

### **Baptism Checklist**

Please initial each item as you are able:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I am trusting Jesus Christ alone for my salvation, desiring that He be Lord in every area of my life.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ I desire to be baptized in obedience to Jesus, my Lord and Savior.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ I renounce Satan and all his ways.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ I desire to follow Jesus all my days faithfully and to unashamedly tell others about Him.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ I have read “What the Bible Teaches about Baptism?” and have looked up and read all the Bible verses referred to in that section.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ I have read and filled out the “Baptism Application Form” honestly and to the best of my ability.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ I am 18 years of age or older. **OR**  
\_\_\_\_\_ I have my parents’ permission to get baptized.

Parent/legal guardian signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
(Please Print)

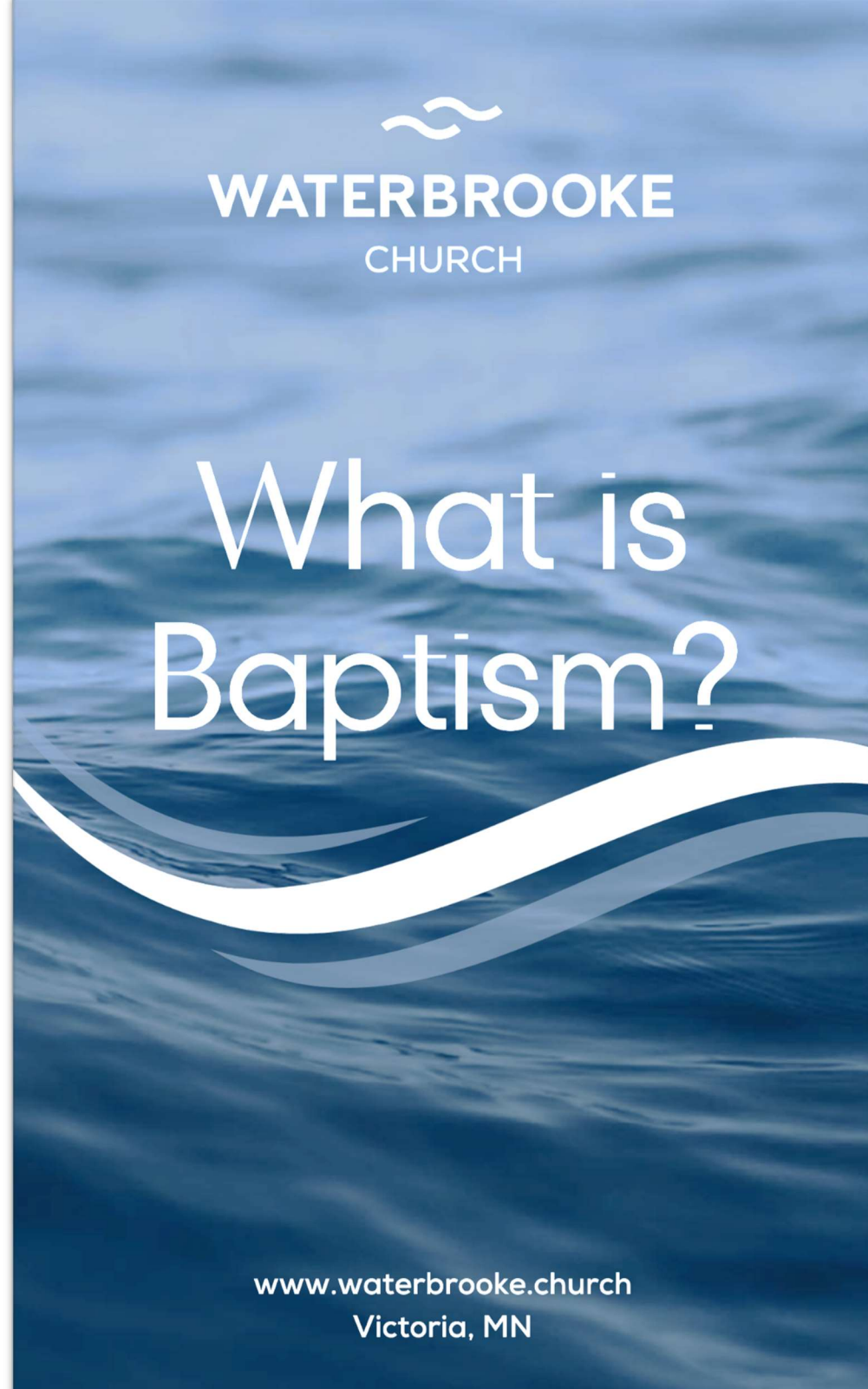
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

\*Please return the following to the church office or a pastor/elder:

- Your “Baptism Application Form” (including your testimony)
- Your “Baptism Checklist”

Cut here and return to church office.



