



Baptism

Baptism is an outward symbol of the decision you have made to follow Christ. All members of our church are baptized by immersion in the water.

We encourage you to invite family and friends to come and watch your baptism. Schedule the date and service with a staff member or someone in the church office (251-639-9952) and ask any questions you may have. Here is more information:

- You can wear your own clothes or use a baptismal robe that we provide.
- You can wear a swimsuit for the baptism with the robe over it **Or** wear your own clothes (your swimsuit or regular underwear under your clothes) to get baptized in. You will need to bring dry clothes, including underwear, to change into afterwards. Bring a plastic bag to take home your wet clothes.
- We recommend dark colors if you wear your own clothes. Our robes are white so you may want to wear a light-colored shirt if you wear our robe.
- We provide towels and a hair dryer is available.
- Ladies, our robes are like a culotte that is weighted on the bottom so it won't fly up. If you wear your own clothes, we recommend shorts or pants instead of a skirt or dress.

We will have a deacon and his wife (or another female volunteer) upstairs in the baptistry to assist you and give you directions. We do try to take photos in the baptistry, but feel free to ask someone to take some from the worship center. This is an exciting event that you will want to celebrate and remember.

One the day of your baptism:

1. Invite others (ask them to arrive early since we usually baptize at the beginning of the service).
2. Bring appropriate clothing & hair care items so you rejoin the service following your baptism.
3. Arrive early (at least 20 minutes before service time) and inform someone at the info desk that you are being baptized today.

We are baptized to follow the example of Jesus Christ who was baptized at the beginning of His ministry on earth by John the Baptist. Many times in scripture, baptism is mentioned as following a decision to surrender or yield our will to Jesus. Baptism is called an ordinance of the church. An ordinance is an outward

behavior that shows the world what you have done inwardly. Baptism does not save you; your trust and faith in Christ with repentance is required for salvation.

FAQ

What do I need to do before I am baptized?

Accept the truth of the Gospel (Acts 2:41)

Believe in Faith (Acts 8:12)

The believers in the book of Acts were immediately baptized following putting their faith in Christ. There is no reason to delay baptism if you have decided to trust Christ. There will always be more to learn but all of this can follow the public step of obedience that is your baptism. Baptism is a command of God: Matthew 28:19-20.

Why do we baptize by immersion (going under the water)?

The scripture was written in the Greek language and the word used for baptism: *baptizo*, connotes a full immersion of the body in water in all 77 uses of it in the New Testament. Some denominations practice sprinkling or pouring water on the head. This is different from our beliefs about baptism so we ask all candidates for baptism and church membership to be baptized by immersion. In Romans 6:3-4 and Colossians 2:12 the language used is “being buried with him in baptism” which is a symbol to show burial or death to sin and being raised out of the water as a symbol of new life in Christ. Sprinkling or pouring doesn’t have this type of symbolic view. Read 1 Corinthians 15:3-4. You can see how baptism shows what has happened in the life of a new believer.

When is a child old enough for baptism?

Young children are often excited about following Jesus in baptism. But a key point for them is to understand and show evidence of their inward change. It is also good if they are old enough to remember it when they are older. There is no disadvantage to delaying baptism, but there can be later issues if baptism takes place too early before they are mature enough to understand the decision. Children can trust Christ but if they don’t fully understand it, it can create a false sense of security if they are baptized before they truly repent of their sin. Talk with a pastor if you are struggling with this decision as to when to allow your child to be baptized.

Is child dedication the same as baptism?

No. Our beliefs are that children must make their own decision for Christ. Babies or young preschoolers are not able to do that. But we offer a child dedication service to challenge the parents and the church to commit to help raise your child to faith in Christ when they are older. This can be scheduled through the church office.

Am I saved if I have not been baptized?

Yes, if you have sincerely trusted Christ and repented from your sin, you are saved. However, the first, most public act of obedience should be baptism as soon as you can arrange it.

What if I was baptized earlier and I was saved after that?

We encourage you to be baptized again after you have truly followed Christ. Following up your decision with baptism will show others that you have made a public decision.

What if I am not sure I am saved?

Talk with a pastor or staff member and allow them to walk you through some scripture and allow you to ask them questions so that you can be sure. They will be happy to talk with you. We want you to clearly understand the decision to surrender yourself to follow Jesus. It is 100% okay to ask questions.

What if I was baptized as an infant? Should I be baptized again?

Yes. Babies are not able to make a personal decision to follow Christ. The scripture does not give us an example of the baptism of infants. The practice originated from some later church traditions. Repentance from sin is a part of salvation and an infant cannot do that.