

# **Baptism Policy**

Approved on September 14, 2010

## **I – Definition**

- 1) Baptism is a worship ceremony created and commanded by the Lord Jesus for His Church.<sup>1</sup>
- 2) It proclaims, through the physical sign of water, the divine promise of forgiveness through the good news of Jesus Christ and admission into the visible church.<sup>2</sup>
- 3) The Old Testament ceremony of circumcision foreshadows the covenant relationship found in baptism.<sup>3</sup>

## **II – Description**

- 1) Baptism, when coupled with the Word (i.e. the verbal proclamation of the Gospel), represents . . .<sup>4</sup>
  - a) Through the sign of water, the promise of the Gospel and the benefits of belonging to the new covenant in Christ.
  - b) Being buried with Christ and the promise of the washing away of our sins in Christ.
  - c) The authority and guarantee of God's promises.
  - d) The admission of the baptisand into the visible universal church.
- 2) By partaking in Christian baptism, by faith alone, Christians . . .<sup>5</sup>
  - a) Are reminded of what Christ has done for them and are strengthened in their faith.
  - b) Publicly proclaim, and submit to Christ as their Lord, Savior and God.
- 3) For those who believe in infant baptism, these benefits are also applied to their children, since God promises good to those who trust in Him and their children.<sup>6</sup>
- 4) Baptism is not . . .<sup>7</sup>
  - a) Magical. Any benefit given from being baptized is received by grace alone.
  - b) Required for salvation, though it is a sin to neglect it.
- 5) The act of water baptism by itself offers no certainty of salvation, though it points to the certainty of the promises we have in Christ through faith alone.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Matt 28:19; Acts 2:38; 10:48; 22:16.

<sup>2</sup> Matt 28:19; Acts 2:38,41; 8:12-13,35-38; 9:18; 16:15,33; 18:8,36,38; 19:5; 22:16; 1Cor 12:13.

<sup>3</sup> Acts 8:12; 10:45-48; (1Cor 10:2); Col 2:11-13.

<sup>4</sup> Ezek 36:25-27; Matt 28:19; Mark 16:16\*; John 3:5; Acts 2:38,41; 8:12-13,35-38; 9:18; 16:15,33; 18:8; 36,38; 19:5; 22:16; Rom 6:3-4; 1Cor 6:11; 12:13; Gal 3:27; Eph 5:26; Titus 3:5; Heb 10:22; 1Pet 3:21.

<sup>5</sup> Matt 28:19; Acts 2:38,41; 8:12-13,16,35-38; 8:13; 10:48; 18:8; 19:5; 22:16; Rom 6:3-4; 1Cor 12:13; Gal 3:27-28; Eph 4:5; John 6:28-29; Acts 13:39; 15:11; Rom 1:16-17; 3:20-21,28; 4:16-22; 10:10; Gal 2:16; 3:11; Eph 2:8-9; 3:12; 2Tim 1:9; Heb 4:16; 10:38; 11:1,7-10; 1Pet 1:5.

<sup>6</sup> Gen 17:7-8; Acts 2:38-39; 16:15,33; 18:8; 1Cor 7:14; Col 2:11-13.

<sup>7</sup> John 4:2; Acts 8:16; 1Cor 1:16-17; 1Pet 3:21.

<sup>8</sup> John 4:2; Acts 8:16; Rom 6:3-4; 1Cor 1:16-17; 13; Gal 3:27-28; Eph 4:5; 1Pet 3:21.

### **III – Administration**

- 1) The outward element to be used in all baptisms is water in the name of the Triune God.<sup>9</sup>
- 2) Since this church is a federation of Congregationalist and Baptist traditions, both infant and profession of faith baptisms are permitted.
- 3) Baptism is to be given only once in a Christian's life.<sup>10</sup>
  - a) All those who have been baptized with water in the name of the Triune God have received Christian baptism.
  - b) Those who come to Baptist convictions, and who have previously received infant baptism, may request to be baptized, since they believe they have never truly received baptism.
    - i) The pastor(s) of the church, however, has freedom of conscience not to personally perform this baptism if he believes it is in fact re-baptism. In such case the Diaconate will find someone else to perform that baptism.
    - ii) Likewise a pastor of Baptist convictions is not required to baptize infants. In such case the Diaconate will find someone else to perform that baptism.
- 4) Though there are standards for baptism in the New Testament, there is also a liberality as befitting the Gospel.
  - a) Before granting baptism under normal circumstances this church asks for the following from the one being baptized or a parent or guardian:
    - i) Meet with the pastor to discuss the meaning of baptism, give testimony acknowledging his sin and repentance, thereof proclaim faith in Christ and His Gospel, and make a commitment to the local church.
    - ii) Commit to the local church as witnessed by being active in the worship life of this church for at least 2 months.
  - b) The pastor(s) can perform emergency baptisms upon his (their) discretion.
- 5) Sponsors are not required.
- 6) Normally, all baptisms will be done during a public worship service on the Lord's Day by the pastor, or someone appointed by the deacons.
- 7) The mode of water baptism (sprinkling or immersion) is up to the conscience of the individual being baptized or parent/guardian and the pastor.

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<sup>9</sup> Matt 28:19; Acts 8:36,38.

<sup>10</sup> Eph 4:5; Col 2:12 (Heb 9:26-28).

# **Baptism Policy**

Approved by the Diaconate on  
September 9, 2009

**ANOTAINTED** Annotated

## **I Definition**

- 1) Baptism is the sacrament of admission into the visible church commanded by Christ.

