

NOW THAT YOU HAVE  
ACCEPTED CHRIST AS YOUR  
LORD AND SAVIOR AND  
DESIRE TO HONOR CHRIST  
WITH YOUR LIFE ...



Getting Off  
to a  
Good Start

# GETTING STARTED ...

**G**reetings! We have prepared this booklet for those who have made a decision to accept Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior.

As a new believer or a believer who has not received immersion baptism, we hope you will take time to carefully study this material. Now that you are confident that you have been “saved,” you are ready for the first step in a life of grateful obedience to your wonderful Savior. The best way we can show that we appreciate His sacrifice for us is to obey and follow the instructions He has given.

The first thing Jesus commanded a new Christian to do is to have immersion baptism. If you are a believer coming from another religious denomination, please carefully read the section titled, “Who Should be Baptized?”

We rejoice in what God has done in your life. Our prayer for you now is that you will begin your new life in Christ by immediately coming for immersion baptism. Your baptism experience will be a treasured memory for the rest of your life. Don’t allow Satan to tempt you to wait. Instead, be obedient to God’s Word and testify to the world that Jesus Christ is your Savior, Lord and Leader.

Baptism is a very special observance in the life of our faith family. We desire to celebrate and rejoice with you in your act of obedience. Please contact me if you have any questions, concerns or special circumstances.

He Cares and I Care,  
*Gregg L Headley*  
Senior Pastor

# BAPTISM IS IMPORTANT!

## “Baptism” – What Does It Mean?

**Baptism is the first test of obedience that God gives a new believer. Baptism doesn't make you a believer – it shows that you already believe.** Baptism does not “save you” – only your faith in Christ does that. In baptism, we take our stand with Jesus in front of other people and confess our faith and desire to please Him. Baptism is like a wedding ring – it is the outward symbol of the commitment you make in your heart, act of identification, obedience and public declaration.



*“But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us” (Romans 5:8).*

## “Baptism” – What Does It Mean?

**Baptism is very important to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.**

Jesus began His own ministry on earth by being baptized by John the Baptist (Mark 1:9). One of the last things Jesus commanded His disciples to do was to baptize all new converts: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19).

**Our baptism is a public testimony of our faith in Jesus Christ and a way by which we identify ourselves with Christ.** “Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 10:32,33).

**Baptism is a command, not a suggestion or choice.** It is the first thing Jesus commanded you to do after entering into a personal relationship with Him. “Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments” (I John 2:3).

TRULY, THERE IS NO DOUBT THAT ALL WHO BELIEVE IN JESUS CHRIST AS THEIR LORD AND SAVIOR HAVE THE RESPONSIBILITY TO FOLLOW THE LORD IN SCRIPTURAL IMMERSION BAPTISM.

# Why Be Baptized By Immersion?

We know that the Bible teaches baptism by immersion by the very word used. The Greek word "baptism" means to dip, immerse or make fully wet. Mark 1:10, Acts 8:38 and John 3:23 give very definite evidence that baptism in the Bible, and universally in the New Testament Church, was by immersion.

Immersion baptism is the only picture, or symbol, of what happens in a salvation conversion. It is IDENTIFICATION with Jesus' death on the cross and His resurrection. When a person trusts in Christ for salvation, he or she is identified with the benefits of His death and resurrection.



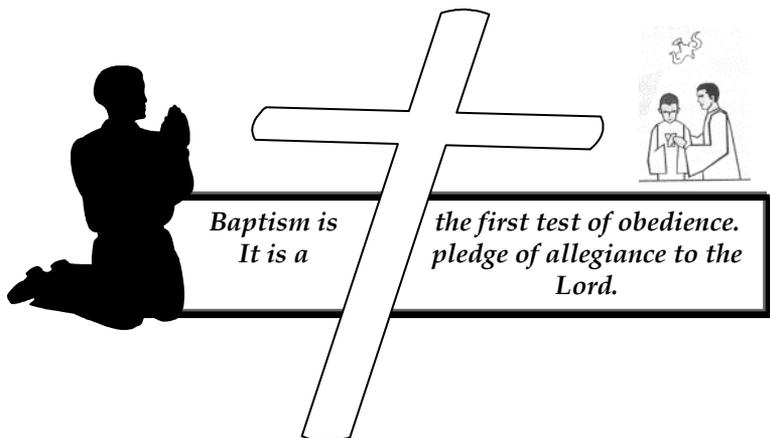
1. We are baptized in His **DEATH** (Romans 6:3).
2. We have been **BURIED** with Him in baptism (Romans 6:4).
3. We have been **RAISED** with Him to walk in a newness of life (Romans 6:4,5).

*"Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold all things have become new" (II Corinthians 5:17).*

# Who Should Be Baptized?

Every person who has received Christ. Scripture teaches that "God's sequence of obedience" is ... SALVATION ... BAPTISM ... CHURCH MEMBERSHIP (Acts 2:41,42).

