

A stylized Christmas tree composed of overlapping, semi-transparent teal and light blue geometric shapes, positioned above a simple teal boat. The background features abstract, layered teal and light blue shapes, creating a textured, watercolor-like effect.

BAPTISM

[MAKING MY FAITH KNOWN]

A Note from Senior Pastor, Tom Lundeen



Senior Pastor, Tom Lundeen

We're excited you are considering baptism; it's one of the most significant points in the life of any Christ-follower. We appreciate the opportunity to help walk you through this exciting process, and want to make sure you recognize the significance of baptism, why a believer should be baptized, and when to consider engaging in this ancient ritual that will publicly proclaim your allegiance to Jesus as your Forgiver and the Leader of your life. To help you understand and prepare for baptism, we've created this booklet for you to jot down notes from the accompanying message, as well as process your personal commitment to this "next step" in your walk of faith.

God bless you -

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pastor Tom". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and personal.

Pages 3-4 of this booklet are designed to review the basic teachings of the Bible concerning baptism, as well as discuss it's practice, symbolism and meaning. Take whatever time you need to thoughtfully work through this section. The remaining pages are intended to answer your practical questions and help you write your baptism MyStory, which is not only an important step for you personally as you consider your decision to follow Christ in water baptism, but also something we often share in a written booklet distributed at our baptism celebrations. Maybe God will use your story to encourage someone else to follow Jesus' prompting in their life!



Connections Pastor, Glen McKinney

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Glen McKinney". The ink is dark and the signature is fluid and personal.

It is our prayer as you work through these materials you will see God's love revealed, hear His encouragement for your life, and feel the power with His Holy Spirit at work within you. May He bless you in the journey of discovery and celebration with Him!

HOW TO USE THIS BOOKLET AND ACCOMPANYING RESOURCES

First,

- ◆ Listen to Pastor Tom's message "[Don't Forget \(to Take the Plunge\).](#)" You can find a link to the message at our website, myriversidechurch.com/baptism.
- ◆ Complete the notes in this booklet as you listen.

Still have questions after listening to the message and completing this booklet? You can always connect with us in these ways:

- ◆ Read the answers to some of the most frequently asked questions about baptism on our website: myriversidechurch.com/baptismFAQ.
- ◆ Call or email a pastor with your questions or concerns; a staff directory can be found on our website at myriversidechurch.com/staff.

Once you've worked through these materials, **if you are ready to be baptized**, we'd love to hear from you! Here are the things you'll need to do:

- ◆ Work on your baptism MyStory to let us know about your decision. You can either tear off the last few pages of this booklet and bring them to the Guest Services window at Riverside, or submit an [electronic version](#), found on our website at myriversidechurch.com/baptism.
- ◆ Once we receive your information, a staff member will contact you to arrange a time for you to meet with a pastor or church Elder so you can share more about your decision and we can provide you details on the next baptism celebration!

"Those who believe and accepted His message were baptized..." Acts 2:41



Message: “Don’t Forget (to take the Plunge)”
(You can find a link to [this message](http://myriversidechurch.com/baptism) online on our website myriversidechurch.com/baptism)

In the Scriptures we see 2 things that Jesus clearly instituted:

_____ and Communion.

“O _____” = symbolic reenactments of the truth of the gospel (that Jesus lived, died, rose from the dead, ascended to heaven, and is coming back again).

...I’m going to encourage and challenge a number of you here today to take a

_____ next step in your spiritual journey...this next step for _____

Fully- devoted Jesus follower is water baptism.

What is _____ and why does it matter so much?

1. What the New Testament Tells Us About Water Baptism

A. What baptism means— “Baptizo” = “to _____...to immerse”

“I would have those who are to be baptized to be _____ immersed, as the work imports and the mystery signifies. (Martin Luther)

The word ‘baptize’ signifies to immerse. It is certain that immersion was the practice of the _____ church. (John Calvin)

Buried with Him, alludes to baptizing by immersion according to the _____ of the first church.” (John Wesley)

B. John the Baptist—his ministry shows us that baptism was not a new idea _____ by Christians, or even by John the Baptist. Baptism = always a symbolic _____. John the “Baptizer” practiced a baptism that symbolized r _____ (note Matthew 3:7-11a).

C. Baptism of Jesus—His baptism was _____ of a number of things:

It was to “_____ all righteousness” (note Matthew 3:15)...

Fulfilled the mission of John the Baptist and marked the start of Jesus’ _____ ministry.

