

BAPTISM

Helping people surrender to Jesus and become more like Him. That's our mission and reason for existence! It's why we love to celebrate God's work in people's lives and are committed to helping you in your spiritual growth.

So, why is baptism potentially your next step in surrendering to Jesus? Faith is not about what you believe to be true. It's in what and whom you put your ultimate trust. When someone is baptized they are declaring publicly, *"I am placing my ultimate trust and loyalty in Jesus for this life and for eternity!"*

At FIRST Christian Church, we follow the practice and teaching of the New Testament. The first followers of Jesus were always baptized by water immersion (going fully underwater opposed to sprinkling). It best represents a person walking away from their old way of life and are now identifying with Jesus in His death, burial and resurrection (Romans 6:3-4). Baptism is an affirmation that Jesus alone is the leader of one's life and their only basis for rescue and salvation. Further, baptism is making a commitment to the spiritual authority of the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, and the Body of Christ – the church.

In essence: **Baptism is our response to the Gospel of Jesus.**

Our response to God's saving grace includes a private and public commitment(s).

1. COMMITMENT OF FAITH - One will express their initial step of faith by placing total trust in the redeeming work of Jesus. (Romans 3:21-23, Hebrews 11:6, James 2:17)
2. COMMITMENT OF REPENTANCE – One affirms there is and will continue to be an inward change of mind, affections, convictions, and actions. When accompanied by faith in Jesus, repentance results in an unashamed public turning toward God and a life of obedience to Him. (Acts 2:36-38, Acts 3:19)
3. COMMITMENT OF CONFESSION – One makes a verbal acknowledgement of your faith and repentance in Jesus Christ. (Romans 10:9-10)
4. COMMITMENT OF BAPTISM – One demonstrates their personal commitment of faith, repentance, and confession in the sacramental form of a public commitment.

SO, WHY BE BAPTIZED?

- **It's what Jesus did.** (Mark 1:9)
- **It's what Jesus commands.** (Matthew 28:19-20)
- **It shows that I follow Jesus.** (Acts 18:8, 1 John 2:3)
- **It illustrates Jesus' death, burial and resurrection.** (1 Corinthians 15:3-4, Colossians 2:12, Romans 6:3-4).
- **It illustrates my new life as a follower of Jesus.** (2 Corinthians 5:17, Ephesians 2:8-9)

WHY BAPTISM BY IMMERSION?

- **Jesus was baptized by immersion.** (Matthew 3:16)
- **Every baptism in the Bible was by immersion.** The Greek word for “baptism” means “*to immerse or dip under water.*”
- **Immersion symbolizes the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.** (Romans 6:4)

WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED?

Every person who believes in Jesus! (Acts 2:41, Acts 8:12-13)

WHAT IF I WAS BAPTIZED OR SPRINKLED AS AN INFANT?

If you have been baptized or sprinkled previously, we encourage you to first talk with one of our pastors about that decision. In most cases with other Christian denominations, the decision for baptism/sprinkling of an infant is made by the parents (and not the individual) to commit that child to growing up to follow Jesus. In every instance of Scripture, baptism was a personal decision made for, and only for, oneself – namely, it cannot be bad on behalf of another person. We encourage people who were baptized as a child to think of their decision to do so - under their own accord - as a way of *fulfilling* that commitment made by their parents during their infancy.

WHAT IF I HAVE BEEN BAPTIZED AND STEPPED AWAY FROM MY FAITH, DO I NEED TO BE RE-BAPTIZED?

If someone chose to be baptized by immersion in their own accord and then “stepped away” from their faith, that baptism is not seen as illegitimate. Rather, one’s baptism is a reminder of the foundation of faith through grace we have received as we continue to repent, follow, and be obedient to Jesus as best we can in this life (John 15, Ephesians 2:4-10).

DO I HAVE TO BE BAPTIZED AT FIRST TO BE A MEMBER OF FIRST?

One does not have to be baptized at FIRST or by a pastor of FIRST in order to be a member of FIRST Christian Church.

PREPARING FOR BAPTISM

We know baptism is a major step for every person in their spiritual faith and walk with Jesus. Our team and church is ready and willing to answer any questions you may have about your baptism.

Prior to immersion, we ask those being baptized to repeat the following *Confession of Faith*: “I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God, and I take Him and my Lord and Savior.”

So, whether it’s during a Baptism Sunday throughout the year or an ordinary Tuesday afternoon, we would love to help you in this next step!