There are individuals who have accepted and placed their faith in Christ but have not had immersion baptism. There are reasons why we "REBAPTIZE" those from other denominations. Some have not previously had a conversion experience. Many have been baptized either in order to be saved or as an act of parental dedication or commitment. We do not view the act of baptism by immersion as sacramental. It does not save or impart spiritual grace to the individual. It does not make one a Christian, more Christian or a better Christian. IT IS AN ACT OF OBEDIENCE AND TESTIMONY FOLLOWING CONVERSION.



For those who have not had scriptural immersion baptism, we do not question your salvation. However, we do desire that you would share with us your testimony of faith in the way our Lord commanded. We are not questioning your profession of faith or reflecting adversely upon the denomination from which you came. **Our prayer is that if you desire to be a part of our faith fellowship, you would be willing to share your testimony through immersion baptism as an act of public commitment to the Lordship of Christ in your life.**

## *What About Infants and Children Being Baptized?*

We have a strong desire to see children express faith in Jesus Christ. Yet, we also are cautious and wait until our children are mature enough to believe and understand the true meaning of baptism. Children (ages 6 and above) desiring to be baptized first need parental permission, then they need to attend a baptism class held at the same time as the adult class.

# When Should I Be Baptized?



According to the Bible, the sooner the better! Acts 2:41 says that the first Christians were baptized on the “the same day” they were saved. Acts 8:38 tell us that as soon as they found enough water to immerse the man whom Philip had just led to Christ, Philip stopped his journey to baptized him.

THERE IS NO REASON TO DELAY. AS SOON AS YOU HAVE DECIDED TO RECEIVE CHRIST INTO YOUR LIFE, YOU CAN AND SHOULD BE BAPTIZED.

You will be asked to share a very brief verbal response of your faith in Christ. Please don't be nervous. The pastor performing your baptism will share and lead you in your faith response. This is also your biblical obedience to Romans 10:9. Our desire is to make this a very pleasant, rewarding and positive experience for you. Our pastors are experienced in performing baptism and will take full responsibility for making sure all goes well for you.

“If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved” (Romans 10:9).

## Tour of the Baptistry

If you would like a tour of the baptistry before your baptism, please call the Church Office. We will schedule a convenient time for you. We make this available to help calm any fears or anxiety you may have about being baptized.

## Can My Family Be Baptized Together?

Yes! If each family member understands fully the meaning of baptism, and each one has personally placed his/her trust in Christ for salvation, we encourage families, couples and friends to be baptized at the same time.

However, it is important to remember that baptism is a personal statement of faith, not a family tradition. It is usually not wise to delay your baptism while waiting for other family members or friends to accept Christ. This puts an undue pressure on them and delays your obedience.

GO INTO ALL THE WORLD...

# BAPTIZING

...IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER,  
AND OF THE SON,  
AND OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

## Can a Family Member or Friend Join Me in My Baptismal Experience?

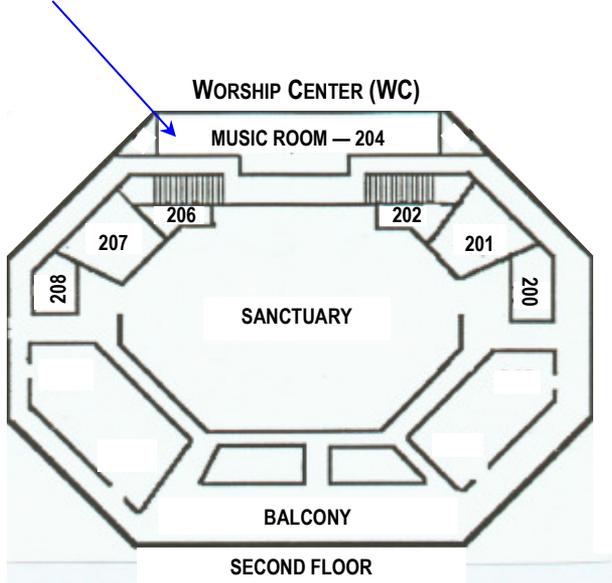
Yes! This is a wonderful expression of commitment. You may also desire to invite the person God used to share and lead you to accepting Christ as your Lord and Savior. We also encourage you to invite relatives, co-workers or friends to come witness your baptismal service. Pictures or video cameras may also be used at your baptism.

# Where Should I Go? What Should I Wear?

Please meet in Worship Center Room 204 (Music Room) at 9.20a before you are to be baptized. Bring your own personal toiletries and black or navy blue clothing for baptism. We provide baptismal robes, towels and hair dryers. You may want to bring a plastic bag to store wet clothing items.

One of our ministry pastors will meet you and other baptismal candidates. They will explain the baptismal procedure and answer any questions you may have.

**Please Meet Here!**



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