



### **Baptism Preparation Guide**

Thanks for taking the step towards getting baptized at Southridge Community Church! We are so excited to walk alongside you as you seek to enact your faith in Jesus through baptism. This guide is meant to help you learn more about the role of baptism in a life of faith and what it means in the context of our church community. If you need help along the way, a Life Group leader, Ministry Team leader, or Location Pastor would love to journey with you.

The process is led by a video that includes clips from two messages from our Lead Pastor, Jeff Lockyer and our Teaching Pastor, Michael Krause. The host in the video will guide you in reflecting on the questions and responding below. The process will likely take anywhere from 1-2 hours to complete, so be sure to go at your own pace and feel free to work through it in multiple sessions if that will work best for you.

After completing the Baptism Preparation Guide, you will be invited into a conversation with one (or more) of our staff to discuss and affirm your decision to get baptized and prepare for sharing your story on video.

This is an exciting time in your life, so please enjoy the process and please do not feel overwhelmed by it. We hope your faith will be enriched and that your story will impact others as you declare your faith in Jesus!

#### **Information for office and baptism certificate:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Birthdate and Place of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_\_

Full Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Which Southridge location do you normally attend? *(please circle one)*  
**St. Catharines                  Welland                  Vineland**
2. If you are in a Life Group, who is your Life Group leader?  
My Life Group Leader is: \_\_\_\_\_
3. If you serve on a Southridge Ministry Team, who is your team leader?  
My team leader is: \_\_\_\_\_
4. Is there someone on staff at Southridge who has played a significant role in your spiritual development?  
If yes, that person is: \_\_\_\_\_
5. Do you have a date in mind for when you would like to be baptized? \_\_\_\_\_

***Southridge Community Church is committed to protecting your right to privacy.  
The personal information gathered here will only be used to support the baptism process.***

## **Baptism Preparation Guide**

Visit [southridgechurch.ca/baptismguide](http://southridgechurch.ca/baptismguide) to access the baptism preparation video. Grab something to write with and be prepared to pause the video now and then to answer the questions below. The host will let you know when to pause the video. If you get stuck at all, please reach out to a Location Pastor for help at [southridgechurch.ca/contact](http://southridgechurch.ca/contact).

**Part One:** (from *Refreshing Faith* series: *A Fresh Response* by Jeff Lockyer)

[Video 0:00-9:58]

1. According to [Romans 10:9-10](#) and the clip you just watched, what role do our words play in expressing and affirming our faith in Jesus?
2. Being drawn by God into faith in Jesus usually involves a few different phases. Jeff quickly recapped previous phases about “Seeking,” then “Believing,” then “Professing” faith in Jesus. In a few sentences, describe what these phases have looked like in your life.
3. What has been happening in your life lately that has been leading to you wanting to publicly profess your faith through baptism? What does it mean to you that Jesus died for you, and rose again to be your saviour?

**Part Two:** (from *Refreshing Faith* series: *A Fresh Response* by Jeff Lockyer)

[Video: 9:59-14:34]

4. Words are usually not enough to communicate clearly. Body language and gestures are an essential part of communication. According to [1 Peter 3:21](#) and the clip you just watched, what does the gesture of baptism symbolize and represent as part of someone’s profession of faith?
5. Baptism is layered with many kinds of symbolism. What does immersion under the water help symbolize in what Jesus has done for us?

6. What do you think Jeff means when he says, “Baptism is a starting point, not a finish line?” How does baptism as a “starting point” relate to your own journey?

**Part Three:** (from *Refreshing Faith* series: *A Fresh Response* by Jeff Lockyer)  
[Video 14:35-18:01]

7. According to [Matthew 28:19-20](#), what process or activity does baptism initiate in our lives?
8. According to the clip you just watched, what do you understand about why Jesus was baptized and how his baptism is different than anyone else’s?

**Part Four:** (from *Refreshing Faith* series: *A Fresh Response* by Jeff Lockyer)  
[Video 18:02-19:19]

9. In the spirit of [1 Peter 3:15](#), how would you describe your “why” for putting your faith in Jesus and wanting to be baptized?

**Part Five:** (from *Family Roots* series: *Sibling Rivalry* by Michael Krause)  
[Video 19:20-24:29]

10. According to [Galatians 3:26-27](#), what does it take to belong to the family of God?
11. What role does the ceremony of baptism play in belonging to the family of God? How might this relate to other kinds of family ceremonies, rituals, or celebrations you’ve experienced?
12. What does it mean to you to be a member of God’s family?

**Part Six:** (from *Family Roots* series: *Sibling Rivalry* by Michael Krause)

[Video 24:30-28:18]

13. Thankfully, we no longer baptize in the exact same way as the early church. But what do you think we can learn from the idea of removing our “old clothes” (think attitudes, habits, and behaviours) to receive “new clothes” (to look and live more like Jesus)?
  
14. Read [Colossians 3:12-14](#). What would it look like in your life to put on the “clothes” described in these verses?
  
