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## BAPTISM INFORMATION PACKET

### **BAPTISM:**

*Celebrating*

*Your New Life!*



## **BAPTISM:** *Celebrating Your New Life!*

### ***Congratulations!***

We're thrilled that you're investigating this important aspect of the With God Life!

Baptism is a celebration of your relationship with Jesus and your life with Christ. It is an opportunity to "identify" yourself as someone who has decided to follow Jesus. By being baptized, you are announcing that you are choosing to leave your former way of doing life on your own and entering into a new life with God. The practice of baptism is symbolic of this choice as you enter the water and are immersed, dying to the old way of life and coming out of the water, being raised to new life! By getting baptized, you are not declaring that you are perfect, have it all figured out, or have reached 'super-Christian' status. In fact, you're saying almost the opposite. You are saying by this act, that because you have chosen to enter into a new life with Him, He will rescue you from the destructiveness of sin and brokenness and will begin the process of transforming you into the person He created you to be.

In addition, together with others who have decided to follow Jesus, we begin to experience what it means to function as a biblical community. In other words, we begin to relate with one another in new and life giving ways. Your baptism, therefore, is a visible symbol of your "initiation" into God's family, where we all stand on equal footing as brothers and sisters.

So this is a very special event. Whether you are a new follower of Jesus, or a veteran of the faith, your baptism should be a joyful, memorable experience. It represents a significant step in your relationship with God and with other believers, and it constitutes a strong statement to the world concerning who Jesus is to you and who you are to Him.

So we encourage you to look forward with eager anticipation to our next baptism service. Invite friends and family to share in it with you. If you know friends or family who do not yet know Christ, take a step of faith and invite them along. God often uses the stories of people like you to draw others to himself.

Together in Christ,

***The Pastoral Staff of Journey Community Church***



## About Baptism

This Baptism Packet is a self-study designed to help you gain a biblical understanding of what it means to be baptized. Please take time to work through the material. You might consider going through this during your devotional time. This curriculum with all other materials needs to be turned in if you are considering being baptized.

### 1. What is the Meaning and Significance of Baptism?

What historical event does baptism symbolize? (1 Corinthians 15:3,4)

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For those who have decided to follow Jesus, what does baptism symbolize? (Colossians 2:12)

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Does Baptism save us? (Ephesians 2:8,9)

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How then are we saved?

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### 2. Why be Baptized?

Who commanded the disciples to be baptized? (Matthew 28:19,20)

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Whose example are we following when we are baptized? (Mark 1:9)

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Who should be baptized? (Act 2:41)

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## Registration Form

**Please Note:** This baptism registration needs to be completed by anyone desiring to be baptized. You can turn your registration in at one of the Baptism Orientation Meetings or to the church office.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How long have you been attending Journey Community Church?
  
2. Who invited you to Journey (i.e., friend, co-worker, family, etc.)?
  
3. Where would you describe yourself spiritually when you first started attending Journey Community Church?  
  
 Not Yet Following Jesus    New Believer    Nominally Committed    Growing Follower
  
4. Who has been a major influence in your life to become a follow of Jesus?
  
5. Are you currently in a small group? If yes, what type?
  
6. Are you currently serving on a ministry team? If yes, what area of service are you in?
  
7. What classes have you taken at Journey?
  
8. What has motivated you to get baptized?



## **How to Prepare for Your Baptism**

### **Give Yourself Time:**

The celebrations will start promptly at 2 pm, therefore please allow yourself time to find parking and check in at baptism registration.

### **What to Wear/How to Dress:**

We encourage modest dress and apparel when being baptized.

Men: shorts, shoes, t-shirt

Women: shoes, shorts & t-shirt (with swimwear underneath).

Also be sure to bring a towel and change of clothes, as there will be a time to hang out and celebrate afterwards.

### **Be Prepared:**

The pastor/leader will be asking you a couple of questions before being baptized. Please consider the following questions:

- ✓ Have you decided personally to follow Jesus and trust him to lead you here in this life and life eternal?
- ✓ Do you understand the meaning and significance of baptism?
- ✓ What has motivated you be baptized today?

### **Bring a Friend:**

Baptism can be used as a great tool to invite a spiritually seeking friend or family member. They may not be willing to come to church at this juncture of their process, but they are often more than willing to attend a significant moment in your life.

### **Take in the Moment:**

This is a significant step in your spiritual journey. Enjoy it as you reflect upon God's goodness in your life!

**Please read over the Baptism FAQs thoroughly for more information or other questions you might have regarding baptism.**

## **Baptism FAQs**

### **What is the meaning of baptism?**

It illustrates Christ's burial and resurrection.

"Christ died for our sins... He was buried... and He rose again." – 1 Corinthians 15:3-4

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

It illustrates my new life as a Christian.

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. Baptism is like a wedding ring - it's the outward symbol of the commitment you make in your heart.

"When someone becomes a Christian he becomes a brand new person inside. The old life has passed away and a new life has begun!" – 2 Corinthians 5:17

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

"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

### **Why be baptized by immersion?**

Because Jesus was baptized that way.

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

Every baptism in the Bible was by immersion.

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

The Greek word baptize means "to immerse or dip under water".

It is best symbolized by a burial and resurrection!

Christian leaders in the past agree:

Martin Luther... "I would have those who are to be baptized to be entirely immersed, as the work imports and the mystery signifies."

John Calvin... "The word 'baptize' signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the ancient church."

John Wesley... "Buried with Him, alludes to baptizing by immersion according to the custom of the first church."

## **Baptism FAQs (continued)**

### **Who should be baptized?**

Every person who has believed in Christ.

"Those who believe and accepted His message were baptized..." – Acts 2:41

"Simon himself believed and was baptized..." – Acts 8:13

"But when they believed Philip as he preached the Good News... and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women." – Acts 8:12

### **When are we to be baptized?**

As soon as you decide to follow Jesus! You shouldn't delay – ideally, baptism is the best first step for new believers.

"Many of them believed... were baptized... that day" – Acts 2:41

At Journey, we wait until our children are old enough to believe and understand the true meaning of baptism before we baptize them. Generally, we begin offering baptism to those in 5th/6th grade.

Some churches practice a "baptism of confirmation" for children. This ceremony is intended to be a covenant between the parents and God on the behalf of the child. At Journey, we have a special celebration called "Child Dedication" for this purpose. In a "child dedication", parents promise to raise their child in the faith until the child is old enough to make his/her own personal decision to follow Jesus.

### **What if I was baptized as an infant? Can I be baptized again?**

At Journey we encourage you to identify yourself as a follower of Jesus through baptism. If your first baptism occurred as a decision by someone else (i.e. your parents decided to have you baptized as an infant), then we would encourage you to be baptized again of your own accord. This decision does not devalue your prior family experience, but simply reflects your desire to follow Jesus and be identified as one of his beloved sons/daughters.

### **Can my family be baptized together?**

Yes! If each family member fully understands the meaning of baptism and each one has personally placed his/her trust in Christ for salvation and to reconnect with God, we encourage families to be baptized together. It is a wonderful expression of a family's commitment to Jesus and to journey together in faith!

## **Baptism FAQs (continued)**

### **Will I have to say anything?**

No. Although we would love to use your grace story (as written in your registration packet) in various ways (website, during a worship service, blog site) to brag on God's goodness through you, your story will not be read to the larger gathering at the baptism service. At the beginning of the beach service, the pastor will explain the meaning of baptism. Together with the others, you will wait at the waters edge, and when it is your turn, the pastor or small group leader will pray with you and slowly lower you just under the surface of the water. Of course he/she will then lift you out of the water as well! You can then leave the water, dry off, and support the others being baptized.