Baptism Guide for First Baptist Church of Avoca

Dear baptism candidate,

Congratulations on your willingness to take this step of obedience. Baptism has three component parts. First of all, baptism by immersion is the first step of obedience to God after salvation. Countless examples from the word show us the importance of this step (Matthew 3:13-15; Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 8:26-39; Acts 9:18; Acts 16:25-33). Secondly, it is a picture of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Entering the water of baptism is a picture of His death. Submersion is a picture of His burial, and emerging from the water is a picture of His resurrection. All of these things express in the physical realm what has happened to you in the spiritual realm (Romans 6:3). Finally, it is an act of fellowship. By publicly expressing your faith in Christ through baptism, you identify yourself with Jesus Christ Himself and with the other members of the local church in fellowship.

During the baptism service you will need to give a testimony of your salvation experience before the church. It need not be lengthy, so don't worry. You can read it or just tell your story; however, you should write it down either way so that you are sure to cover everything. If you desire the pastor can do more of an interview style, where we would ask you some of the questions below. It will just be an opportunity for you to confirm in your heart the transformation that God has accomplished and an opportunity for the church to rejoice with you. To facilitate this testimony time we have enclosed a brief guide to help you formulate your thoughts. Although your testimony is personal and can contain other details of your experience, it **should** include the following ideas:

1. Could you please describe how the debt/price for your sin has been paid?
2. What were the circumstances that led you to repent of your sin and to confess Jesus as your Savior? What happened leading up to and immediately following your decision?
3. What were the influential factors that helped you make your decision?
4. Where did your salvation experience occur?
5. How does your salvation experience impact your life now? Why is it important to you?
6. What are some scripture verses that relate to your salvation and what God has done for you?
7. Who is Jesus Christ to you?

Once you have read and completed your testimony you will need to meet with one of the pastoral staff prior to the baptism service. Please call the church office and schedule a time at your convenience. We are excited, because as you take this step of obedience, God will allow you to grow in your faith in ways you were not able to do before.

Please plan on arriving about 30 minutes prior to the beginning of the evening service in order to allow time for you to get ready. You should come dressed in the clothes that you will be baptized in. Please wear a dark colored top. We do have some baptismal robes that you can wear if you prefer, but please tell us in advance if you will need one. Please bring a towel and extra undergarments with you, bring dry clothes to change into and any toiletries you might need after being immersed in water. Members of our leadership team will meet with you in the rooms on both sides of the platform to provide for your needs and to ensure your privacy.

If we can help you articulate your testimony, or, if we can answer any other questions concerning your decision to be baptized, please don't hesitate to contact us.

In Christ,

The Pastors of First Baptist Church of Avoca