

Parent Commissioning at Living Hope Church

At Living Hope Church, we believe children are a precious gift from the Lord (Psalm 127:3; 1 Corinthians 4:7). Scripture consistently teaches that parents are called to be the primary disciple-makers in their children's lives (Deuteronomy 6:4–7; Psalm 78:5–8; Ephesians 6:4). Parents are entrusted with the responsibility to teach their children the gospel and to model a life shaped by faith in Jesus Christ.

Because of this conviction, Living Hope Church practices Parent Commissioning.

What Is Parent Commissioning?

Parent Commissioning is a public moment in the life of the church where parents make both a promise and a plea.

Parents publicly promise to raise their children to know and love Jesus—committing to teach them the gospel and to point them toward Christ through word and example. At the same time, parents acknowledge their insufficiency for this task and call upon God's grace, blessing, and power to sustain them.

In response, the church body also makes a promise. We commit to coming alongside parents in prayer, care, and support. As a congregation, we affirm that children are precious image-bearers of God and that we share responsibility for their spiritual formation. Scripture warns us not to hinder the faith of children (Luke 17:1–4; Mark 9:42; 2 Corinthians 6:3), but instead to welcome them and lead them toward Christ (Matthew 19:14).

Why Not “Dedication”?

You may notice that Parent Commissioning sounds similar to what is often called a baby dedication. This change in language is intentional. It more accurately reflects what we believe and practice as a church.

Biblically, dedication often refers to specific acts—such as Hannah dedicating Samuel to lifelong service in the temple, or Samson being set apart as a Nazirite from birth. Parent Commissioning, however, does not dedicate a child to a particular calling. Rather, it commissions parents to faithfully carry out the responsibility God has already given them.

This language also clarifies what Parent Commissioning is not. It is not infant baptism. We believe baptism is a public declaration of personal faith in Christ—identifying with His death,

burial, and resurrection—symbolized by immersion in water (Acts 2:41; Romans 6:3–6). For this reason, we wait until a child can articulate a credible profession of faith in Jesus Christ before baptism.

What Parent Commissioning Does—and Does Not Do

Parent Commissioning does not save children or confer any special spiritual status. Salvation is by grace alone through faith alone (Ephesians 2:8–9). This practice is a meaningful act of obedience and communal commitment, but it does not replace the need for personal repentance and faith.