

COMMON QUESTIONS

about baptism



What is the meaning of baptism?

1. It illustrates Christ's burial and resurrection.

“I passed on to you what was most important and what had also been passed on to me--that Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures said. He was buried, and he was raised from the dead on the third day, as the Scriptures said.” 1 Corinthians 15:3

“For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with him you were raised to a new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead.” Colossians 2:12

2. It signifies the end of my old life and the beginning of a new life as a Christian.

“What this means is that those who become Christians become new persons. They are not the same anymore, for the old life is gone. A new life has begun!” 2 Corinthians 5:17

“For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may live new lives.” Romans 6:4

3. Baptism doesn't make you a believer.

It shows that you already believe. Baptism does not save you; only your faith in Jesus Christ does that. Baptism is like a wedding ring - it's the outward symbol of the commitment you make in your heart. It suggests a person has entered into a relationship with Jesus Christ, and has taken on a new identity, that of a Christian.

“For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith. You can't take credit for this, it is a gift of God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it.” Ephesians 2:8-9

Why be baptized by immersion?

1. Jesus was baptized that way.

*“After his baptism, as Jesus came up out of the water, the heavens were opened and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and settling on him.” **Matthew 3:16***

2. The meaning of baptism suggests immersion.

The Greek word “baptize” means “to immerse, or dip under water.” It symbolized a burial and resurrection!

*“And he gave orders to stop the chariot. Then both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water and Philip baptized him. 39When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord suddenly took Philip away, and the eunuch did not see him again, but went on his way rejoicing.” **Acts 8:38-39***

Who should be baptized?

1. Every person who has believed, or trusted Jesus Christ as their Savior.

*“Those who believed what Peter said were baptized and added to the church--about three thousand in all.” **Acts 2:31***

*“But when the people believed Philip's message of Good News concerning the Kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, many men and women were baptized.” **Acts 8:12***

*“Then Simon himself believed and was baptized.” **Acts 8:13***

2. At Hopewell, we wait until our children are old enough to believe and understand the true meaning of baptism before we baptize them.

Until then, and prior to baptism, we “dedicate” children during a worship service. This “ceremony” is intended to be a covenant primarily between the parents and God on behalf of the child, and secondarily between the church and the parents. The parents promise to raise their child in the faith until the child is old enough to make his or her own decision to trust Christ. The church also promises to assist the parents by creating the environment so that the child can make a personal confession of faith in Christ.

When should I be baptized?

As soon as you have believed.

“Those who believed...were baptized...that day!” Acts 2:41

“So Philip began with this same Scripture and then used many others to tell him the Good News about Jesus. As they rode along, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, “Look! There's some water! Why can't I be baptized?” [a] 38He ordered the carriage to stop, and they went down into the water, and Philip baptized him.” Acts 8:35-38

There is no reason to delay. As soon as you have decided to trust Christ as your savior, you can and should be baptized.

Can my family be baptized together?

Yes! We encourage families to be baptized at the same time IF each family member understands fully the meaning of baptism, and each one has personally placed his/her trust in Jesus Christ for salvation. 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 on other family members to accept Christ, particularly children. This puts undue pressure on them and delays your step of obedience.

Because this is a celebration of one of the most important decisions you have made, we encourage you to invite all your relatives and friends to attend your baptism.

What should I wear when I'm baptized?

You will be given a personalized red shirt that can be worn over a swim suit or other appropriate clothing. We recommend wearing light weight pants, capris, or knee length shorts as well as shoes that can be easily removed before entering the water. You will also need to bring a towel, a change of clothes, and a plastic bag for your wet clothes.

Will I have to say anything before I'm baptized?

No, you will be asked to write a one page testimony that will be read to the congregation by one of the staff while you are being baptized.

What if I have special needs?

We are able to perform private baptisms in special circumstances.

How do I let someone know I'd like to be baptized?

Just call the church office at 610.286.6308 or email Anita at anitaw@hwcf.org.