

## Why are we making such a big deal out of baptism?

The main question people have asked me about this new amendment to our church's constitution is, "Why do we have that section in there about baptism?" If you haven't read the amendment here it is in its entirety:

### Suggested Membership Revision:

The membership of this church shall consist of those who have been born again into Christ\*, have submitted to the authority of the Bible as the inspired word of God, and who are committed to and involved with our congregation.

- Scriptures teach that to be saved one must believe (Jn. 3:16), repent (Acts 2:38), confess (Rom. 10:9-10), and be immersed (Mt. 28:19-20, Rom 6:3-4). We understand that not all of these are practiced by other church denominations and those churches attempt to bring people to Christ through other methods. However, since we are submitted to the authority of scripture we attempt to bring people to Christ in the same manner as scripture outlines. We also understand that perfect theology is not what saves us, but the grace of God, which can cover our misunderstandings. If a person wishes to join our church having come from a background that taught and/or practiced something other than what is outlined in scripture then we, making no judgements about their current or previous salvation status, will ask them to submit to the teachings of scripture in each of these areas if they have not already done so.

One will be considered committed and involved with our local congregation when he/she

- openly declares it to the body
- privately expresses his/her interest to the elders
- or is perceived by the pastoral committee and/or the eldership to have been attending the church for a significant amount of time, and has shown a commitment to the church.

At this point they will be informed that they meet the qualifications of membership and may therefore serve and participate as such (vote, be elected to the board, teach classes, etc.) should they so desire.

So why did we go out of our way to make baptism by immersion a requirement for membership? First of all, because it's biblical. The New Testament has a lot to say about baptism. If we narrow it down to only those passages that have something to say about the meaning or purpose of baptism we are left with a much more manageable group of texts. If you want to look into this for yourself start with these passages: Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; John 3:3-5; Acts 2:38-39; Acts 22:16; Romans 6:3-4; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Galatians 3:26-27; Ephesians 5:25-27; Colossians 2:11-13; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 3:21. In his book Baptism: A Biblical Study Jack Cottrell studies each of these passages in depth and concludes:

"What is remarkable is not only the fact that [these passages] do present *baptism as the time God has appointed for initially bestowing salvation upon believing, repentant sinners*, but also the fact that they are unanimous in doing so. This is not some obscure inference that must be laboriously forced from the fringes of a few texts, but is the central theme of them all! And at the same time, no other meaning emerges to serve in even a secondary role, much less to challenge the one main idea that *baptism is for salvation*".

If we believe that baptism is for salvation, as scriptures teach, then we must require it for membership. We must practice what we preach.

### What about other methods of baptism?

Different churches teach a lot of different things about baptism, but if we do it the way the scriptures teach we can at least know that we are doing it right. The word baptize means, "to dip, or plunge." Scriptures show that when they would baptize people they went down into the water (Acts 8:38) and came up out of it (Mk. 1:10). Baptism was described as a washing (Acts 22:16), it symbolizes a burial (Rom. 6:4) and new birth (Jn. 3:5), and was performed when someone believed and repented (Acts 2:38). If we are trying to practice baptism as they did in scripture, we need to practice immersion when someone believes and repents. Practicing anything else can lead to awkward situations where someone has been "baptized" yet is not a believer; or, someone who is a believer who has never been baptized as the scriptures command.

### If someone was sprinkled as an infant and still believes, do they really need to be immersed?

I've been asked this one a lot. We mentioned earlier that baptism is a salvation issue. It's not the only one, but it does concern our salvation. What if we were talking about a different salvation issue? Take belief for instance. I know of a church that teaches that the resurrection of Jesus did not actually take place historically. They believe it to be "true" in that it teaches a good moral but it didn't really happen. If someone from that church were to try to place their membership here we would ask if they believed that Jesus died for their sins and rose from the dead. If they don't believe that they should not be members here. I would encourage them to continue attending and to be as involved as possible in hopes that we could continue the dialogue and convince them of the truth of scripture. The same is true of repentance, confession, and yes, baptism.

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# NOVEMBER 2016

| SUN   | MON | TUE  | WED   | THU  | FRI                        | SAT |
|---|-----|--|---|--|----------------------------|-----|
|   |     | 1<br><br>SERVICE &<br>ACTION MTG<br>1:00PM | 2   | 3<br><br>WORSHIP<br>MEETING<br>6:30PM                          | 4                          | 5   |
| 6 ANNUAL<br>CONGREGA-<br>TIONAL<br>MEETING<br><br>SS 9:30AM<br>WS 10:30AM | 7   | 8  | 9<br>LADIES BS<br>9:30AM<br>PRAYER HOUR<br>5:30 PM<br>ADULT BS<br>6:30PM  | 10<br>ELDERS<br>6:00PM<br>DEACONS<br>6:30PM<br>BOARD<br>7:00PM | 11                         | 12  |
| 13<br><br>SS 9:30AM<br>WS 10:30AM   | 14  | 15   | 16<br>LADIES BS<br>9:30AM<br>PRAYER HOUR<br>5:30 PM<br>ADULT BS<br>6:30PM | 17   | 18                         | 19  |
| 20<br><br>SS 9:30AM<br>WS 10:30AM   | 21  | 22   | 23<br><br>OFFICE<br>CLOSED<br>PM  | 24<br><br>OFFICE<br>CLOSED                                     | 25<br><br>OFFICE<br>CLOSED | 26  |
| 27<br>HANGING OF<br>THE GREENS<br>6:00 PM<br><br>SS 9:30AM<br>WS 10:30AM  | 28  | 29   | 30<br>LADIES BS<br>9:30AM<br>PRAYER HOUR<br>5:30 PM<br>ADULT BS<br>6:30PM |  |                            |     |



