

WHAT MISSIONVIEW BELIEVES:

BAPTISM

WELCOME

We are so excited that you're interested in being baptized here at MissionView!

In the New Testament, Jesus instituted two *ordinances* (sometimes referred to as *sacraments*) for his followers to practice: Baptism and the Lord's Supper, which we often call Communion. These practices serve as public reminders of what God has done and is continuing to do.

At its core, baptism is a proclamation of faith. It is practiced by believers who have recognized their sin before a holy God and are publicly declaring their salvation in Jesus Christ.

This booklet will describe:

- What Scripture says about baptism.
- What baptism illustrates.
- What baptism is not.
- Who is baptized.
- How we baptize.
- Why we baptize.

It will also include:

- Preparing for your baptism.
- Details about your baptism day.
- Next steps to take after being baptized.

WHAT SCRIPTURE SAYS ABOUT BAPTISM

There is a recognizable pattern found in the New Testament where people hear the gospel, repent, believe, and are then baptized.

Here are just a few examples:

- John the Baptist baptized those who would repent (Mark 1:5).
- On the day of Pentecost, 3,000 new believers were baptized (Acts 2:41).
- The Samaritans that believed were baptized (Acts 8:12).
- Paul was baptized three days after he met Jesus on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:18).
- Cornelius and some other Gentiles were baptized (Acts 10:47).
- Lydia and her household were baptized (Acts 16:15).
- The Philippian jailer and his household were baptized (Acts 16:33).
- Many Corinthians were baptized (Acts 18:8).
- The Ephesian disciples were baptized (Acts 19:5).

Christians today are continuing in this pattern as people recognize that sin has kept them from God and believe only Jesus can save them and restore that relationship.

To be saved means that you are made into a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17). That is why you often hear Christians described as being “born again” (John 3:3). Born-again believers are cleansed of their old life of sin and made new. This includes being given a new heart, a new life, a new family, a new Lord, a new Spirit, a new eternal destination, and much more (Romans 6:1-11, Colossians 2:11-12, Galatians 4:4-7, Titus 3:4-7)!

Baptism is a public proclamation of this very salvation in your life.

WHAT BAPTISM ILLUSTRATES

Baptism is meant to function as a visible symbol of a deeper invisible reality. It's like a wedding ring; a married man wears this visible symbol to proclaim the invisible reality of his commitment to his wife.

By being submerged in water, you are identifying with Christ's death and symbolically displaying death to your old self and old life. Coming up out of the water reminds us of Christ's resurrection and announces your union with Jesus and newness of life in Him. The act says, “I am not just a different or better person, but I am brand new!”

Additionally, the water symbolizes being washed and cleansed of sin, a beautiful picture of what has already happened at the moment of salvation.

WHAT BAPTISM IS NOT

Baptism is not what saves us. We are only saved by grace through faith in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:8-9). While it symbolizes being washed and made new, a person must be spiritually baptized into Christ in order to be saved: *“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” Galatians 3:27 (ESV)*. At the moment of repentance and faith in Jesus Christ, a person is *“buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.” Colossians 2:12 (ESV)*

Similarly, baptism is not necessary for salvation. It is not a prerequisite to be saved, nor is it required afterward for salvation to be complete. Rather, believers are baptized after salvation as they respond to Christ’s command and celebrate new life.

There is nothing magical or significant about the water used for baptism, though we do believe it to be a spiritually celebratory act.

WHO IS BAPTIZED

A new believer should be baptized once in obedience to the command of Jesus. Often new Christians question whether or not they are spiritually ready for baptism. Take comfort in knowing that most people who are baptized are brand new in their faith. Once saved, we should obey and celebrate, not wait!

Some people, however, may have been baptized earlier in their lives (such as in the case of infant baptism) without understanding the significance of baptism, or perhaps they did not truly repent and receive Jesus as their Savior. In such cases it is very important to be re-baptized as a public profession of faith.

At MissionView, we do not baptize infants. We do allow children to be baptized if they make a profession of faith of their own accord. A pastor and/or Children’s Director works with families to determine if it is the appropriate time. We do perform child dedications during our morning services quarterly for parents who wish to commit to raising their children with Jesus Christ as the foundation.

If you have questions, we would be happy to talk with you about this important decision. Please call the church office to set up an appointment with a pastor.

HOW WE BAPTIZE

At MissionView, we practice immersion in water. We believe that immersing rather than sprinkling was the New Testament mode of baptism and that it serves as a better symbolic picture.

We baptize publicly. We believe that this is a time to celebrate with the Church family the public proclamation of a person's salvation.

We baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, as commanded by Jesus (Matthew 28:19).

In most cases, baptisms at MissionView Church are conducted by one of the Pastors or Elders. However, at times, others will participate in baptizing during our baptism services. For anyone desiring to baptize at MissionView, the following guidelines will be followed:

- Baptizer has demonstrated a personal relationship with Christ.
- Baptizer has first been baptized as a believer.
- Baptizer should be a member in good standing.
- Baptizer should be approved by pastor(s) in charge of baptisms.
- Baptizer is one who has had a spiritual impact in the life of the one(s) being baptized.
- Baptizer has been specifically requested by the one(s) being baptized.
- Baptizer has met with a pastor and the person they are baptizing to go over the plan for baptism or they have attended the baptism class.

All people being baptized must attend the mandatory baptism class the week before baptism or they must meet personally with a pastor before the baptism service.

WHY WE BAPTIZE

We get baptized because Jesus was himself baptized, and we want to follow his example (Matthew 3:13-17).

We get baptized in obedience to Jesus, as he commanded that we do so (Matthew 28:19). This should be one of the first steps of obedience we can take in our new lives with Him.

We get baptized to identify with Jesus and his Church. By being baptized we are announcing our participation in the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:12-13, Ephesians 4:4-6).

We get baptized to celebrate and worship God together. In being baptized, the love and grace of God are put on display for all to see!