



First Vancleave  
**BAPTIST CHURCH**

# PARENT COMMISSIONING

Because Discipleship begins at Home

DEUTERONOMY 6:4-9



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# **I. What is Parent Commissioning?**

## **A. An Opportunity to Celebrate**

In I Samuel 1, a woman named Hannah yearned for a child. Her greatest desire was to be a mother. Yet, she experienced disappointment after disappointment, and remained childless. She continually cried out to God and, in time, God gave her the gift of a son.

When Samuel was born, Hannah said, “For this child I prayed, and the Lord has granted my petition which I asked of Him. Therefore I also have given him to the Lord; as long as he lives he shall be given to the Lord.”

Understanding that the child born to Hannah and her husband, Elkanah, was a gift from God, Hannah stood before God and offered praise and thanks for His gift in their lives. A Parent Commissioning service is a dedication and celebration of the gift you have received from God.

The Faith Family at FBC Vancleave wants to join you during this special time. We want to embrace you and the challenge that lies ahead, praying for you and encouraging you as you look forward to all God will do through the life of your child.

## **B. A Commitment to God's Plan**

Parent Commissioning is about the entire family. It is a commitment of parents to follow Christ and seek His wisdom throughout the journey of training up your child.

While children bring great joy to parents, they can also bring great challenges. Indeed children are a gift from God, but this gift is also a responsibility and a challenge, requiring and encouraging your dependence upon God day by day.

So, what is God's plan to which you are committing? In Deuteronomy 6:4-9, we see the basic duty and responsibility of every parent:

- You are to love God and pursue your relationship with Him on a daily basis.
- You are to honor God by obeying His word in your life.
- You are to teach your child to love and reverence God.
- You are to provide spiritual and moral training for your child according to God's Holy Word.

In this service, you are acknowledging your need for God's wisdom, guidance and strength in parenting. You are affirming the commitment of your heart to follow Christ and obey His Word. You are surrendering yourself to honor God by being a faithful steward of the gift He has entrusted to you. This is a moment when you recognize and embrace the spiritual responsibility of answering to God for the child you bring to the commissioning service.

## **C. A Time for Your Faith Family to Support You**

God has not left you without instructions for parenting, and He has not left you to do this task alone. When the Faith Family at FBC Vancleave comes together for parent commissioning we are not simply celebrating the gift of a child and the commitment of a parent. We are embracing our responsibility to support families by teaching God's Word, serving one another in love, training up disciples and pointing others to Christ.

We understand the importance of maintaining an atmosphere that inspires faith, challenges growth, and provides opportunities for service.

Our commitment to children and student ministries provides opportunities for spiritual and emotional growth. Through biblical preaching, Bible studies for all ages, intentional discipleship, a variety of family-focused and age specific events, we aim to create an atmosphere of spiritual growth in your life as a parent and your child's life for years to come.

We want to encourage your journey with your child, and have given much attention to developing ministries for this purpose. While no church is perfect in all it provides for parents and children, the commitment of our Faith Family is to do all we can to make disciples that make disciples in the coming generations.

## **II. How is Parent Commissioning done?**

### **A. Through a Dedicated Worship Service**

The Parent Commissioning service takes place during a special worship service in which time is set aside to present the parents and children before the Faith Family at FBC Vancleave.

During this service, careful attention and instructions will be given from the Lead Pastor to encourage and honor parents, and those in attendance concerning the special task of making disciples in the home and at church.

### **B. Through a Public Declaration**

Much like Baptism is a public display and testimony of salvation, the Parent Commissioning service is your public declaration and commitment to train your child intentionally for the Lord.

Following the statement of Hannah's grateful expression of praise to God, the Bible says Hannah and Elkanah worshiped the Lord in the temple. They gave public witness to their commitment to honor God's plan for their child and serve as partners in the task of honoring God in their home.

Through your public declaration you are giving your Faith Family an active role from which you will receive encouragement, support, and wisdom.

## **C. Through a Time of Preparation**

Whether this is your first child or an addition to your already growing family, all parents wishing to participate in the Parent Commissioning must attend an eight-week Parent Orientation led by Children's Director or our Lead Pastor.

During this time, you will be encouraged and challenged in your personal walk with Christ, given an overview of the commissioning service to come, and challenged to be intentional in the discipleship of your home.