## Serving In November

November 06

**Meditation:** Rick Weinkauff  
**Servers:** Brenda Gibson, \*Iris Felix  
 John Signorelli, Rebecca Cullen  
**Greeters:** Bob Clark/FD, John Signorelli/FHD  
**Nursery:** Sarah Skiles, ?  
**Lord's Supper Prep:** Iris Felix  
**AV Booth:** Robert Crawford/Sound, ?/PP  
**Children's Church:** Roma Weinkauff

November 13

**Meditation:** Joe Price  
**Servers:** Brenda Risner, \*John Signorelli  
 Doug Tritle, ?  
**Greeters:** Bob Clark/FD, John Signorelli/FHD  
**Nursery:** Elisabeth White, Wanda Jones  
**Lord's Supper Prep:** Iris Felix  
**AV Booth:** Robert Crawford/Sound, ?/PP  
**Children's Church:** Sarah Skiles

November 20

**Meditation:** Jerry Gibson  
**Servers:** Brenda Gibson, \*Iris Felix  
 John Signorelli, Rebecca Cullen  
**Greeters:** Bob Clark/FD, John Signorelli/FHD  
**Nursery:** Jeremy Buxton, Jessica Buxton  
**Lord's Supper Prep:** Iris Felix  
**AV Booth:** Robert Crawford/Sound, ?/PP  
**Children's Church:** Nicole Stanfill

November 27

**Meditation:** Doug Dalton  
**Servers:** Brenda Risner, John Signorelli  
 \*Wanda Jones, ?  
**Greeters:** Bob Clark/FD, John Signorelli/FHD  
**Nursery:** Kristen Partin, Rebecca Cullen  
**Lord's Supper Prep:** Iris Felix  
**AV Booth:** Robert Crawford/Sound, ?/PP  
**Children's Church:** Christina Barnes

## In Our Prayers

Mike Chase - colon cancer  
 Jeff Dirickson - new job  
 Don Smith - cancer  
 Gene Dreschler - praise, in rehab  
 Donna Peters - surgery recovery  
 Bob Coulter - Parkinson's disease  
 Laurie Cullen - salvation/early onset  
 Alzheimer's  
 Kay Bolding - bone marrow transplant

Periodically the Prayer List will be updated. If we remove someone that you still want on the list, please let us know and we will to put them back on.

*If you have a prayer need or know of any changes, please contact the church office.*

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

11/01 Tyler Tidwell  
 11/11 Zoe Dirickson  
 11/15 Elisabeth White  
 11/20 Carol Carson  
 11/27 Kristen Partin

## Sunday Services

Sunday School 9:30 am  
 Worship Service 10:30 am

## Wednesday Night

Prayer Hour 5:30 pm  
 Adult Bible Study 6:30 pm

## Secretary's Report September 2016

|                          |            |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Average Attendance       | 56         |
| Average Visitors         | 12         |
| Total Average Attendance | 68         |
| Total Offerings          | \$9,409.00 |

## Your Elders

Phil Carson, Randall Coffman, Doug Dalton,  
 Gene Drechsler, Jerry Gibson, Jim Jones

## Your Deacons

Crystal Crawford, Rebecca Cullen, Brenda Gibson

## The Trickle-down Theory of Thanksgiving.

It's gonna rain turkey, son!  
 Stuffing falls, things happen!  
 People drop rolls, peas roll off  
 plates!... Stay alert!...



## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING - 11/06

**We will be voting on the 2017 Budget, a Constitution amendment and the following new Board members:**

**Elder: Randall Coffman**

**Deacons: Richard Barnes,  
 Wanda Jones  
 Matthew Palmer,  
 Brenda Risner**

We're not trying to judge anyone's faith. We are simply trying to be consistent with what scriptures teach in both our words and our actions. Personally, I believe that there will be plenty of people in heaven who were never baptized as we've been discussing. However, that is between them and God. I do not believe that I am 100% correct on every doctrinal issue, but my salvation isn't tied to how much bible trivia I can answer correctly. However, surrendering to the Lordship of Christ means submitting to and obeying God's word to the best of my knowledge and ability. Some people have completely surrendered their lives to Christ and never understood this doctrine completely. Only God knows what is in a person's heart and the depth of their faith. In our efforts to reach out to people and make them a part of our church we must be obedient to scripture. My hope for those who have been "baptized" in a manner inconsistent with scripture is that, as they come to a more complete understanding of this (or any) doctrine, they would humbly submit to the teachings of scripture.

"Then Peter said, "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have. "So he ordered that they be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ."

Acts 10:47-48

In Him,  
Ben

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## **IMPORTANT UPCOMING DATES**

**THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24TH  
THANKSGIVING**



**SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 27TH  
HANGING OF THE GREENS**

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 24TH  
CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE**



**SUNDAY, DECEMBER 25TH  
CHRISTMAS DAY**

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 31ST  
NEW YEAR'S EVE**

