



## **Baptism at Calvary Church**

Baptism is an important aspect of church life at Calvary. It is an ordinance which uses water to demonstrate the spiritual cleansing that has taken place in a person's life. It provides an opportunity for individuals to publicly declare that they have placed their trust in Jesus Christ and have experienced God's forgiveness of their sins. Baptism also allows the church community to celebrate the life change that God has brought about in an individual's life.

## **Who should be baptized?**

Everyone who has come to recognize Jesus as their Savior and has committed to following Him with their lives. Jesus set an example by submitting to the Father when he was baptized in Matthew 3. No need to be baptized again, if you've been baptized previously (exception, if you were an infant).

## **How does Calvary Church observe baptism?**

Calvary Church practices baptism by immersion just as Jesus was baptized in Matthew 3:16. Submersion in the water symbolizes the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus (1 Corinthians 15:3-4). Being submersed underwater represents our death to sin and the old way of life, and being raised out of the water symbolizes how Jesus raised us and gave us a fresh start in life (Romans 6:3-5).

## **Who does the baptizing?**

A member of Calvary's pastoral staff will perform the baptism.

## **What does a baptism service at Calvary Church look like?**

Generally, baptism takes place within our Sunday morning worship service, typically after a time of singing. The minister will call those being baptized in a predetermined order. Each baptizee will be given an opportunity to share a pre-written testimony. The minister baptizes by immersing the baptizee in the water. Typically, several people are baptized in each service. The baptismal is located in the Sanctuary which is only accessible by using stairs. Accommodations can be made for those who cannot navigate stairs, to be baptized on the platform which is handicap accessible.

## **What do I wear?**

Each baptizee will receive a baptism t-shirt which will be worn during baptism. Please bring a white, black or gray t-shirt to be worn under the baptism t-shirt along with black pants, jeans or loose-fitting shorts to the knee. Avoid wearing tight shorts, leggings or short shorts. Socks need to be worn into the baptismal to help prevent slipping and for hygiene purposes. Participants can come to the baptismal area in baptism clothes or changed upon arrival. Baptism shirts will be given out on the morning of baptism.

## **What do I need to bring?**

Change of clothes, underwear, socks, towel, brush, hair dryer, cosmetic items and a bag for wet clothes.

### **When do I arrive?**

Please arrive no later than 30 minutes before your scheduled time in the service.

### **Will I be asked to say anything at the service?**

During the baptism service, we encourage the baptizee to share a story/testimony or meaningful Bible verse. The minister will ask two questions to be publicly answered before the congregation (prior to being submerged in the water).

1. Have you asked Christ to forgive all your sins and be your Lord and Savior?
2. Do you renounce Satan, this world and your own evil desires and choose to follow Christ and Him alone?

### **Why tell my story?**

Sharing a personal salvation story is good spiritual practice. Writing a testimony can deepen a believer's faith as they recall what God has done in their life. For those listening, a testimony is an encouraging reminder that God is active in changing lives. God loves hearing us testify to what He has done. It is an act of worship.

### **How long should my story be?**

Testimonies to be shared during baptism services should be one to two minutes (long).

### **Why just a minute or two to tell my story?**

1. The services are timed to include many different elements, baptism is just one piece.
2. The highlights of your story are the most important in this context, the details will get lost in a longer story.
3. To allow time for all those getting baptized to share their story.

### **Guidelines and suggestions in preparing your story.**

Your story is simply an account of how Jesus Christ became part of your life. The following questions are meant as a guide:

1. What was life like before committing to follow Jesus? Briefly describe life without Christ.
2. Were there circumstances or people who helped you understand that you are a sinner in need of a Savior?
3. What has led you to this decision to be baptized?
4. Is life different now that you are a follower of Jesus? If so, describe the difference.

Once you've finished reflecting on and answering these questions, we would be happy to help further prepare your testimony. Especially if you need help consolidating your story to one to two minutes.

### **What should I do after I write my story?**

Email your story to the staff contact by the date requested, approximately 2 weeks before your scheduled baptism. Please note that our staff reviews each baptism testimony, editing stories for clarity, grammar and context. This entire process exists to glorify and honor God and his work in your life to bring you to salvation.

### **One last thing we want you to know.**

Please know that we are praying for you as you prepare to be baptized. Though this is an exciting time, we recognize Satan is real, and he will do anything to make you not want to go through with your baptism. Please ask your friends, family or community to be praying for you before and after your baptism. We are praying for you and are excited to celebrate this next step of faith with you.