### **III. Who can participate in Parent Commissioning?**

#### **A. Can a child at any age participate?**

Yes. However, our primary focus is on children from birth to 24 months. We recognize that many children are adopted or that parents come to faith in Christ after this age, therefore, we fully support all families who are beginning this exciting chapter of their life.

#### **B. Can a single parent participate?**

Yes. We want to do all we can to encourage your walk with Christ. Single parenting is double duty in bringing up a child. The Faith Family at FBC Vancleave desires to be part of your extended family. We hope to provide compassionate support, spiritual growth, and a variety of ministries to enable you to succeed in the discipleship



of your child. If you want to participate in a commissioning service and would like the support of your parents or another family member, we would gladly discuss this matter with you prior to the service of commissioning and provide guidance on how they can take part in the service with you.

### **C. Can the biological parents participate if they are not married?**

*No.* While we honor the life of each child and encourage parents married and unmarried to embrace the importance of spiritual commitment for children, a parent commissioning service is intended to reflect the teaching of Scripture on marriage and family life.

Understanding the sacred honor of marriage as presented in God's Word, we believe every public act of worship is to conform to His standards. To fail to recognize and honor the specific teaching of Scripture on matters of family life would violate the integrity of our church and the Savior we serve.

For those who are unmarried or living together, taking steps to acknowledge and surrender to God's plan for their individual lives would take precedence over participation in a parent commissioning service. Our goal in ministry is to meet people where they are in life, to lead them to God's grace and truth, and to help them discover life abundant in Christ and His church.

## **D. Can grandparents or legal guardians participate?**

Yes. If at least one of you is an active member in the Faith Family of FBC Vancleave and are fulfilling the role of parent as defined in Scripture.

## **IV. Are there any requirements to participate in Parent Commissioning?**

### **A. Is Lordship Salvation Required?**

Yes. Parents participating in the commissioning service should have a testimony of a surrendered life to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

### **B. Is FBC Vancleave Membership Required?**

Yes. At least one parent must be an active member in the Faith Family of FBC Vancleave.

### **C. Is the Parent Orientation Class Required for everyone?**

Yes. This class is a recent development in our ministry to families. If you have participated in a dedication service, but have not attended the class, it is necessary for you to attend. Our goal in this class is to strengthen parents and families, by introducing you to a tool that will enable you to effectively disciple your child.

All parents desiring to participate must complete an eight-week Disciple-making parent class prior to the commissioning service. The Disciple-making parent class will be held at FBC Vancleave Wednesday evenings, 6:30pm, facilitated by the Children's Ministry Director and the Lead Pastor. The dates of the class will be determined by interest and the scheduling of commissioning service.

## **V. General Questions**

### **A. Does FBC Vancleave baptize infants or babies?**

*No.* The practice of infant baptism is simply not found in the Bible. It comes out of history and church tradition. Baptism is one of two ordinances (Baptism and the Lord's Supper) given to the church by the Lord Jesus Christ. Examples and directives for the proper practice of these ordinances are found throughout Scripture.

Baptism is for believers – those who have put their faith and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. Baptism is only seen in the Bible when someone receives Christ and confesses Him as Lord and Savior. Baptism pictures the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, symbolizing life before Christ and a new life in Him.

While the intent of infant baptism is to identify a child with the Christian faith, baptism cannot secure salvation. Each child must hear and respond to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

For this reason, we have a commissioning service to Christ for parents and their children, but we do not confuse this service with

baptism, which always follows a profession of faith. If you have questions about baptism, we will be glad to discuss them with you and provide guidance and opportunity to follow Christ according to His Word.

## **B. Do I need to sign up to participate?**

Yes. In fact, there are two important aspects to signing up.

First, all parents desiring to participate need to sign up for the Parent Orientation class.

Second, all parents desiring to participate need to sign up for the Commissioning Service which includes providing the parent names along with each child's full name, birthdate and a picture of child to be display on screen during service. You may register online for both at <https://fbcvancleave.org/parentcommissioning/>.

## **C. Do you have any scriptural references which refer to parenting?**

Yes. Below are some of the most familiar and selected scriptures which refer to parenting.

Deuteronomy 6:5-7

Deuteronomy 4:9

Psalms 78:1-7

Psalms 127

Proverbs 22:6

Proverbs 23:13

Proverbs 29:15

Proverbs 17:6

Ephesians 6:1-4

Colossians 3:21

