

Congratulations on your decision to be baptized!

We're excited to share with you in this important step on your journey of following Jesus. In this letter, you will find information on what we believe about baptism, sharing your story of coming to faith in Jesus, and what happens on the day of your baptism.

What We Believe About Baptism

Baptism, as practiced in the New Testament and the earliest history of the church, is the act of being immersed in water as a sign of a person's faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord. It symbolizes our death to sin and our new life in Christ, and it illustrates Jesus' death and resurrection and the power of these events in our lives. Jesus himself was baptized to set an example for us, and he commands all of his followers to be baptized as an outward sign of the inner transformation of our lives. By being baptized, you are telling the world that you have placed your trust in Jesus Christ alone and that you are surrendering your life to his purposes.

Sharing Your Story

Everyone who is baptized has a story to share about how Jesus has changed their life and why they are being baptized as a recognition of that change. As part of your baptism, we want to share your story with our church family. On the back page of this letter, you'll find an outline for sharing your story. You can fill in each section of this page (typed or handwritten) or use it as a guide for writing your story on your own. Your story will be read to the congregation as part of your baptism celebration. (You may omit any parts of your story that you would like to keep private. God still knows your whole story!)

Please share your story in about one page.

On the Day of Your Baptism

Normally, you will be baptized during the worship service you regularly attend. You will choose a sponsor — someone who has had a significant impact on your faith journey — who will stand with you on the stage as you are baptized. This person receive you after you come up out of the water.

Please arrive with your sponsor about 10 minutes before the service begins and find me (Julia) so we know you're here. Be sure to wear your blue "I Have Decided" shirt and other clothes that can get wet (such as a swimsuit under athletic shorts or jeans). Bring a towel and a change of clothes and take the clothes to the restroom before the service begins.

All of our baptism candidates and their sponsors will sit on the far-right side of the Auditorium. At the end of the greeting time, Pastor Lee will ask for everyone's attention and say a few words about the meaning of baptism. When it's your turn to be baptized, you'll walk up the stairs on the right side of the stage, nail a copy of your story to the cross (I'll give you a copy before the service), and walk to the center of the stage. Pastor Lee will read your story as you walk and will help you into the baptistery when you arrive. You'll sit in the baptistery, and Pastor Lee will ask you to publicly profess your faith in Jesus. Then, he will lean you back until you're completely under the water and help you back up. Then everyone will cheer!

After you're baptized, your sponsor will receive you and wrap you in your towel so you can start drying off. You can then go to the restroom to finish drying off and change your clothes. You may re-enter the worship service when you're done.

Once again, we're so excited to share in this special day with you! Please let me know if you have any questions as you prayerfully prepare for this important step on your journey of following Jesus.

Yours in Christ,

Julia Bauman
Associate Pastor, Community Life
Julia@bearvalleychurch.com

Name _____

My Story

My life before following Christ:

How I came to understand my need for Christ:

When I committed my life to Christ:

My life since committing to follow Christ:

Please return this paper to the church or email it to Pastor Lee at lee@bearvalleychurch.com by the Friday before your baptism.