

# BAPTISMS

An outward sign of an inward commitment.  
Baptism signifies you being a follower of  
Jesus, beginning a changed life, and uniting  
with a new family.

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# HISTORY

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"Baptism" means "to cleanse by dipping or submerging, to wash, to make clean with water, to wash one's self, bathe."

Baptism began as a Jewish ritual cleansing ceremony for Gentile converts. John the Baptist took baptism and applied it to the Jews themselves because it wasn't just the Gentiles who needed cleansing.

## **Why was there baptism before Jesus?**

John's baptism was about repentance—it was a symbolic representation of a person changing their mind and choosing a new direction.

*I baptize you with water for repentance ...*  
Matthew 3:11 (NIV)

*... John's baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.*  
Acts 19:4 (NIV)

Being baptized by John meant the recognition of a person's sin, a desire for spiritual cleansing, and a commitment to obey God's law and belief in the promised Messiah.

## **The baptism of Jesus...**

*Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. But John tried to deter him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" Jesus replied, "Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness." Then John consented. As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased."*

Matthew 3:13-17 (NIV)

Jesus was not baptized because He needed to be cleansed from sin. Rather, His baptism was the "fulfillment of all righteousness." He was paving the way for us, His followers!

## PURPOSE

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Today, baptism is a person's identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

*... We are those who have died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 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. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin because anyone who has died has been set free from sin.*

Romans 6:2-7 (NIV)

Baptism is an ordinance given to the Church by Jesus Himself.

*Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.*

Matthew 28:19-20 (NIV)

Baptism is a necessary act of obedience in the life of a believer. It is a symbol of disassociating with past beliefs and behavior to say, "I identify with Jesus, His message, and His life." We are publicly stating that we belong to Him, we love Him, and that we're not ashamed of the One who gave His life for us so we could come into a relationship with Him.

We often say, "Baptism is an outward sign of an inward commitment."

### **How do I know when I should be baptized?**

If you've repented and put your faith in Jesus, you're ready for baptism - there are no other prerequisites. However, we understand that baptism is an important act of obedience, and we want to make sure you feel confident about the commitment you're making and understand why you're doing it. If you have any questions beyond the ones this packet have addressed, please feel free to call the church and speak with a pastor.

At Lakes Area Vineyard Church, we do water baptisms at different times throughout the year. To find out the dates of the next baptism, go to our website, [myvineyardchurch.com](http://myvineyardchurch.com), or call the office at (218) 846-1199.

### **Who can be baptized?**

*Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins ... "*

Acts 2:38 (NIV)

Any person who has repented and believed in Jesus Christ is ready to be baptized.

Baptism does not save anyone. It is not for someone "trying" to become a Christian. It is for those who already believe, have committed their life to Christ, and will now publicly profess their faith in Him. It is for those who have repented of, or turned their backs on, the life they used to have in order to follow Jesus.

### **What about children?**

We do not baptize babies at Lakes Area Vineyard Church because we believe baptism is reserved for those who can willfully choose to repent and believe. As for older children, we don't have an age limit because each situation depends on the person. We trust you, the child's parent, to help discern whether or not your little one is ready for baptism.

To be clear, we do believe that God cares deeply for young children. The Bible makes it clear that they are under God's protection.

*And he said: "Truly I tell you, unless you change and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven."*

Matthew 18:3 (NIV)

*Jesus said, "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these."*

Matthew 19:14 (NIV)

The important thing to remember is that a person does not need to be baptized in order to be saved or to identify as a Christian. Baptism is an act of obedience to Jesus, and there is plenty of grace as you navigate the decision about baptism with your child.

If you'd like help discerning the readiness of your child for baptism, please contact the church and a pastor would be happy to help.

If you have a child you'd like to dedicate to the Lord, we do Child Dedications throughout the year as well. Please check out our website, [myvineyardchurch.com](http://myvineyardchurch.com), or contact the church for more information.

# WHAT TO EXPECT SUNDAY MORNING

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## **What should I wear?**

You can wear an outfit you would feel comfortable being baptized in. You can change in the restrooms, and we will provide towels for you as you exit the water.

Appropriate clothes to wear during baptism:

- Girls-swimsuit underneath shorts and at-shirt
- Boys-swim trunks and a t-shirt

## **What should I do once I get to church?**

If you are not wearing your clothes to be baptized in, you'll want to change when you get to the church before the service begins.

We ask that you change in the restrooms that are located in the lobby. There will be extra towels and bags for your wet clothes at the Connection Center.

## **What do I do once I'm changed?**

Please find a seat in the auditorium. You are welcome to sit anywhere during the service.

## **When will the baptisms take place during the service?**

After the first worship song, announcements, and a short message, a pastor will invite to the front all those who have let us know in advance they would like to be baptized.

The worship team will play while baptisms are taking place and a live video feed of the baptisms will stream on the main screen.

Spontaneous baptisms will take place during the remaining worship songs.

## **What happens after I'm baptized?**

Once you get baptized, you will be handed a towel and helped out of the tank by our ushers.

You can immediately go and change and come back for the rest of the service. Don't forget to grab your baptism certificate at the Connection Center! We will have one made for you if you let us know in advance that you are going to be baptized. If you decided during the service, we will mail your certificate the next week.

We encourage you to take advantage of the prayer ministry offered at the end of the service.

## **What happens now that I am baptized?**

Congratulations! We are so excited that you made this next step in your faith journey.

Make sure to read the next section, "What you may experience after baptism."

***Please do not hesitate to call Lakes Area Vineyard Church at (218) 237-8463 and talk to someone on our pastoral staff if you need encouragement, prayer, support, or if you have any further questions.***

## **WHAT YOU MAY EXPERIENCE AFTER**

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### **What happened to Jesus after he was baptized?**

*Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, left the Jordan and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness, where for forty days he was tempted by the devil. He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them he was hungry. The devil said to him, "If you are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread." Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'"*

Luke 4:1-4 (NIV)

Jesus used God's Word to ward off challenges from the enemy.

Typically, when you choose to turn toward Jesus or take the step to be baptized, you may also experience some temptation or other unusual things. Nightmares or criticism from others who normally would not show that sort of character toward you, depression, anxiety, anger, or temptation to a heightened degree are all examples.

### **This is often called spiritual warfare. What is spiritual warfare?**

To understand spiritual warfare, we need to begin with acknowledging that we are in a war. Battles make up smaller components of a larger war and are fought on different fronts, for different reasons, and with varying degrees of intensity. The same is true in spiritual warfare. As Christians, we are in battles that are real even though we often cannot physically see them. With a little training we can recognize attacks from the enemy and how to stand against him.

### **What can we do to prepare for these battles?**

We can use God's Truth (Holy Scriptures) to ward off attacks from the enemy just like Jesus did.

1. Be strong in the Lord
2. Put on the Armor of God and stand firm (see verses on the following page)

3. Pray

4. Stay alert

*Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. Therefore, put on the whole armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people.*

Ephesians 6:10-18 (NIV)

### **Why do we mention this after baptism?**

It is important for you to be aware that testing or temptation may follow your experience of baptism. Do not be too surprised if you experience some level of spiritual battle. You have everything you need to counteract any temptation or test.

And remember, after Jesus was tempted by the enemy, he began his ministry in the power of the Spirit! May that give you the courage and hope to take your stand and fight as well.

***Please do not hesitate to call Lakes Area Vineyard Church at (218) 846-1199 and talk to someone on our pastoral staff if you need encouragement, prayer, support, or if you have further questions.***

**Ready to be Baptized? Sign up for our next Baptism service at [myvineyardchurch.com/baptism](http://myvineyardchurch.com/baptism)**