

Dedications at King's Church Chessington

King's Church exists to invite all people into an ever-growing relationship with King Jesus. It is natural that when Christians start a family, they want to share Jesus within their family. Psalm 78:4 reminds us that we will not want to hide the great news about the Lord, but share it with the next generation, and pray that they will pass it on to the generations after.

At KCC, we remind each other of the importance to pass faith on in this way by 'dedicating' parents to this important task. The parents come to the front of the church with their child and make promises in front of the congregation. In turn, the church promises to support parents and children spiritually. As a church family, we partner with you to share the joys and responsibilities of raising children.

This document is designed to guide you through this process and explain KCC's policy for this area of church life. If you have got this far, I guess you are:

- a) A parent, and
- b) Interested in dedicating yourselves to this important task.

We pray you find this helpful in guiding you.

The Normal Process....

1. Read through this guidance.
2. Discuss it with your spouse.
3. Speak to a pastor or elder at KCC.
4. Liaise with KCC staff to organize a date. *(please note, due to church size we usually need to hold group dedications on 2-3 Sundays each year. Therefore, we will most likely have a few families dedicating themselves at the same time.)*
5. Consider if you would like to use a room at the King's Centre for a celebration lunch. This could be a shared lunch with the other dedication families.
6. Meet with a member of the pastoral staff to go through the service.
7. Enjoy the day.

Questions to consider...

1. Have you joined KCC as members? Our normal practice restricts dedication services to church members.
2. Have you talked with your spouse about how you plan to raise your children?
3. Do you both agree on the value of raising kids to know Jesus and live under his word?
4. Do you seek to obey Jesus in the whole of life, e.g. marriage, finance and family life?
5. Have you considered some supporting people to pray for you in this vital task? Some traditions call these Godparents. Whatever we call them, it is good to have both formal and informal support of people as you journey as parents. Speak to the pastoral team if you would like these supporters formally recognized on the day.

We would be delighted to discuss these questions with you.

FAQs

What does a normal dedication service look like?

We start by asking the couple some questions about your child, parenting context and Christian faith. This is not a test, just a chance for the church to get to know you and an opportunity for you to show how you trust in Jesus in everyday life.

The formal part of the service contains Scripture readings (from Deuteronomy 6, Proverbs, or Psalm 78). We then tend to ask the father one question, the mother one question and the church one question. We run through these questions when you meet with a pastor before the service. Some people choose to answer both questions together. A pastor can guide you as to when this would be appropriate.

Why do we dedicate and not christen at KCC?

A christening is a baptism for the child. It can be a lovely service, but is based on certain beliefs about children, the church community and what baptism is. KCC practices believers' baptism, also known as credobaptism. We baptise people after they have made a profession of faith in the Lord Jesus; therefore, we don't baptise infants. Instead, we dedicate parents to raise the child to know the Lord, and then to confess him and make the faith their own at a later date. We can talk more about this if you wish.

Do I need to dedicate each child separately?

There are no rules here, but it is a good practice. With each separate service it reminds both the parents and church family what they are doing and why they are doing it. Alternatively, some parents may wait until they feel their family is complete and have just one dedication service.

Why is the dedication of us and not the child?

The Bible teaches that it is parents who carry the primary responsibility to raise the child to know the Lord (Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Psalm 78:3-4), but that is in the context of a local church community. Therefore, we view it as important for parents to pledge to the child, and the church to pledge its support. We ask the Lord to bless the parent, the child and the church. This is a lovely sign of dependance on God, in asking for his help and seeking to follow his word in the Bible.