



SERVICE OF DEDICATION



OPENING WORDS *(Minister)*

Beloved, today is a holy day. For every day is holy when we are blessed with a life beginning. We gather during this time to recognize and dedicate this new life. We gather also to celebrate the hope and wonder that is childhood; to dedicate ourselves to the rich fulfillment of all that learning and care bring forth.

In so doing, we recognize the mystery of life as it begins its unfolding. We celebrate this mystery in song, word, prayer, and promise. Our gift is that of love freely given. With reverence and respect, we dedicate ourselves to the task of parenting and nurturing. Thus do we promise to love unconditionally and to strengthen the bonds of friendship.

RESPONSIVE READING ~ words by Kalil Gibran

Your children are not your children. They are the sons and daughters of Life's longing for itself.

They come through you but not from you. And though they are with you, yet they belong not to you.

You may give them your love but not your thoughts, for they have their own thoughts.

You may house their bodies but not their souls, for their souls dwell in the house of tomorrow, which you cannot visit, not even in your dreams.

You may strive to be like them, but seek not to make them like you. For life goes not backward nor tarries with yesterday.

You are the bows from which your children, as living arrows, are sent forth.

The archer sees the mark upon the path of the infinite, and he bends you with his might so that his arrows may go swift and far.

Let your bending in the archer's hand be for gladness; for even as the archer loves the arrow that flies, so also does the archer love the bow that is stable.

CHARGE TO THE PARENTS *(Representative of Religious Education Program)*

Do you, the Parents who have come forth this morning, dedicate yourselves to the care and nurture of your children in love freely given; to provide for them, to protect them, to encourage their worthy endeavors as they journey forth into a life that is unique and special, to share with them all that love, joy, and blessings have to offer?

(Parents) ***"I Do"***



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CHARGE TO GODPARENTS, GRANDPARENTS & FAMILY

Do you, the Godparents, Grandparents, and family who have come forth this morning, dedicate yourselves to the care and nurture of this child (these children) in love freely given; and to support these parents, to embrace them as family, to encourage their growth as they journey forth into a life that is unique and special, to share with them all that love, joy, and blessings have to offer?

(God Parents, Grandparents and Family) *"I Do"*

***CONGREGATIONAL PLEDGE**

We, the members and friends of The Unitarian Universalist Church of Worcester, welcome you and your children. We hereby pledge ourselves to support, provide for, and nurture these children. We dedicate ourselves to providing all that is necessary for these children to grow to their fullest potential, as unique and precious lives within the bonds of this loving community.

ACT OF DEDICATION

(Minister) What name do you give this child?

(Parent(s)) - **Child's Name**

(Minister) (**Child's Name**), with water, ancient symbol of purity, I anoint you and dedicate you to the source of your being. I proclaim now that you are loved by parents, family and friends; that you are, to all who know you and will come to know you, precious. May your life be filled with joy and blessings, now and from this day forward.

GIFTING OF A ROSE *(President of the Board of Trustees)*

May this rose, in all its beauty, stand as a symbol of this precious life and its unfolding in love and understanding.

PASTORAL PRAYER *(Minister)*

SPIRIT OF LIFE, SOURCE OF NEW BEGINNING . . . it is befitting that we come here today to dedicate our children, for it is the season of the child, precious and holy. May these young lives find love, compassion, understanding, wisdom, and patience in all whom they meet here. As we have dedicated ourselves to the process of nurturing, so too do we rededicate ourselves to nurture that child within, that part of ourselves that wonders, awestruck, at life's propensity toward beauty and rebirth. May we all find that nurturing presence within ourselves and in the world that surrounds and sustains us. AMEN.

*** Please stand in body or in spirit.**