Matthew 28:19 – “Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations,  
baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit,”

## **II Description**

- 1) Baptism is . . .
  - a) For the admission of the baptisand into the visible universal church.
  - b) A sign representing God’s promise of the Gospel and the benefits of belonging to the new covenant in Christ. Rom 3:1-4; 9:4-5; 1Cor 10:1-4
  - c) A representation of being buried with Christ and the promise of the washing away of our sins in Christ. (Rom 6:3-4)
  - d) A seal representing the authority and guarantee of God’s promises.
  - e) A means of grace, by which our faith is strengthened in Christ.
  - f) A public statement of our faith in Christ.
  - g) A reminder of our service to God.
- 2) Though baptism is very important and a sin to neglect it, it is not required for salvation. (John 4:2; 1Cor 1:14,17)
- 3) The act of water baptism by itself offers no certainty of salvation, though it points to the certainty of the promises we have in Christ through faith. (Rom 6:3-4)
- 4) The effectiveness of baptism is not dependent on the ritual itself.
  - a) Baptism is only effective by the grace given by the Holy Spirit, which produces saving faith.
  - b) The effectiveness of baptism is not necessarily related to the time of its administration.

## **III Administration**

- 1) The outward element to be used in all baptisms is water in the name of the Triune God.
- 2) Since this church is a federation of Congregationalist and Baptist traditions both infant and profession of faith baptisms are permitted.
- 3) Baptism is to be given only once in a Christian’s life.
  - a) All those who have been baptized with water in the name of the Triune God have received Christian baptism.
  - b) Those who come to Baptist convictions, and who have previously received infant baptism, may request to be baptized, since they believe they have never truly received baptism.

- i) The pastor(s) of the church, however, has freedom of conscience not to personally perform this baptism if he believes it is in fact re-baptism. In such case the church will find someone else to perform that baptism.
  - ii) Likewise a pastor of Baptist convictions is not required to baptize infants. In such case the church will find someone else to perform that baptism.
- 4) Though there are standards for baptism in the New Testament (Acts 10:47-48; 1Cor 1:14,17), there is also a liberality as befitting the Gospel (Acts 2:41; 8:36; 22:16).
  - a) Before granting baptism under normal circumstances this church asks for the following from the one being baptized or a parent or guardian:
    - i) Meet with the pastor to discuss the meaning of the baptism and give their testimony.
    - ii) Acknowledge of one's sin before a holy God, repentance and faith in Christ and His Gospel and commitment to the local church.
    - iii) Commit to the local church as witnessed by being active in the worship life of this church for at least 2 months.
  - b) The pastor(s) can perform emergency baptisms upon his discretion.
- 5) Sponsors are not required.
- 6) Normally, all baptisms will be done during a public worship service on the Lord's Day by the pastor, or someone appointed by the deacons.
- 7) The mode of water baptism (sprinkling or immersion) is up to the conscience of the individual being baptized or parent/guardian and the pastor.

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Greetings in Christ,

Below is the new Baptism Policy approved by the Diaconate on September 9, 2009. I hope you will study this statement and if you have any questions, comments, concerns or joys please contact me. I will be preaching on this policy on Sunday, October 4, 2009.

I would like to thank all the Deacons for their labors, I think they did a great job on this policy.

God's grace to you.  
In Christ,  
Pastor Doug

## **Baptism Biblical References & Allusions**

**Admission:** Matt 28:19; Acts 8:13; 9:18; 16:15,33; 18:8; 22:16; 1Cor 12:13

**Buried with Christ:** Rom 6:3-4; Col 2:12

**Children:** Gen 17:7-8; Acts 2:38-39; 16:15,33; 18:8; 1Cor 7:14; Col 2:11-13;

**Circumcision, tied to:** Acts 8:12; 10:45-48; (1Cor 10:2); Col 2:11-13;

**Commanded:** Matt 28:19; Acts 2:38; 10:48; 22:16

**Covenant:** Rom 3:1-2; 9:4-5; Eph 2:12-13

**Faith, tied to:** Acts 2:38,41; 8:13,35-38; 18:8

**Forgiveness, tied to:** Acts 2:38

**Holy Spirit:** Matt 3:11; John 1:33; Acts 2:38; 10:47; 11:16; 1Cor 12:13

**Household:** Acts 16:15,33; 18:8

**In the name of the Trinity:** Matt 28:19

**In the name of Jesus:** Acts 2:38; 8:12,16; 10:48; 19:5

**Into Christ:** Rom 6:3-4; Gal 3:27

**Into Christ's death:** Rom 6:3-4

**New birth:** Titus 3:5

**Not magical:** John 4:2; Acts 8:16; 1Cor 1:16-17; 1Pet 3:21

**Only once:** Eph 4:5; Col 2:12 (Heb 9:26-28)

**Preaching, tied to it:** Acts 2:38,41; 8:12,35-38; 18:8; 19:5

**Repentance, tied to:** Acts 2:38

**Salvation, tied to:** Mark 16:16\*; 1Pet 3:21

**Sin to neglect:** Luke 7:30

**Sprinkling:** Mark 7:4; Acts 2:41; Heb 9:10,19-22

**Unity:** 1Cor 12:13; Gal 3:27-28; Eph 4:5

**Washing:** Ezek 36:25-27; John 3:5; Acts 22:16; 1Cor 6:11; Eph 5:26; Titus 3:5; Heb 10:22

**Water:** Acts 8:36,38

