

BAPTISM

Being baptized is an important first step for a Christian. It is an outward symbol of the inner commitment to Jesus. Because of this, we think a celebration is in order whenever a part of the Great Lakes' family makes this public declaration.

Why be baptized?

1. To follow Christ's example

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth and was baptized by John in the river. - Mark 1:9

2. Because Christ commanded it.

Jesus said, "Go then, to all people everywhere and make them my disciples, baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and then teach them to obey everything I have commanded you.." - Matthew 28:19-20

3. Because it shows you are a believer and identify with Christ and the community of other Christ Followers.

...many of the Corinthians who heard him believed and were baptized. - Acts 18:8

4. Because obeying Christ's command shows you know Him.

We know that we have come to know Him, if we obey His commands. - 1 John 2:3

The meaning of baptism

1. It is a symbol of Christ's burial and resurrection.

For when you were baptized, you were buried with Christ, and in baptism you were also raised with Christ. - Colossians 2:12

2. It is a symbol of your new life as a Christian.

By our baptism then we were buried with Him and shared His death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead also we might live a new life! - Romans 6:4

3. Baptism does not make you a believer; it shows that you already are one! Baptism does not "save" you, only your faith in Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring - it's the outward symbol of the commitment you made in your heart.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith. it is the gift of God not by works, so that no one can boast. - Ephesians 2:8,9

4. Since water baptism is a symbolic picture of what Jesus did for us, it is important to understand that baptism is a follow up to being saved by Christ and not a requirement for salvation.

Why we baptize by immersion

1. Jesus was baptized by being immersed in water.

As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water. - Matthew 3:16

2. Every baptism in the Bible was by immersion under water.

...then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. When they came up out of the water... - Acts 8:38,39

3. The word "Baptize" literally means "to dip under water". The Greek word "baptizo" means "to immerse or dip under water."

4. It is the best way to picture a burial and resurrection.

Who should be baptized?

1. Every person who has made the decision to believe in Christ.

Those who believed and accepted His message were baptized. - Acts 2:41

2. The one requirement for baptism is belief in Christ! We do not baptize children until they are old enough to understand and believe.

When are we to be baptized?

1. As soon as you have believed! You shouldn't delay.

Then Philip began with the Scripture and told him the Good News about Jesus. As they traveled along the road, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "Look here is water! Why shouldn't I be baptized right now?" Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." The official answered, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. - Acts 8:36-39 (paraphrase)

2. There is no reason to delay. As soon as a person decides to believe in Christ, they can and should be baptized.

What about being baptized twice?

Our church recommends that you be baptized again if you have not been baptized by immersion since you became a believer. It doesn't devalue a prior experience, but simply reflects your desire to be baptized in the same way Jesus demonstrated and commanded us to follow.

Can a 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 to be baptized at the same time. It is a wonderful expression of commitment.

Will I have to say anything?

Nope. Your public statement is the act of baptism itself. We are so happy that you desire to follow Jesus' example in baptism. Many people like yourself have been baptized in pools, lakes and the ocean over thousands of years.

What should I wear?

Ladies – Shorts & a dark t-shirt.

Men – Shorts or swimsuit and a dark t-shirt.

Make sure to bring a towel and change of clothes!