Jesus identified Himself with the _____ condition of humanity which He had come to save.

It is an example to _____ His followers

D. Other New Testament Examples —baptism practiced _____ after commitment to Jesus Christ, so much so that often baptism and salvation closely tied together. Every example of baptism in the New Testament is _____ baptism (no examples of _____ baptism).

Note Matthew 28:18-20 (_____ Commission).

Baptism is an outward sign and symbol of what has happened _____ and spiritually to a person who commits their life to Jesus by faith. The _____ of baptism does not provide salvation...

2. Why Baptism Matters

Baptism describes _____ what salvation means (note Romans 6:4-11).

Baptism is an _____ test of discipleship (note John 14:15).

Baptism represents _____.

Baptism is a _____ testimony.

Baptism represents _____.

Why baptism is a bold next step in your spiritual journey:

Baptism is not an “optional _____” for Jesus’ followers. It’s to be done as soon after you _____ your faith in Jesus as possible (note Acts 8:26-31, 34-39). The challenge is for you to make a _____ commitment to be baptized.

Here are the 3 qualifications to engage in baptism:

- 1) You need to be a follower of Jesus.
- 2) You need to have not been baptized as an adult believer in Christ already.
- 3) You need to be at least 12 years old

(We do baptize children younger than 12 if they have parental support and have talked it through with the Children’s Pastor. Family Ministries also has a [discipleship class](#) for children under 12; they are given a chance to engage in baptism after completing this course; you can find details on our website).

Don’t get baptized:

- ⇒ If you’re not sure about following Jesus.
- ⇒ If you’re trying to impress others.
- ⇒ If you think it would be a “cool” experience with your friends/family.

Do what Jesus calls you to do. Do it today!

WHAT DOES BAPTISM LOOK LIKE AT RIVERSIDE —

How often do you offer baptism? We generally host baptism celebrations 3-4 times/year. Some take place during the worship service in our indoor baptismal tank. We've also hosted indoor celebrations after worship services or other times. We usually have an outdoor celebration during the summer, often in a private pool.

Will you perform a private baptism? As a general rule, since baptism is defined as a public declaration of faith, we schedule baptisms during times where friends, family, and others can celebrate with you.

Do I need to be a member to be baptized at Riverside? No. As long as you are a follower of Jesus and have not been baptized as an adult believer in Christ already, you can participate in our baptism celebrations.

Can I request a specific pastor baptize me? Yes! If there is a pastor (or another person) who has been really key in developing your walk of faith, we encourage you to ask them to be a part of your special day!

What will I need to do? Once you've completed your MyStory and given your testimony to a pastor or Elder, we'll let you know when our next celebration is scheduled and what you can expect. We'll provide details on the service, how you will enter and exit the baptismal tank/pool, and other details to make you comfortable with your baptism. For some services, if time permits, the pastor will give each person the opportunity to answer a question about why they wish to be baptized; most times we'll just print this information in a booklet for people to share.

What should I wear? Women should wear shorts or a modest swimsuit and a top. Men may wear shorts or a modest swimsuit and a t-shirt. Bring a change of clothes, a towel, and a plastic bag for your wet clothes.

Can my family and friends be baptized together? Yes! If each person understands fully the meaning of baptism, and each one has personally placed his/her trust in Christ for salvation, we encourage families to be baptized at the same time. It is a wonderful expression of commitment. However, it is important to remember that baptism is a personal statement of faith, not a family or group tradition. It is usually not wise to delay your baptism while waiting on others to join you. This puts an undue pressure on them, and delays your obedience.

Ready to Give your Testimony?

Congratulations! You've made a decision that will impact the rest of your life. Baptism is a public confession of faith, and we'd love to hear more about you, your walk of faith, and your baptism testimony. (online testimony and registration form also available [here.](#))

Name (please print): _____

Best Email: _____

Best Phone: _____

Which of the following best fits your life story right now?

I made the decision to follow Christ TODAY!

I am a recent Christ-follower (within the last 5 years).

I've been Christ-follower for awhile (more than 5 years), but didn't understand my need for baptism until now.

SHARE WHEN YOU RECEIVED CHRIST AS YOUR SAVIOR.

WHAT EXPERIENCES HELPED YOU REALIZE YOUR LIFE WAS NOT THE WAY IT COULD OR SHOULD BE, OR THE CIRCUMSTANCES THAT INFLUENCED YOUR TRUSTING IN JESUS?

WHY DO YOU WANT TO GET BAPTIZED?



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