



**Seneca Creek Community Church
Baptism Information Class**

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Thank you for taking time to attend our Baptism Information Class. Our purpose is to inform you about the meaning, significance, and biblical teaching on baptism. We also want you to know what to expect at the baptism service. We will allow time for your questions.

A. What is baptism all about?

1. The _____ ring analogy

- a. The _____ is the foundation
- b. The rings are the _____ of the commitment
- c. Symbol is not _____

2. The purpose of baptism:

Baptism is a public declaration of my _____ with Christ. It signifies to all those present that I have taken my stand with Jesus Christ and renounce any and all previous religions and/or secret societies.

3. Biblical passages which inform us about baptism:

- a. Matthew 28:19-20 – *Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. (NIV)*
 - Old Testament – baptism of _____
 - John the Baptist – baptism of _____
 - Jesus – baptism of _____
- b. Romans 6:3-5 - *Or 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. If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be*

united with him in his resurrection.

- c. Acts 2:41; 8:12; 10:47-48 - Baptism _____ a decision to believe in Jesus Christ.
- d. While the Bible does demonstrate a clear pattern of belief, it does not teach that baptism is _____ to be a Christian. Just as a person can be married but not wear a ring, so it is possible to be a Christian yet not be baptized. However, just as a wedding ring is a valuable and visible symbol of the marriage, so baptism should be a valuable and visible symbol of new life in Christ.

B. Who should be baptized?

- 1. Since baptism is a symbol of a commitment to follow Christ, it is reserved for those who have made that personal decision. Following Christ means:
 - a. _____ my hopeless sinful condition before a holy God-- that nothing I could do would ever earn God's favor.
 - b. _____ that Jesus Christ died on the cross to completely pay the penalty for my sin.
 - c. _____ Christ alone as my Savior, the one who makes it possible for me to stand forgiven in God's sight.
- 2. If you have made that decision, you are a follower of Christ! You are ready for baptism. If you have not made that decision, you may want to speak with someone from the church after the class who can answer any questions you have. (We also offer an opportunity at the end of each Sunday service for people to pray and accept Christ as their Savior.)

C. What about infant baptism?

- 1. While the Bible teaches that Jesus loved children, blessed them, held them, and prayed for them, there is no _____ that he baptized infants, nor did he instruct others to baptize them. Since baptism is a public, symbolic representation of the decision to follow Christ, it would be impossible for an infant to have made that decision.

2. Having said that, we recognize that many denominations practice infant baptism. If your parents had you baptized as an infant, it was with the _____, prayer, and _____ that one day you would decide on your own to follow Christ. (Seneca Creek uses child dedication services to make that same type of public statement.) Your baptism as an adult does not nullify an infant baptism, but can be seen as completing or fulfilling it. By publicly declaring your allegiance to Christ, you honor that hope which your parents expressed by having you baptized.

D. Seneca Creek Doctrinal statement regarding baptism:

Baptism, as demonstrated in the New Testament, is done by or in water and is symbolic of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. It is also an outward sign of an inward reality – new life in Christ and inclusion into the body of Christ (the baptism of the Spirit). Therefore, baptism is for believers only and, while not necessary for salvation, is a natural response that should follow conversion. (Note: While this ordinance is a vitally important practice, it should not be regarded as a means of salvation.) (Mt. 28:19, Romans. 6:3, 1 Corinthians. 12:13, Acts 2:32)

E. What about testimonies?

We all have our own story. Take a few minutes to think about your faith story. What part of that could you share with the others in your group right now?

Please write out your personal testimony on the form attached. This testimony will be read aloud by a designated reader at the baptism service. As you write it out, try to include information so that someone listening to your testimony would know how he or she could become a Christian, too. It may be helpful to use the following guidelines:

1. Describe what your life was like before you accepted Christ
2. Describe how and when you decided to become a follower of Christ
3. Describe the changes in your life since that time

If you would like your small group leader, or other Christian friend to baptize you, please indicate that on your testimony form.

F. What can you expect at the baptism ceremony?

Please arrive between 20 to 30 minutes early. You will want to change into a bathing suit or other attire that can get wet AND your baptism t-shirt that we have

provided for you. In addition, bring along a towel, a comb, and a plastic bag to put your wet clothing in. Other helpful items would include a hairdryer and make up, if applicable. Once you arrive, change into your baptism clothes and return to the auditorium for instructions.

All participants will sit in one designated area. You will receive a handout with the order of service. When your turn comes, walk to the steps and enter the baptistery, taking a seat once you're in. When your testimony is done, the person baptizing you will ask you two questions.

1. Have you put your complete and total trust in Jesus Christ for the salvation of your soul? (Answer, "Yes")
2. Are you now ready and willing to follow Jesus Christ as the Lord of your life? (Answer, "Yes")

Then the person baptizing you will say, "Then based on your testimony I now baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit." At that point, you will plug your nose and use your other hand to grasp your wrist. The person baptizing you will hold your wrist with one hand and put their other hand behind your back and then slowly lower you into the water backwards (all you need to do is lie back and relax). As soon as your whole body is immersed, he or she will pull you up and out of the water. (We've never lost anybody yet!)

Someone will assist you in leaving the baptistery and hand you your towel. You can then proceed to the changing room to dry off, change clothes and celebrate!

Testimony Form

For Seneca Creek Baptism Service

(Please return to the church office no later than one week before the baptism service.)

Name: _____

Date: _____

If there is a particular person you would like to baptize you other than Pastor Mark Tindle, please specify (e.g. small group leader, other church staff, a Christian friend/mentor, someone who has disciplined you, etc.):

As you write out your testimony, try to include information so that someone listening to it would know how he or she could become a Christian, too. It may be helpful to use the following guidelines:

1. Describe what your life was like before you accepted Christ
2. Describe how and when you decided to become a follower of Christ
3. Describe the changes in your life since that time

NOTE: You don't need to write more than 2 or 3 paragraphs