

All of these are good things, but they are not the most important thing. The most important thing is that our children love and follow Jesus. Matthew 6:33 (NLT) says, "Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and live righteously and he will give you everything you need."

Question #2: What will get my best parenting time, effort, resources and planning? \_\_\_\_\_

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Psalm 127 is a great reminder of what's important and what true success is as a parent.

Psalm 127:1a (NLT) says:

"Unless the Lord builds a house, the work of the builders is wasted." The foundation is what a house is built on. It's vital to have a good foundation for a house to remain standing. I think we all realize that it's vital to build our child's life foundation ...our family's life foundation...on God and His Word.

You're getting off to a great start by dedicating your child and yourself to God. Let's look at some Biblical examples of people who dedicated their child to God.

Hannah dedicated her son, Samuel, to the Lord. 1 Samuel 1:27-28 (NLT) says: "I asked the Lord to give me this boy, and he has granted my request. Now I am giving him to the Lord, and he will belong to the Lord his whole life. And they worshiped the Lord there."

Hannah had prayed for a long time for a son. When God answered her prayer, and gave her a son, she dedicated him back to God. He grew up to be a great leader for God.

Mary & Joseph took Jesus to the Temple to be dedicated when He was a baby. (Luke 2:21-28 NLT). Mary and Joseph dedicated Jesus publicly.

These are two great examples set before us in God's Word that we can follow as parents.

Let's take a few minutes to define what Parent and Child Dedication means so everyone can have a clear understanding.

First, let's look at what it is not. Parent and Child Dedication IS NOT...

- A substitute for a personal decision to follow Christ. The dedication is not the "salvation" of the child. A young child is not able to understand sin, what Jesus did for us, their need for forgiveness and what it means to follow Jesus.

Our prayer is that your child will grow up in the knowledge of God and His Son, Jesus, and be filled with the Holy Spirit when he or she is old enough to understand and make a personal decision to follow Him. {We have included a sample letter at the end of this pamphlet that you can use to write a letter to your child now for when they make a decision to follow Christ at a later date. The idea would be to place it in a sealed envelope and present it to your child on the day he/she accepts Jesus as his/her Forgiver, Saviour and Friend.}

- A show or ritual. The dedication is focused on your heart commitment to God.
- Infant baptism. In the Bible, baptism is always when people are old enough to understand what it means and can make the choice for themselves. It's for people who have made a decision to follow Jesus and want to publicly declare that decision. If you have questions regarding Infant baptism please refer to the MB Confession of Faith <https://www.mennonitebrethren.ca/mb-beliefs/the-mb-confession-of-faith-detailed-edition/> (see #8) or contact Pastor Alex at: [leadpastor@gmbchurch.ca](mailto:leadpastor@gmbchurch.ca)
- Just for the child. That is why it is called Parent and Child Dedication. This dedication is just as much about you - the parent.

Now let's look at what Parent and Child Dedication IS...

- A time of thanking God for the gift of your child. As we read earlier in Psalm 127, children are a gift from God.
- A time of dedicating your child to God. We must realize that children belong first and foremost to God our Father. We have the awesome responsibility of caring for His children.
- A time to publicly declare that you are going to raise your child according to God's ways. There's an amazing verse in Genesis 18:18-19 (NLT) about Abraham. It says: "Abraham will certainly become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth will be blessed through him. I have singled him out so that he will direct his sons and their families to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just. Then I will do for Abraham all that I have promised."

At the dedication, you will be making a vow to God to direct your children in the ways of God just as Abraham did. We all desire for God to say the same thing about us as He did about Abraham. In fact, go ahead and write your name(s) in the verse....

"I have singled out \_\_\_\_\_ to direct their sons and their  
(Parents Names)  
families to keep the way of the Lord by doing what is right and just, so that God can  
complete in \_\_\_\_\_ all that He promised them.  
(Parents Names)

- A time to pray a blessing over your child. During the dedication, the Pastor will pray a blessing over your child asking God's Spirit to guide and protect your child.
- A time for the church family to commit to support you and partner with you as you lead your child spiritually. As part of the dedication, the church will be asked if they will support you on your family's spiritual journey. They will live out their promise by praying for you and your child as well as volunteering to serve you and your child.
- A time to commit yourself to being the spiritual leader and example for your child. Think about this statement: "No one has more influence in your child's life than you." There are 168 hours in a week. Approximately 1.5 hour per week your child is at church. What happens at church in your child's life during that one hour each week is very important. However there remains 166.5 hours each week. You can see that as a parent, you have the greatest opportunity to influence your child spiritually. What happens at home spiritually is just as important as what happens at church. It takes home and church working together to see kids grow up to love Jesus. When you combine the influence of church and home, you will see your child's life impacted for eternity.

