

Order of Worship

Child Blessing Service

Scripture Text:

Mark 10:13-16

Introduction:

Children are an incredible gift from God. To thank God for the gift of life Hannah and Elkanah took Samuel to the temple to dedicate him to God (I Sam. 24). Eli took care of Samuel and urged him to listen to God's voice. Mary & Joseph took Jesus to the temple to thank God for him (Luke 2:22-39). Anna and Simeon praised God for Jesus and saw glimpses of the fullness of God's salvation for the world.

With grateful hearts, _____, _____, _____, _____ (parents' names), are bringing their children for blessing. Long ago parents also brought their children to Jesus for blessing.

Scripture:

Mark 10:13-16

Hymn:

While we sing STS 47 Let the Children Come to Me, the parents and families will come forward to the front row.

To the congregation:

When parents bring their children for blessing the church is being asked to do three things:

- 1) to praise God in celebration of a child,
 - 2) to assist the parents with prayer, support and counsel in their task of raising a child;
- and
- 3) to welcome a child into the larger community of God's children, just as Jesus welcomed and blessed children.

If you are willing to do this, then answer, we are. WE ARE.

To the parents:

Each child is a reminder to us, a sign of hope, that God is at work in the world, creating newness, wonder, beauty and life. In bringing your children you are engaging in an act of worship recognizing that ultimately children are not our possession; they belong to God and are given to us as a trust.

It is your task as Christian parents to see that your child is instructed in the teaching of God's Word, the Bible and the principles of faith. In every way, by word and deed, you are to lead your child to know the love of God and to have faith in Jesus Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Will you accept your child as a gift from God? Will you commit yourselves to raising your child in an atmosphere of Christian love and nurture? Will you seek God's wisdom, patience and playful spirit for your journey as parents? Will you dedicate yourselves and your child to the care and direction of God? If so, then answer in unison, I will. I WILL.

Naming and Parental Words:

Leader: What is the name of this child?

Parent: (state full name of child) _____
We praise God for _____
This day is important to us _____

Prayer of Blessing

Pastor to hold the child and pray for them.

_____, as a child of God, you are wrapped in God's love. It is good to welcome you into our midst. We give thanks for your birth, your life and all that you may become. We pray that God will give you strength to meet the challenges and joys of living and will provide all you need to grow in life & faith. We pray that God who created you, who sent Jesus to redeem you and the Spirit to dwell in you, may watch over you, enabling you to seek, to find and to know him. May God bless you and keep you. AMEN.

Prayer:

God of our mothers and fathers,
we thank-you for the gift of children, and for the privilege of molding and guiding them as they grow.

We pray for these parents – (names of parents). Give them delight, strength, patience and the gift of humor. May they be open to learning about your amazing love as they care for their children and see signs of your divine gifts in everyday ways.

We pray for these children –(names of children). May they learn to know the deep love Jesus has for them and may they follow and serve him with joy.

We pray for the siblings. Grant them joy in family life, and a new awareness that their parents and the church also promised to teach them about Jesus.

We pray for the extended families, for all who are gathered here, and for those not present who have and will have a part in the lives of these children. May we all learn the awesome task of supporting each one of these children as they grow in faith and life. Help us to know when to lift them up and when to let them fall, when to hold tightly and when to let go.

As we pledge ourselves to care for these children, and to support their parents, we also pledge ourselves to care for our world, so that peace and justice, mercy and hope may come to pass for all God's children. In Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

Congregation to Parents:

HWB 791 - stand & read in unison

You have offered your child to the strong and tender providence of God.

We rejoice with you and give thanks for the birth of your child. We promise, with humility and seriousness, to share in your child's nurture and well-being.

We will support, by our example and words, your efforts to provide a loving and caring home, where trust in God grows and Christ's way is chosen. Our prayers will be with you and for you.

May our shared life and witness help make your task both joyful and fruitful.

Gifts – On behalf of the Christian Education Committee and this church we look forward to helping you nurture your child's faith. We want you to bring your child to Sunday School and to participate in worship.

As a reminder of this day and of the promises we have made to God and to each other, we present you with (describe gifts).

Ruth Boehm (Canada), 2021. Faith Mennonite, Leamington
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