

# SSBC Infant Dedication Policy

## Philosophy of Infant Dedications

Our doctrinal statement says that we believe a church is “a congregation of baptized believers associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel.” One cannot be born into church membership. Rather, one must first be born again and be baptized upon a credible profession of faith in Christ before covenanting in membership with a local church. For this reason we neither practice infant baptism, nor do we grant church membership to children simply by virtue of belonging to church members.

However, we also recognize children as a precious gift from God and a sacred trust within our families and our congregation. During his earthly ministry Jesus extended a special welcome to children, and held them up as living parables of the kind of trusting faith one must have toward Christ in order to enter the kingdom of God. God places a call upon parents not only to provide and care for their children’s earthly needs, but also to be their primary spiritual shepherds by bringing them up in the training and instruction of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4).

And so we offer infant dedication at South Shore Baptist Church as part of our worship services. Infant dedication is a public act of thanksgiving to God for the unique gift that the children among us are. It is a recognition that the child ultimately belongs to God. Infant dedication is also a corporate commitment:

- of the child to God by praying for the child’s salvation publicly and by acknowledging the child as a gift and sacred trust from God
- of the parents to raising the child in the training of the Lord
- of the membership of the church to support one another in training the children among us in the gospel, in keeping with our church covenant

## Infant Dedication Policy

- 1) At least one of the parents must be a member of SSBC.
- 2) Infant dedications will normally occur on a regularly scheduled basis, rather than at the request of parents. Multiple families may be dedicating children in the same worship service.
- 3) Members interested in dedicating their children should contact the church office to request participating in an upcoming dedication. An SSBC pastor will confirm the date with the family. The pastor may wish to meet with the family.