

# FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

# *About Baptism*

## at Calvary Church

### **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 that they have experienced God's forgiveness of their sins. Baptism is also a great time for the church 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 themselves to following Him with their lives is strongly encouraged to participate in baptism.

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

We practice baptism by immersion (Acts 8:36-39). It is symbolic of the beginning of the Christian life and is the holy and beautiful testimony of a believer affirming personal faith in the crucified, buried, resurrected, and ascended Savior. This spiritual union with Christ -- dying to our old life in Adam and being resurrected to a new life in Christ -- is illustrated by water baptism (Romans 6:1-11, Galatians 2:20, Colossians 2:11-12).

It is also a sign of identification with the Body of Christ, the Church (Acts 2:41-42). The Lord Jesus has commanded His Church "to go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Matthew 28:19). We

Calvary Church

707 East Beltline NE | Grand Rapids, MI 49525 | [www.calvarygr.org](http://www.calvarygr.org)

believe that immersion paints a wonderful picture of Jesus' life, death and resurrection. It also portrays the washing, or cleansing, that God has done in a believer's life. Typically, several people are baptized in each service. We use the baptismal located in the Sanctuary.

### **Who does the baptizing?**

A pastoral staff representative will baptize you.

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

After a time of worship and some remarks by one of our pastors, the first person will be called to come into the baptismal. You will be given an opportunity to share your story of how you've come to faith or your faith journey, after which the pastoral staff representative baptizing you will immerse you in the water and lift you back out.

### **What do I wear and what do I need to bring?**

Please bring a bathing suit or a change of underwear, extra pair of socks, white handkerchief and towel. Women may want to wear a camisole or a t-shirt under the robe. Women please note that a one-piece bathing suit is preferable. If a two-piece is all you have,

you should wear a white t-shirt over it. Please bring a towel, a bag for your wet clothes, and a change of dry clothes. Please arrive no later than one-half hour before your scheduled service.

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

During the baptism service, we would encourage to share your story or share a Bible verse. You will also be asked two questions by the pastoral staff representative (prior to being submerged in the water) to answer publicly to the congregation.

1. Have you asked Christ to forgive all your sins and be your Lord and Savior?
2. Do you forsake Satan, sin and this world to follow Christ and Him alone?

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

Telling your story is good for you and also for those who are blessed by hearing it. For you, sharing your testimony can deepen your faith as you recall what God has done in your life. For those listening, your words are encouraging reminders that God is active in changing our lives. God loves hearing us testify to what He has done. It is an act of worship.

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

Since there will be many stories to hear, we encourage you to keep yours to about one or two minutes, no longer.

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

1. The service will be packed with preaching, singing and baptisms.
2. The people who hear your story can only absorb so much.
3. The highlights of your story are the most important in this context, the details will get lost in a longer story.

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

Writing a testimony is a difficult process and this gives us an opportunity to help you write it. We need to have your testimony in the church office two weeks before your baptism. While we try our best to honor your writing, we may need to edit it. Besides grammar, sentence flow and readability, we are cautious about how certain things are said from the baptismal. Please e-mail your testimony to [kwhite@calvarygr.org](mailto:kwhite@calvarygr.org).

### **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 to

guide you as you write. Because of the number of people participating we ask you to keep your remarks to about one minute. When you are finished answering these questions, we would be happy to talk with you and help you further prepare.

1. What was I like before I made the commitment to follow Jesus? Briefly describe your life without Christ.
2. What were the circumstances and who were the people who helped you understand that you are a sinner and need a Savior?
3. Why are you being baptized? What has led you to make this decision?
4. Is your life different now that you are a follower of Jesus? If so, describe the difference.

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

Please know that we are praying for you as you prepare to be baptized. We want you to know that Satan is alive and well, 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 excited to celebrate this next step with you.