



# **BAPTISM**

**Good Shepherd Lutheran Church**

A Guide to Understanding Baptism.

(Application included)

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# God's Gift of Baptism

## The Sacrament of Baptism

Jesus died for the sins of the whole world, and at baptism, that's when forgiveness and salvation become ours! The Lord comes down to our spiritually dead hearts and creates saving faith. This was not a decision on our part, but God's gift to us—to redeem us and bring us back to Him so He can continue to be our Loving Father!

*...he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.—Titus 3:5*

## Returned to the Father

We learn through God's Word that all people from the temptation of the devil and the fall of Adam in the Garden of Eden are conceived and born in sin and so are separated from God. Without Jesus Christ we would be lost forever to the devil and hell and eternally separated from our caring Creator. Our Almighty Father however, has taken away Satan's threat of death and has promised us eternal life in our new perfect home--heaven. But while on earth God judges sin and pours out His abundant grace on us to keep us as His children.

*Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned. --Mark 16:16 ...how much more did God's grace and the gift that came by the grace of the one man, Jesus Christ, overflow to the many!—Rom. 5:15*

## Jesus Christ Our Savior

Jesus, God's Son has taken on all our sin for us and as our mediator He presents us as saints to God our Father. What a wonderful and beautiful gift this is. Throughout our short lives here on earth we are to continually ask the Holy Spirit for strength and guidance in continuing to grow in faith from the gift of baptism so Christ can live in us and through our life share His love with others!

*"Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life."—Romans 6:3*

## The Holy Spirit in Baptism and as Faith Grows

*Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.—Acts 2:38*

This is what the Holy Spirit does in baptism for us: regeneration, new birth. We are given a new conscience toward God—faith! Let us actively treasure this! For Satan is always ready to slowly and subtly take it away from us...sometimes by way of simple neglect on our part. The Holy Spirit gave us the ability to guard that precious given faith that the Lord granted to us in baptism by growing our faith through continuous time and study in the Word of God and being regularly strengthened, fed, and nourished through another gift of God, the sacrament of the Lord's supper. These are the safeguards that God has graciously given us! For infants, this awesome responsibility belongs to the parents, as they are teachers and examples of Christ. Let us cherish the priceless gift that the Lord reached down and handed to each of us at our baptism: **Faith, Conversion, Forgiveness, and Salvation through Christ!**

## Who can be baptized?

All children are eligible for baptism at Good Shepherd whether their parents are members or not, provided their parents give their consent. Baptism of adults takes place after instruction in the Christian faith and in the presence of elders or congregation. The adult answers questions normally addressed to the sponsors. The adult is received by Holy Baptism into communicant membership for the reception of Holy Communion.

*I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. -John 3:5*

## How to Arrange a Baptism at Good Shepherd

The time of baptism is arranged with the pastor. Sufficient time should be given the pastor so he can give parents and sponsors appropriate instruction in their duties and responsibilities. The choice of any Sunday service is ideal, but private baptisms which must include an elder of the church can be arranged as well. Baptism is usually administered at the beginning of the service following the first hymn (see order of Service for more details).

## Age of Child

*Lord, our Lord how majestic is your name in all the earth! You have set your glory above the heavens. From the lips of children and infants you have ordained praise because of your enemies, to silence the foe and the avenger.*  
--Psalm 8:1-2

A child should be baptized as soon as possible. In Old Testament times it was the custom to circumcise the male child at eight days of age; in the New Testament baptism took the place of circumcision:

*"In him you were also circumcised, in the putting off of the sinful nature, not with a circumcision done by the hands of men but with the circumcision done by Christ, having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead."*  
-- Col 2:11

Baptism should take place as soon as possible in the six-week period following birth. God is eager and parents should be eager too to have the Holy Spirit give the gift of faith.

*Mark 10:14 "Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it."*

## Sponsors

Sponsors were historically chosen in the days of anti-Christian persecution by parents who expected martyrdom for their faith in God. They would request fellow believers to promise that if anything happened to them they would raise their child to know Jesus Christ as Savior. The Christian Church has continued this important custom. Some Christian parents, who have appointed in their wills Christian guardians also have the guardians as sponsors for their children. When necessary, sponsors may be represented by suitable proxies. When choosing a sponsor please be mindful that sponsors need to be practicing Christians (and, when possible, at least one a practicing Lutheran) who are willing and able to bring up the child in the Lord's nurture and admonition.