Parent & Child Dedication is NOT:

A substitute for a p\_\_\_\_\_ d\_\_\_\_\_ to follow Christ.

A s\_\_\_\_\_ or a r\_\_\_\_\_.

I\_\_\_\_\_ B\_\_\_\_\_.

Just for the c\_\_\_\_\_.

Parent & Child Dedication IS:

A time of \_\_\_\_\_ God for the gift of your child.

A time of \_\_\_\_\_ your child to God.

A time to publically declare that you are going to raise your child according to \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.



A time to \_\_\_\_\_ a blessing over your child.

A time for the \_\_\_\_\_ to commit to support you and partner with you as you lead your child spiritually.

A time to commit yourself to being the spiritual \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ for your child.

Proverbs 22:6 (NLT) says: "Direct your children onto the right path, and when they are older, they will not leave it."

We are to lead our children down a life pathway of following God. We must lead not only with our words, but with our actions and lives as well. We must be a spiritual example. Kids will follow what we do even more than what we say.

We all realize that God is asking us to be the spiritual example and leader of our child. So how do we do that? How do we live that out in everyday life? God's Word has the answers. Let's check out what it says.

1. Lead your family to love God with all their heart, soul, and strength. Deuteronomy 6:5-7 (NLT) says: "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your strength. And you must commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today. Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up."

God's plan is for you and your family to love Him passionately. He wants to have a close relationship with you. Notice the order given for loving and following God. It says first to get God's commands inside YOU and THEN inside your children.

2. Write God's love on your child's heart. God wants us to write His love on the hearts of our children. He says, "...commit yourselves wholeheartedly to these commands that I am giving you today." You've heard the saying "A child's heart is like wet cement." It is so true. Young children are more open and receptive to God's Word than any other season of life. "Research shows that the first five years are particularly important in a child's development with the first three years being the most critical. Early experiences provide the base for development and functioning throughout life. Children learn more quickly during their early years than at any other time in life." It's amazing how much of God's Word kids can soak up even at an early age.

There is a short window of time before wet cement hardens into concrete. And when it becomes concrete, you can write on it, but it's much harder and takes a lot more effort. Now is the time to write God's love into your child's heart. While they are wet cement. What you write on their heart now will stay with them for life. And here's the cool thing. The Bible tells us how we can accomplish that. Let's take a look.

Deuteronomy 6:7 (NLT) says: "Repeat them again and again to your children. Talk about them when you are at home and when you are on the road, when you are going to bed and when you are getting up."

In this verse, the Bible gives us four specific times that are great opportunities to write God's love on our child's heart. Let's see how we can maximize these four times.

The first time he mentions is "...when you are at home." This is when you are at home with your kids. Some different areas you can write God's love on your child's heart would be:

- Meal time – pray and thank God for the food He has provided
- Living room – teach them that God loves it when we share our toys
- Playing in the backyard – teach them that God made everything they see... flowers, grass, trees, etc.

Think about this statement for a moment. "Is your schedule so busy that it is preventing you from sitting at home and talking about God with your family? Our schedule reveals our priorities." We are all busy. But we must make time for what is most important.

The second specific time the verse mentions is "...when you are on the road." They obviously didn't have cars back when this was written. People walked most places with their family. So, it is referring to travel time. For us today, this would be the in-between times when we are in the car with our children. Times like to and from preschool, driving to a sports practice, a trip to and from the grocery store, or out running errands. Think about how much impact you can have if you are intentional about your time in the car with your kids.

The third specific time the verse gives us to write God's love on our child's heart is "...when they go to bed at night. Bedtime is such a great time to write God's love on the heart of your child. Some of the best conversations happen when you are tucking your child into bed. You can read them a Bible story, talk about the day, and pray with them.

At the child dedication, we will be giving you a Bible that you can read to your child at bedtime.

The final, specific time the verse mentions is "...when you are getting up." When you are waking your child up and getting them ready for the day. Some ideas for writing God's love on your child's heart in the morning are:

- Read them a Bible story
- Whisper, "God loves you" in their ear as you are waking them up
- Pray with them before you take them to school
- Read a Bible verse and talk about it at breakfast
- Play worship music while everyone is getting ready
- Teach them to say, "Good morning, God...I love you" when they wake up
- Sing their favorite worship song with them
- Put a Bible verse on the bathroom mirror and say it with them as they are brushing their teeth.

We want to encourage you to take advantage of these four key times to influence your child for God. Home time, travel time, morning time, and bedtime.

There is another way you can be a spiritual leader and example for your child.

3. Pray for your child. One of the most important things you can do is pray for your child. We are giving you two tools you can use to pray for your child.

