

# CHILD DEDICATION

Believing in the importance of the church and parents working together for the spiritual development of children, Trinity practices Child Dedication.

## What is Dedication?

Dedication is a public ceremony and a personal commitment for parents/guardians to raise their child in the training and instruction of the Lord supported by their church family.

Faith comes to a child through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. Faith is not passed on to a child through the faith of their parents/guardians. Parents/Guardians are promising to raise their child in the training and instruction of the Lord with the desire that their child will receive Jesus Christ as their personal Savior. During the dedication the church also publically commits to support, love and provide guidance for the family.

## Is dedication the same as infant baptism?

Child dedication is different from infant baptism or christening. Infant baptism was developed in early church history as a means to ensure the salvation of infants before they could make a personal decision to follow Jesus Christ. It was believed that if a child died, through infant baptism, he or she would be assured a place in heaven.

## Reasons why Trinity Church dedicates infants/children instead of baptizing them:

1. **Because** New Testament baptism is consistently linked with the faith of the one being baptized, even with the "household baptism" (Matt. 16:16; Acts 2:41; 16:14ff; 16:29ff; I Pet. 3:21).
2. **Because** of the Biblical examples of dedication of the first born.

All Israel	Exodus 13:1
Samuel	I Samuel 1:21ff
Jesus	Luke 2:22ff
3. **Because** in the New Testament, parents brought their children to be blessed by Jesus (Matt. 19:13-15; Mark 10:13-16; Luke 18:15-17).
4. **Because** in dedication we have found an appropriate rite which publicly declares three important and Biblical acts of consecration:
  - The consecration by the parents of the child back to God who gave him/her (I Sam. 1:27, 28).
  - The consecration by parents to raise the child in the "discipline and instruction of the Lord" so that one day this child will have good opportunity to personally make a faith commitment to Jesus (Eph. 6:4).
  - The consecration of the church family to pray for and be of encouragement to both parents and child (Rom. 1:12; Eph. 3:12ff).
5. **Because** we reject the notion that such a rite actually cleanses an infant from the guilt of original sin (Heb. 10:4; I Pet. 3:21). This results in salvation through merit instead of by faith alone (Eph. 2:8, 9). We further reject the notion that infants/children who die unbaptized are damned. While they bear the results of original sin, they are covered by the blood of Jesus until, at the age of accountability, they reject Christ (Luke 18:15-17; Matt. 18:3).