

BAPTISM

FAIRVIEW MISSIONARY
CHURCH

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Information regarding Baptismal Services

TESTIMONY: Everyone being baptized will be asked to say a few words about what the Lord means to them.

DATE: Sanctuary baptism dates are set as needed and are held at the close of one of the morning services.

SMALL GROUP BAPTISMS: Knowing that some people would be more comfortable in a smaller group baptismal service, we also do small group baptisms where you can invite just your family and friends. Let Pastor Joel know if this is what you prefer.

CLOTHING: For the sake of modesty, please wear a dark shirt and long shorts or pants. You will have time to change into these during the service. Also, bring a towel to dry off when you are done. Afterwards you can change back into your normal clothes. If you want, bring a clean hanky to hold over your mouth and nose while being baptized.

If the baptism is going to be at the lake or pool, guys, you may wear a bathing suit and shirt. Ladies, you may wear a one-piece bathing suit with dark shirt and shorts over it.

BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE: When you make the decision to follow the Lord in baptism, please fill out the form to the left and return it to the church office or contact Pastor Joel. You will receive a certificate following your baptism.

Special Note to Children Wanting to be Baptized

Please fill out the form to the left and turn it in to the Children's Director. Children will receive a special booklet to work through with their parents to prepare them for baptism.

BAPTISMAL CERTIFICATE INFORMATION

Please fill out this form for the Baptismal Certificate. In some cases, the Baptismal Certificate can become a legal document if you lose your birth certificate, therefore, it is important to have this information correct.

Which service do you prefer?

9:00 _____ 10:30 _____

Please provide your email or phone so we can contact you with instructions

Full Legal Name _____

Place of Birth (City/State) _____

Date of Birth (Month/Day/Year) _____

Please return to church office

The History of Baptism

In the Old Testament, animals were sacrificed on the altar of the temple. Often the blood from the animals would splatter, so part of the furniture of the temple was a large brass pool known as the laver. The water in the laver was used to wash the sacrifices and for the priests to wash themselves.

When a man was ordained as a priest in the temple, he was washed with water as a part of the ceremony. Each day every priest had to wash his feet before making the daily sacrifices.

When a Gentile (someone who is not a Jew) decided to worship the Lord instead of his idols, he was accepted by the Jewish people. They would call such converted idol worshippers proselytes. Part of the ceremony for a proselyte was a baptism, a ceremonial washing. Ceremonial washings, for the Jews, pictured the spiritual cleansing of the heart by God. They knew the water would not take sins away. The water was a symbol of God's forgiveness. This is why John the Baptist demanded that those who listened to him be baptized, to show to others that God had cleansed them of their sin.

After Jesus began preaching, His disciples baptized those who listened to Jesus and received His words. Jesus commanded that His disciples baptize their converts in the churches. This command is part of Jesus' last words to His disciples (Matthew 28:19). The Christian Church has kept this command over the years.

The Meaning and Symbolism of Baptism

Baptism is a symbolic act of washing. Christians understand that the water does not wash the sins away. Jesus takes away our sin by grace through faith. Baptism is a physical picture of what has happened in the hearts of all who put their faith in Christ.

A. Baptism symbolizes death, burial and resurrection. (*Romans 6:3-4 and Colossians 2:12*)

Death to the old way of life (*controlled by sin*)

Burial - the yielding of ourselves totally to God

Resurrection to newness of life (*controlled by God*)

Jesus died, was buried, and rose again to live a totally new kind of life. When a person becomes a Christian he identifies himself with Christ. That is, he lets the world know that he is a Christian by being baptized. Baptism is a symbol of what happens when we are saved, of our new life in Christ.

B. Baptism and its meaning are illustrated by Paul in I Corinthians 10:1-2 where he uses the account of the crossing of the Red Sea recorded in Exodus 14. This is done as follows:

- 1) In Egypt, they were slaves to idol worshippers.
- 2) Under God's direction, they left Egypt and its slavery.
- 3) They went through the sea, a real act of faith.
- 4) They came up the other side, a free people, ready to serve the Lord.

C. Baptism signifies our placement into the Body of Christ, the Church. (*I Corinthians 12:13*)

Baptism is the ceremony by which we join the "Universal Church of Christ." No matter what denomination we belong to, every born-again Christian is a member of Christ's body, the Church.

D. Baptism is also a sign to the unbelievers (a testimony to them).

- 1) Baptism identifies us as belonging to Jesus.
- 2) Baptisms are held as public services, as a testimony to all of our faith in Christ.

The People Who Should be Baptized

Below is a list of passages about people in the Bible being baptized. Read each verse, then put a check beside each kind of person in the second column mentioned in the verse. Or you may draw a line to connect them. There will be much duplication.

Acts 2:38	Men	Matthew 28:19
Acts 8:12	Women	Mark 16:16
Acts 8:38	Children	I Corinthians 12:13
Acts 9:18	Babies	
Acts 16:15	Believers	
Acts 22:16	Unbelievers	

Some other churches baptize babies, though a baby does not understand his need of a Savior. These churches either believe that baptism is God's way of saving people or that it is merely a ceremonial act identifying the child with the church and committing the parents and the church to help the child later receive Christ as his Savior.

If you were baptized only as a very young child, we ask you to be baptized again as an adult after you have received Jesus as your Savior.

The Method of Baptism

The Missionary Church and most other evangelical churches practice "immersion." To do this, the minister and the one to be baptized enter a pool or tank of water. The minister then lowers the one to be baptized into the water and lifts him out.

The Missionary Church uses immersion because we believe this is the method used by Jesus' disciples. It is also the best illustration of death, burial and resurrection.

An Extra Note of Explanation

Jesus commanded His disciples to baptize their converts as they went about preaching the Gospel (*Matthew 28:19*). He also commanded them to observe the breaking of the bread and drinking from the cup as a memorial to Him (*I Corinthians 11:24*). Baptism and communion are called ordinances by the Missionary Church and other evangelical churches. Most liturgical churches (Catholics, Lutherans, etc.) call them sacraments. There is an important difference.

An ordinance is a law or command. We call these two symbolic acts ordinances since Jesus commanded His followers to practice them. A sacrament is quite different. By definition, it is a means of grace (salvation). In other words, a person participating in baptism or communion receives God's grace. To these churches, there is almost a miraculous quality associated with these acts.

The Bible never teaches that God will save a person because he has taken communion or been baptized. God's grace is ours if we put our faith in Jesus as Lord and Savior. Any rituals Christians participate in are aids to worship, reminders of what Christ has done (communion), or a testimony to others of what Jesus has done in our lives (baptism).