**Baptism Application Form**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Baptism Questionnaire:**

Cut here and return to church office.

1. What is the gospel in your own words? Include Scripture in your answer.
2. What is baptism? What does it symbolize? Does baptism save you? Use Scripture in your answer.
3. *Why* do you want to be baptized? Use Scripture in your answer.
4. Using a separate sheet of paper, share your testimony of how God saved you.

## ***How to Prepare for Your Baptism***

- Baptisms are usually held outside after the second service.
- What to wear: Most people wear shorts and shirts
  - Avoid wearing white.
  - Be mindful of images and wording that may be on the shirt.
- Remember to bring a towel to dry off afterward and a change of clothes.

### **These questions may be asked during your baptism:**

- Do you admit and acknowledge that you are a sinner in need of a Savior?
- Do you believe Jesus died on the cross for your sins, rose from the dead to give you new life, and trust Him for your salvation?
- Do you renounce Satan and all his ways?
- Is it your desire to be baptized today and join in the mission of Christ's church?

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## What is the *Gospel*?

Before understanding what baptism is, it is necessary to understand the gospel. The gospel means “good news”. It is the announcement that God entered the world in the person of Jesus Christ to redeem fallen humanity and restore this broken world through His death, resurrection, and kingdom reign. All humanity has sinned and fallen short of God’s glory (Romans 3:23). This presents an extraordinary dilemma: God is holy, so He must punish sin. But God is merciful. He does not want to punish sinful humanity (Romans 6:23). How does God deal with the dilemma of human sin? He sent His only Son, Jesus, to live the perfect life all humans failed to live and to die the death all humans deserve on the cross. So, those who repent and trust in Jesus alone—not their good works—God will forgive them of their sins and give them eternal life (John 3:16). A Christian is someone who was once spiritually dead in sin but is now spiritually alive through faith in Jesus Christ.

## What is *Baptism*?

Baptism is a public ceremony in which Christians declare their faith and allegiance to Jesus Christ before the world and officially become a member of the family of God. A Christian believes and confesses Jesus as Lord and Savior repents of sin, becomes a new creation in Christ, and receives the Holy Spirit. After conversion, Jesus commands all believers to publicize their faith and become official members of Christ’s church through baptism.

In the Bible, baptism demonstrates six elements<sup>1</sup> of the gospel in the life of all followers of Jesus. Therefore, baptism is:

### *1. A Public Profession of Faith and Repentance*

Baptism is a public celebration. Faith in Jesus is not private. It is front-page news. Christian faith is loud, and baptism is the megaphone that amplifies the sound of one’s saving faith in Jesus to the world. When Peter preached

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<sup>1</sup> For these six elements of baptism in greater detail, see Bobby Jamieson, *Going Public: Why Baptism is Required for Church Membership* (Nashville: B&H Publishing Group, 2015), 44–49.

## Why Should Christians be Baptized?

Finally, baptism is what characterizes all of Christ’s followers. The New Testament provides the following reasons why believers should participate in baptism. They are:

1. Jesus commanded all His followers to be baptized (Matthew 28:18–20).
2. Baptism is a public sign of genuine repentance and faith in Jesus (Matthew 10:32–33).
3. Baptism shows that Christ’s followers embrace God’s purpose for their lives (Luke 7:30).
4. Baptism publicizes one’s transformation from death to life in Christ (Romans 6:3–4).
5. Baptism symbolizes putting off the “old man” to put on the “new man” (Romans 6:4–7).
6. Baptism demonstrates the unity of all believers in Christ’s church (1 Corinthians 12:13).
7. Baptism demonstrates one’s victory in Christ and Satan’s defeat (Colossians 2:12, 15).
8. Baptism is an appeal to God for a clear conscience (1 Peter 3:18–21).

## How Should Christians be Baptized?

Baptism is by immersion in water. The Greek word for baptism—*Baptizō*—means “to dip,” “to plunge,” and “to immerse.” Therefore, in baptism, someone is *lowered under* and *raised* out of the water. Baptism by immersion is a regular practice in the New Testament.

For example, John the Baptizer baptized people where “water was plentiful” (John 3:22–23). Also, when John the Baptizer baptized Jesus in the Jordan River, the Bible says that Jesus “*came up out of the water*” (Mark 1:10), which implies he was underneath the water. Finally, after the Ethiopian eunuch believed in Jesus through Philip’s witness and as they came to a body of water along the roadside, he wanted to be baptized immediately. According to the Bible, the eunuch said, “‘See, here is water! What prevents me from *being baptized?*’ And he commanded the chariot to stop, *and they both went down into the water*, Philip and the eunuch, and *he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water*, [...] the eunuch went on his way rejoicing” (Acts 8:36b–39).