15. Read Matthew 3:13-17; this tells the story about when Jesus was baptized. When Jesus came out of the water, the Spirit of God came upon Jesus and God declared that Jesus was His Son and that God was so pleased with Jesus. When we get baptized, we too receive the Holy Spirit in our lives. Read Galatians 5:22-26; what can receiving the Spirit of God mean for your life?

**Part Seven:** (from *Family Roots* series: *Sibling Rivalry* by Michael Krause)

[Video 28:19-37:30]

16. What parts of your life do you see God fundamentally changing as you put your old life aside for the new life made possible through faith in Jesus?
  
17. How does putting your faith in Jesus, as represented through baptism, make you one and the same with all other followers of Jesus?
  
18. What questions do you still have that you can list here to talk about with your location pastor?

### Follow Up Questions:

19. After seeing these video clips and answering these questions, describe, in your own words, what baptism means to you and why you see it as a spiritually significant step in your life.
  
20. How would you like to see your faith continue to change and grow after your baptism? How do you think the church can support you in this ongoing journey of following Jesus?
  
21. Is there anything you need more clarification on about your baptism day or the interviews that are coming up? Write your questions here so you will remember them when you talk with one of our leaders.
  
22. If you'd like to read more of what the Bible says about baptism, you can look up some of these verses as part of your preparation. Don't feel like you have to, but we just want to direct you if you could use more time and study to fully embrace what baptism is and why it is so important in your life with Jesus.
  - a. [Matthew 3:13-17](#)
  - b. [Acts 2:37-41](#)
  - c. [Acts 8:26-38](#)
  - d. [Acts 16:25-34](#)
  - e. [Romans 6:3-13](#)



### **Your Story with God.**

On a separate sheet, take time to reflect on and write out your “story with God.” Please do not think of this as a daunting task, because it is not meant to be! We are aiming for about a one-page written version that tells the story of putting your faith in Jesus. We’ve provided a few questions to help you work through your story so that you will be well prepared for the video which will be used to share your story with our church community on the day of your baptism.

First, we want to give you a few words of encouragement though.

Your baptism video will be shared across our community and we usually put the videos on social media to add to the celebration of your baptism. Because of this, we ask that you don’t share any details you wouldn’t want others to know. Also, we ask that you don’t share anything that might shame, embarrass, or hurt anyone else.

And please know that there will be people who hear your story who are in the place you used to be. Treat your story as the one and only opportunity you will ever have to say to them what you wish someone had said to you about Jesus when you needed it most. Let God use you to inspire them to put their trust in Jesus too!

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1. In about 150 words (first 1/3 of a page), briefly describe your early life and whether or not you had any kind of relationship with Jesus. What influences and choices did you make that led you toward or away from a life of faith in Jesus? What led you to want to build a relationship with Christ?
2. In about 150 words (second 1/3 of a page), briefly describe when and how you decided to put your faith and trust in Jesus. What prompted this decision? How did you make it? Who was influential in the process?
3. In about 150 words (final 1/3 of a page), briefly describe the difference Jesus is making in your life since you put your trust in him. How have you seen your life start to change? Why do you want to get baptized as a result?



### Things to know for the day of your baptism

#### **What to Wear**

We recommend you wear a dark shirt and pants. Clothing that is made of material that retains minimum amounts of water would be best. Ladies, we encourage you to wear a one-piece bathing suit under your dark shirt. Please wear these clothes to the service and bring along a change of clothes and a towel.

#### **What to Expect**

Please be prepared to meet with the person who will be baptizing you at the front of the auditorium, 15 minutes before the service for instructions on the flow of the service and any other details you need to know.

Just before the baptism portion of the service, the pastor and all participants getting baptized will move to the entrance near the baptism tank. The pastor will enter the water first to make introductory comments and then invite the participants one by one into the baptism tank.

When it is your turn to be baptized, the pastor will share a few brief reflections and then invite you to cross your arms over your chest to prepare to be leaned backward below the water.

The pastor will then say, "Because you have put your trust in Christ, I baptize you in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit." The pastor will then immerse you backward into the water. This is quick; do not worry, you won't be under water long. You will need to bend your knees to assist the pastor in lowering you down and lifting you up.

Afterwards, someone will direct you to an appropriate location for toweleling off and getting changed. Then you can return to the auditorium to join your family and friends for the rest of the service.

#### **Who to Invite**

Your baptism is an incredibly exciting step in your life of faith. It is something worth celebrating, so we want to encourage you to invite your family and friends to join in the celebration. This is a chance for you to gather together the people in your life who are your support system, so please be sure to ask others to join with us in celebrating who you are and what Jesus has done for your life. Most people will be honoured you have asked them to come to witness your baptism, even if they do not express a faith in God or participate in a rhythm of church. This is a chance for you to share your faith as you declare your love for Jesus and your desire to trust him with your life.

Finally, if you wish to continue the celebration after the church service, please talk with your Location Pastor or leader about arranging to hang out at the church if you would like to use the space. Many people have had a luncheon for their friends and family who came to their baptism, so please know that if we can help facilitate some space for you we would love your celebration continue.

We are so excited about everything God is doing in your life and we look forward to your upcoming baptism!

Sincerely, Your Location Pastors