## Sponsor's Responsibility

Sponsors pray for the child, share as they are able what God did in baptism, and, if the parents die or fail to carry out their responsibilities, do all within their power to bring up the child as a practicing and confessing Christian.

## The Baptism Ceremony

Parents and sponsors will find it convenient to sit in the front row of the church on the side where the baptismal font stands. Photographs during the ceremony are not allowed; after the service they are always permissible and encouraged. There is no fee for baptism, as there are not fees for communing or for listening to the gospel being preached. If any gift is received by the Pastor, it is automatically put in the Pastor's "Library and Computer Fund."

## Water and Word

With the baptismal water and the Word of God there is connection between the Gospel promise of Christ's saving Grace.

*...and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. --1 Peter 3:21*

## Order of Service

*The Ceremony will be printed out in the service bulletin.*

- ✓ The Hymn
- ✓ Procession to Baptismal Font: Pastor, parents, sponsors, elder
- ✓ The Announcement of Baptism and its significance
- ✓ The Sign of the Cross
- ✓ The Gospel Lesson
- ✓ The Apostle's Creed
- ✓ Question to Parents and Sponsors
- ✓ THE BAPTISM (with water and in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit)
- ✓ The Blessing
- ✓ The Prayer and Introduction to God's Family

Other symbols of God's baptismal promise: sash, candle, seal and certificate:

*...He anointed us, set his seal of ownership on us, and put his Spirit in our hearts as a deposit, guaranteeing what is to come.—2 Cor 1:21-22*

A baptismal certificate is presented from the church indicating details of the baptism. It is suggested that such a certificate be displayed in the home. Thus, in time when faith falls short or in time of distress or doubt, the baptized person can look at the signed and sealed certificate and say, "there is proof that I renounce the devil and his wicked works and that I was received into the kingdom of God's grace by the washing of Holy Baptism." Thus encouraged, the Christian turns to Jesus His Savior in whom alone is help and forgiveness.

# GSLC Application for Baptism

(Please fill out this online form and click on the SUBMIT button.  
You may also want to print it off and take it to Pastor Johnson.)

1. We desire Holy Baptism for our child because we believe that the Lord Jesus Christ, the Redeemer of the world, ordained Holy Baptism for our salvation.  
( \_\_\_Yes or \_\_\_No)
2. We believe the Holy Bible, which declares that by Baptism our children enter a covenant with the Triune God. ( \_\_\_Yes or \_\_\_No)
3. We desire that our child remain a member of the kingdom of Christ, both here on earth and throughout eternity. ( \_\_\_Yes or \_\_\_No)
4. To this end we pledge ourselves to give our child a Christian education.  
( \_\_\_Yes or \_\_\_No)
5. It is our purpose to assume all the responsibilities of godly parents, to provide a home program which will be conducive to our child's spiritual welfare.  
( \_\_\_Yes or \_\_\_No)
6. We desire that our child be enrolled in the Nursery Roll of the church, that he/she later join the Sunday School. ( \_\_\_Yes or \_\_\_No)

Person Being Baptized:	
First Name: _____ Middle _____ Last _____	
Date of Birth:	_____ (ex. 2 /12/2010)
Place of birth	_____
Father's Name	_____
Father's Religion	_____
Mother's Name	_____
Mother's Maiden	_____
Mother's Religion	_____

*Continued on next page.*

**GSLC Application for Baptism  
(continued)**

Address	
Street Address	
City St Zip	
Home Phone	
Dad's Mobile Phone	
Mom's Mobile Phone	
Email	
Sponsors	
Name of Sponsor	
Address of Sponsor	
Religion of Sponsor	
Sponsors	
Name of Sponsor	
Address of Sponsor	
Religion of Sponsor	
Baptism Service	
Date of Baptism	
Hour of Baptism	
Place of Baptism	
Other Family Members in Home	
Name	Age/Baptized

Signature of Parents or Adult being baptized:

\_\_\_\_\_

Parents (Child baptism)

\_\_\_\_\_

Adult (Adult baptism)