

## Bringing Your Baby to Church

### In the Sanctuary

You are most welcome to keep your baby with you in church. We don't mind the little noises a baby makes, and we don't mind the larger noises as you make a quick exit to the family room, across from the west sanctuary doors. The family room is equipped with a video feed of the service, comfortable furniture, and kids' toys and books. Please feel free to come and go as you wish and your baby's needs dictate.

### Try the Nursery!

Our small childcare staff provides continuity, so your baby can get to know them. They will keep your child comfortable and safe during service, and will come find you if needed.

Please come visit the nursery, meet the staff, and find out if it is right for you and your baby. The nursery is in the RE building, open 15 minutes before each service.



## From Generation to Generation

In a house which becomes a home  
One hands down and another takes up  
the heritage of mind and heart,  
laughter and tears, musings and deeds.  
Love, like a carefully loaded ship,  
crosses the gulf between the generations.  
Therefore we do not neglect  
the ceremonies of our passage;  
when we are born,  
when we are wed,  
when we die,  
when we are blessed with a child...

(for) We live, not by things,  
but by the meanings of things.  
It is needful to transmit the passwords  
from generation to generation.

—Antoine de St. Exupery,  
*Wind, Sand, and Stars*

# Babies!



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## First Unitarian

A Unitarian Universalist Congregation  
Meeting in Albuquerque,  
Carlsbad, East Mountains, and Socorro

## Celebrating New Life

### An Invitation

One of this church's great purposes is to share our values with the next generation. Our religious education program is our major effort in fulfilling this purpose, but our care of children and support of their parents in parenting them begins at birth or adoption. We celebrate with parents this wondrous event and the tremendous potential that each new life brings into our world.

### At Birth

We mention the birth and adoption of children during the minister's prayer each Sunday. Please call the office, 884-1801, to let us know your baby's name and birth or adoption date. Congratulations!



## Dedicating Infants

### The Ceremony

The dedication service is usually done as part of a regular Sunday morning service. The dedication itself is a short ceremony that introduces the child to the life and care of the congregation and gives parents an opportunity to publicly affirm your love for your child; your intent to care for your child; and your intent to foster liberal religious values, such as the worth of persons and a respect for truth, in this new human being.

In addition, the congregation affirms its responsibility for "the religious upbringing of this child and of all of our children, that they may grow in beauty, love, and truth." In this church, children are usually dedicated to "a life of love and service, for and among your fellow human beings."

During the ceremony, the baby is touched with water, a symbol of life, and given a rosebud to remind us of his or her unfolding potential for beauty and love. A certificate of dedication is also presented.



### Babies' Comfort

Babies are most comfortable being dedicated before they are six or seven months old (after which stranger anxiety often sets in). However, this is up to the parents; you may wish to wait for a particular date or for a time when out-of-town families can share the day with you. Holidays are also a popular time to dedicate children, particularly Christmas time, when we are reminded that "every night that a child is born is a holy night." Not every Sunday is available for dedications, so make arrangements with a minister in advance.

## Personalizing a Dedication

Here are a few things to think about, to make your child's dedication day complete.

### Special Elements

You may include special readings, poetry, or music that are meaningful to you and can be incorporated into the service. Discuss this with the minister. You might want to donate the flowers for that morning's service or a new hymnal in honor of your child. (Call the church office at least a week in advance to arrange this.) You might want to plan a special lunch or celebration after the service.



### Guests and Special Participants

Non-UU grandparents sometimes wish to present the child with a Bible or other symbol of the heritage they share with their grandchild; this is fine, and we can mention it in the service.

Godparents are not as common in UU churches as in other faiths, but if there are people who have particularly supported you in your parenting and who intend to have an ongoing relationship with your child, this can be incorporated into the service as well.

### Baptism

We sometimes also baptize infants whose parents are part of the liberal Christian strand of Unitarian Universalism. The service is the same with words of baptism added.