- Prayer calendar – place it somewhere where you will see it every day and pray for your child. There is a prayer for each day of the month written on it.
- Prayer bookmarks – they contain prayer promises from God’s Word. Keep them in your Bible and each week pull it out and pray one of these prayer promises for your child.

4. Bring your child to church consistently. It’s so important to make attending church a priority for your family. Each week we prepare lessons that help lay a spiritual foundation for your child’s life. Consistently attending is vital to your child’s faith development. Look at the stats:

- If you only attend once a month, your child misses 75% of the lessons from God’s Word.
- If you only attend twice a month, your child misses 50% of the lessons from God’s Word.

There are so many reasons why we should come to church consistently – a few of them are:

- We get connected to God’s people
- It’s a special time to worship in community
- It is the outworking and practice of our faith and obedience
- We see the example of other Believers
- It is the refreshment of God’s people
- We learn to serve
- We learn to use our giftedness
- We learn to understand Christianity in terms of community

There will be weeks when the kids are sick or you are out of town. But we want to encourage you to be faithful in bringing your child to God’s house.

5. Talk about the lesson during the week. When you talk about the lesson at home during the week, you double the impact it has in your child’s life.

6. Look for teachable moments. A teachable moment is an opportunity to share God’s truth with your child that pops up spontaneously. An example would be seeing a rainbow with your child. You can share with them the story of God’s promise after the flood and how He always keeps His promises.

As you prepare for this child dedication, we want you to remember this: One of the best things you can give your child is a caring, loving home.

### A Father's Role:

How a man relates to his wife dramatically affects the entire family and directly affects the children.

- Love your wife (Ephesians 5:25-27 NLT) "Husbands...love your wives"
- Serve your wife (Ephesians 5:25-27 NLT) A love marked by giving, not getting...
- Be the spiritual leader (Ephesians 5:25-27 NLT) Everything he does and says is designed to bring out the best of her...
- Train your children (Ephesians 6:4 NLT) "Fathers, do not provoke your children..."
- Instruct your children (Ephesians 6:4 NLT) "...bring them up with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord."

### A Mother's Role:

It's important for your children to know that Mommy loves Daddy.

- Love your husband (Titus 2:3-5 NLT) "...train the younger women to love their husbands."
- Help your husband (Genesis 2:18 NLT) "...it is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper who is just right for him."
- Love your children (Titus 2:3-5 NLT) "...how to love their husbands and children."

Notice that in both the Ephesians and Titus passages the emphasis is first for husbands and wives to love each other and then love their children. The best parenting tool you have is a strong marriage.

The bottom line...being a parent is both a joy and a lot of work. And there is an unspoken pressure to raise perfect kids. Many times, as a parent, our self-esteem can be tied to our child's behaviour. It's easy to get discouraged at times. The good news is kids come with a manual. It's called the Bible. The Bible has the answer to all our needs and questions as parents.

As I mentioned earlier, we are here to partner with you on this journey. We want to be your biggest fan and resource as you lead your children spiritually.

Sometimes as parents we feel overwhelmed and don't feel like we have the knowledge or time to lead our children spiritually. Don't be discouraged. Just start doing something. It might be reading a Bible story to your child at bedtime. It might be praying for them. It might be looking for teachable moments. It might be singing songs with them in the car. Even if you start with just 5 minutes a day, it will make an eternal difference in your child's life.

Psalm 78:1-7 (NLT) says:

“O my people, listen to my instructions.  
Open your ears to what I am saying,  
for I will speak to you in a parable.  
I will teach you hidden lessons from our past –  
stories we have heard and known,  
stories our ancestors handed down to us.  
We will not hide these truths from our children;  
we will tell the next generation  
about the glorious deeds of the Lord,  
about His power and His mighty wonders.  
For He issued His laws to Jacob;  
He gave His instructions to Israel.  
He commanded our ancestors  
to teach them to their children,  
so the next generation might know them –  
even the children not yet born –  
and they in turn will teach their own children.  
So, each generation should set its hope anew on God,  
not forgetting His glorious miracles  
and obeying His commands.”

Before this dedication takes place, take some time to think deeply over what has been talked about above. Pray and ask God to reveal to you if there are any changes you need to make or priorities that need to be adjusted or new commitments that need to be made.

We are honored to be a part of your family’s spiritual journey. We pray God’s blessings will be on you and your child(ren) as you enter this time of dedication. We love you!

