

Baptism at Covenant Church

Baptism is an ancient Christian practice where a person publicly identifies with Jesus and becomes part of His church family. Across the world, almost every Christian church practices water baptism in some way.

A Brief History

Baptism originally grew out of a Jewish ritual-cleansing bath. Over time, it became a picture of being washed clean through Jesus' death and resurrection. Being submerged under the water and coming back up symbolizes dying to our old, self-centered way of living and stepping into a brand-new life with Him.

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! (2 Corinthians 5:17)

We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. (Romans 6:4)

In the early church, people were baptized as soon as they decided to follow Jesus. Eventually, parents began having their infants baptized so they could feel confident their children were included in God's family. Centuries later, as the Bible became widely available for everyday people to read, Christians noticed an important pattern: baptism in the New Testament was a personal choice! It was an intentional act of obedience and faith, not something done to someone without their decision.

As a result, many believers chose to be baptized as adults to show that their faith wasn't just inherited from their parents—it was a personal commitment to Jesus. At Covenant, we share that same commitment.

What Does Baptism Mean Today?

People come to Covenant from all kinds of church backgrounds:

- Some were baptized as infants, but it carried little personal meaning for them later.
- Others were baptized as infants, and that connection to the church was a meaningful part of their faith journey. Many have had significant confirmation services.
- Some were baptized at an older age, but did it mostly to go along with the crowd.
- Some have followed Jesus for years but haven't taken the step of baptism yet.

We don't believe baptism is a magic ritual, nor is it required for God to love or save you. It doesn't erase the good work God has already done in your life, and doing it just because you feel obligated won't change your heart. But when you choose baptism as a symbol of your commitment to follow Jesus, it becomes a deeply meaningful milestone in your walk with Him.

A Few Traditions Unique to Our Be in Christ Family

If you've seen immersion baptisms before, our approach at Covenant might look a little different. These are church traditions rather than strict biblical rules, but they carry meaning for us:

1. We lower people forward: You start on your knees in the water and lean forward, face-first (and yes, you can definitely plug your nose!). This posture shows that baptism is an active choice you are stepping into.
2. We immerse three times: Going under the water three times represents the presence and work of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit in your life.

Frequently Asked Questions

What do I need to do to get baptized at Covenant?

Because baptism is about publicly choosing to follow Jesus, we like to start with a conversation. A pastor or church leader will sit down with you. We talk through (and encourage you to write out responses to) three simple questions:

- What was your life like before committing to Jesus?
- What led you to place your trust in Him?
- How is your life changing as a result of following Him?

What actually happens during the baptism?

You will enter the water wearing a swimsuit and a t-shirt (or comfortable clothing you don't mind getting wet). You'll kneel down, briefly share your commitment to Jesus, and then be lowered forward into the water three times by the person baptizing you. Most often, this takes place during a Sunday morning gathering.

We also love to have someone who has been important to you on your journey with Jesus (a family member, a friend, or a church leader) come and read a short passage of scripture of their choosing to encourage you. You can choose who you would like to do this for you. And, we would welcome the opportunity as a church family to pray for you.

Do I have to speak in front of everyone?

You are only required to answer "Yes" to a simple question confirming your faith in Jesus. However, we encourage people to share a short testimony or a favorite Bible verse so the congregation can celebrate with you. Answering the three questions above is a great way to shape how you share. If public speaking makes you overly nervous, we can easily pre-record a short video of your story to play beforehand!

Where does it take place?

We have a heated baptismal tank hidden right under our stage at the church! But we've also done baptisms outdoors in Penetang Bay and in local swimming pools! Baptism is meant to be a public event shared with your church family, but the actual location can be wherever makes sense for you.