

GOING FURTHER - Resources

Recommended Book:

(Available to check out from the church library.)

Your Marriage Can Survive a Newborn (by psychologist Glenn Williams and occupational therapist Natalie Williams) helps couples thrive during the stress and strain of having a newborn. With chapters about anxiety, expectations, money, sex and fun, the Williams' speak from their own experience of having three children, as well as from the stories of other overextended parents, to show couples how to nurture their relationship even as they nurture their new baby.

Recommended Website:

The "Having a Baby" topic on www.troubledwith.com provides encouragement and insights about making the transition from just the two of you to a "three-family." It includes practical advice for the pregnant season as well as information about what life will be like once the baby arrives.

GOING FURTHER – Church Support

Mom to Mom

This ministry is designed for mothers with Preschoolers. Mom to Mom fall and spring semesters meets every other Monday from 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. This Ministry is designed to support and encourage moms throughout the Preschool years. Registration required.

Family Dedication

A Family Dedication is a personalized time set aside in a worship service for members of NRHBC who are parents that desire to publicly commit to bring their child up in "the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Contact the Preschool Ministry office or visit the church website Preschool page at www.nrhbc.org to find out more about family dedications.

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**Preparing
For Baby**

Preparing for Baby's Arrival

*From Cindy Leach, Minister to Children
With Kurt Bruner, The Center for Strong Families*

Congratulations on the exciting stage of life you've entered. Whether you've recently had a new baby or are counting down to your due date, you've likely noticed that parenthood is an entirely different world. In the midst of all the joy and anticipation comes a whole new level of stretching (not just your belly) and character development. You may be wondering if life will ever be the same. In many ways it won't. So, become intentional about this season by preparing yourself to take three important steps for the transition to parenthood.

STEP ONE: Buckle Up

As new parents, you've strapped yourself into a roller coaster of adventure - with highs you could have never imagined and lows that can push you to discover abilities and courage you didn't know you had. Along with God's blessing of children comes His calling for you to lay your life down for your child (Philippians 2:3-11). Things you once took for granted - like sleep, eating a warm meal or a spontaneous get-away with your spouse - are now things you will often sacrifice. While your friends without children sleep in on Saturday morning or hang out at the local Starbucks, you will be taking on what one sociologist called the "bone - wearying" work of a parent.

STEP TWO: Give Up

When you give sacrificially as parents you probably won't get the same kudos you'd get in the workplace, or even the same recognition you would have given each other for similar efforts before the kids arrived. You're moving into a time of life where such sacrificial giving is just something you have to do often and without expecting much fanfare. But it's in this aspect of your new mission - losing your life - that you find your life (Matthew 16:24-25). It's here that you develop "servant muscles" through the ongoing exercise of selfless giving. You'll also find that parenting is an arena for Christian discipleship with a day to day intensity like none other.

STEP THREE: Team Up

Couples entering into the journey of parenthood usually discover a sense of purpose and shared accomplishment that can push their relationship into greater joy. But they can simultaneously drive each other crazy. Adjusting to less sleep, sex, money and time for each other can be a blow to marital satisfaction. Worse still, couples that need each other the most often find themselves taking their frustration out on the only other adult in the house. Your marriage can survive this adjustment and you can experience the joy of parenting if you choose to be a team - if you lay your lives down for each other (Ephesians 5:22-33) and give each other an extra measure of love (1 Corinthians 13:4-8) and grace (2 Corinthians 9:8).