In addition, baptism by immersion best pictures the inner transformation of all believers from spiritual death to spiritual life in Christ. That is why the apostle Paul uses the symbolic language of death, burial, and resurrection. He says, “Do you not know that all of us who have been *baptized into Christ Jesus* were *baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death*, in order that, *just as Christ was raised from the dead* by the glory of the Father, *we too might walk in newness of life*” (Romans 6:3–4). In this manner, when someone gets baptized, they are plunged into the waters to symbolize their death and burial with Jesus then they are raised out of the water as a symbol of their new life with Jesus.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> If candidates are unable to be baptized by immersion for safety or medical reasons, the modes of pouring or sprinkling may be considered on a case-by-case basis. If the candidate makes an intelligible confession of faith in Jesus Christ, and is converted, they may be considered for baptism.

the gospel at Pentecost, he said, “Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins” (Acts 2:38). In response, three thousand souls professed their faith in Jesus and repented of their sins in the public ceremony of baptism (Acts 2:41).

### 2. A Sign of Forgiveness and Cleansing

Baptism symbolizes what is true of all followers of Jesus: they are forgiven and washed of their sins. Baptism is the new covenant fulfillment of the water purification rites in the Old Testament (Exodus 30:17–21; Leviticus 15; Numbers 19:18), which anticipated actual cleansing from sin, now realized in the finished work of Christ on the cross. After Paul’s conversion, Ananias, a devout follower of Jesus, urged Paul to be baptized. He told Paul, “And now why do you wait? Rise and *be baptized and wash away your sins*, calling on His name” (Acts 22:16).

### 3. A Sign of Union with Christ in His Death, Burial, and Resurrection

Baptism is a visual of what it looks like when Christians are one with Christ. Consider Romans 6:3–4: “3 Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 We were buried therefore with Him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.” Baptism vividly reenacts the drama of salvation whereby a Christian dies with Christ, is buried underneath the waters of baptism with Christ, and is raised out of the waters of baptism with Christ.

### 4. A Sign of New Life in Christ

Baptism signifies the miracle of new spiritual life in Christ. The Old Testament anticipated a day when God’s people would receive a new heart and the Spirit of God Himself (Jeremiah 31:33–34). Now, in Christ, that day is here. Baptism is the new covenant sign of new life in Christ into the community of God’s people. That is why Paul says, “11 In [Christ] also you were circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ, 12 *having been 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 2:11, 12).*

5. *A Sign of the Gift of the Holy Spirit*

A Christian is someone baptized in the Spirit. In other words, when someone believes in Jesus as Lord and Savior, one receives the gift of the Holy Spirit (Mark 1:8; Acts 1:5; 2:38). Jesus even applies the metaphor of a river to the Spirit because He overflows with life and power in the heart of a Christian (John 7:38–39). So, baptism embodies that reality. That is what Paul teaches to the Corinthian church: “*For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit*” (1 Corinthians 12:13).

6. *A Sign of the Dawning New Creation in Christ*

Baptism not only looks backward to the cross but also looks forward to the resurrection and the new creation of all things. That is why Paul says, “For if we have been united with him in a death like [Christ’s], *we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his*” (Romans 6:5). Baptism dramatically portrays the tension of the already and not yet of God’s kingdom: the old is gone, and the new has come (2 Corinthians 5:17).

## **Who Should be Baptized?**

Baptism is not for everyone. But baptism is for anyone who professes an intelligible faith and allegiance to Jesus Christ. Therefore, those who trust in Jesus as Lord and Savior should participate in baptism. According to the New Testament, once people believe in Jesus and repent of their sins, they take the next step to get baptized (Acts 2:38, 41; 8:12).

Baptism is a recurring pattern in the early church. Examples include three thousand souls on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38, 41), the new Christians in Samaria (Acts 8:12), the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:35–38), the Apostle Paul (Acts 9:17–18), Cornelius (Acts 10:47–48), Lydia (Acts 16:14–15), the Philippian jailer (Acts 16:31–34), the Corinthian church (Acts 18:8), the Ephesian church (Acts 19:1–5), and Stephanas (1 Corinthians 1:16; 16:15).

All of these examples include people who made an intelligible profession of faith in Jesus, and then participated in baptism. There are no examples of infant baptism in Scripture. Therefore, infants are not candidates for baptism.