Cherith Rast

On behalf of Your GMB Church Family



# SAMPLE LETTER

## *A Letter to My Child*

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

*Sunday March 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020 was a special day. It was the day we dedicated you to God.*

*We pledged to bring you up to follow Jesus. And for all these years we have prayed for you, taught you, and brought you to church. Our prayer has been that you would experience and know the love Jesus has for you.*

*And now, the moment has come. You have accepted Jesus as your Forgiver, Saviour and Friend. We are so excited for you! You've made the most important decision in your life!*

*Jesus will always be with you. He has great plans for your life. As you continue to grow in your faith, we will be there to support and encourage you each step of the way.*

*We love you and are so thankful for you. You are a gift from God.*

Love,





# Preparing a Parental Blessing For Parent & Child Dedication

Dear Parents,

In just a few weeks, you will be dedicating your child(ren) to God. As part of the dedication, we'd like to give you the opportunity to speak a blessing over your child. In the Bible, God used parental blessings to make significant impact in children's lives. We believe He will do the same in your child's life through the blessing you speak over him or her.

Here are some ideas and tips as you prepare your blessing:

- **Pick out a verse to read over your child.**
  - Some examples are Psalm 20:4, Philippians 4:19, Numbers 6:24-26, Deuteronomy 31:6, Proverbs 20:7, Proverbs 14:26, Isaiah 54:13, Proverbs 3:5-6, Psalm 112:1-3, Isaiah 44:3-4 Psalm 1:1-3, Psalm 128:1-2, Jeremiah 17:7-8, Deuteronomy 30:16, Jude 1:2, Joshua 1:8, 1 Kings 2:3.
  - You can use one of these or another verse that God leads you to.
- **Write out the thoughts and prayers of your heart for your child.**
  - Express your love for your child
  - What do you want to see God do in your child's life spiritually as he or she grows up?
  - What kind of person do you want to see him or her become?
  - What kind of character do you want him or her to have?
  - How do you want to see God bless your child?
  - What commitments will you make to your child as his or her parent?
- **Be prepared to read what you wrote to your child at the dedication.** You will share this when your child is being dedicated up front. Please keep it to 2 minutes or less so everyone can have time to share.





# PARENT PRAYER CALENDAR



One of the greatest privileges we have as parents is praying for our children.  
See God work in your child's life as you pray these prayers each month.  
Prayer makes the difference.

<b>1</b>	May my child know You as Forgiver, Leader and Friend. (Romans 10:9-10)	<b>2</b>	Help my child to put You first in everything he/she does. (Matthew 6:33)	<b>3</b>	Use my child's life to impact the world with Your love. (Matthew 28:19-20)	<b>4</b>	Give my child compassion for others. (Jude 1:22)	<b>5</b>	Help my child to respect those you have placed in authority over them. (1 Peter 2:17)	<b>6</b>	May my child have faith in difficult times. (Deuteronomy 33:27)	<b>7</b>	May my child follow after righteousness, faith, love and peace. (2 Timothy 2:22)
<b>8</b>	May my child grow in Your grace and knowledge. (2 Peter 3:18)	<b>9</b>	Put a desire for Your Word in my child so he/she can grow in their faith. (1 Peter 2:2)	<b>10</b>	Place your angels around my child to protect and preserve him/her. (Psalm 91:11)	<b>11</b>	May my child walk in Your light. (1 John 1:7)	<b>12</b>	Bless my child with Your favor. (Proverbs 3:4)	<b>13</b>	Give my child godly wisdom as they select friends. (Proverbs 1:10)	<b>14</b>	Place a love for Your Word in my child's heart. (Psalm 119:97)
<b>15</b>	Give my child a spirit of power, love and a sound mind. (2 Timothy 1:7)	<b>16</b>	May my child be swift to hear, slow to speak and slow to anger. (James 1:19)	<b>17</b>	May my child be clothed with humility. (1 Peter 5:5)	<b>18</b>	Help my child to be a doer of Your Word, not just a hearer. (James 1:22)	<b>19</b>	May my child have a passionate love for You. (Psalm 9:1-2)	<b>20</b>	Help my child to have a heart of gratitude. (1 Thessalonians 5:18)	<b>21</b>	Give my child the wisdom to make the right decisions. (James 1:5)
<b>22</b>	Place a love for the church in my child's heart. (Psalm 122:1)	<b>23</b>	Help my child to stay pure in his/her words and deeds. (Psalm 24:4-5)	<b>24</b>	Place a heart of love for others in my child's heart. (John 13:34)	<b>25</b>	Help my child to speak with kindness. (Psalm 19:14)	<b>26</b>	Help my child to have the courage to stand for what is right. (Joshua 1:6)	<b>27</b>	May my child bring glory to You in everything. (1 Corinthians 10:31)	<b>28</b>	
<b>29</b>	Give my child the heart of a servant. (Mark 10:45)	<b>30</b>	May my child be a person of honesty and integrity. (Psalm 25:21)	<b>31</b>	Direct my child's steps each day. (Proverbs 3:5-6)		Write additional prayers on the other side as God brings them to mind.						

