

## Baptism Vision Doc

### Vision Bottom Line:

- To maintain consistency and elevate baptism as a foundational next step within the Know God principle of the spiritual journey, baptism is a next step offered every first weekend of the month at the end of each weekend service.

### Biblical alignment:

- Baptism is a movement of the Holy Spirit, encouraged by the church through regular and consistent opportunities and teachings that are experienced church-wide
- Baptism is the next step after salvation
- Baptism is a step within the Know God principle of the spiritual journey
- Baptism is done as full immersion, as the Scripture teaches, unless there is a physical limitation

### Values:

- Baptism participants can be planned or spontaneous.
- During the weekend service, the vision cast and send-off language for baptism reflects that it's a foundational next step within the Know God principle of the spiritual journey, and is a next step offered every first weekend of the month at the end of each weekend service.
- Baptism can be an intentional part of weekend programming at send-off every first weekend.
- Baptism can be a next step someone takes as a result of completing the Baptism Bible Study, attending a weekend service, participating and engaging with a Group or the DreamTeam, or as part of GrowthTrack.
- Baptism can be a next step out of GrowthTrack, but GrowthTrack can also be a next step for someone who got baptized.
- Before someone's baptism, the team insures the guest knows why they want to get baptized, and what it signifies.
- Baptism is recognized and valued as a key indicator of spiritual health and growth of our church.
- Baptism is scheduled and planned for every first weekend, but campuses have freedom to host additional baptism opportunities outside of the first weekend including in Groups, at someone's home, at something mid-week, etc.

### Goal of Baptism Every 1<sup>st</sup> Weekend:

- Offers baptism as a consistent next step.
- Guests getting baptized are in the auditorium at send-off so that guests of our church can experience baptism.
- Programming and language provided will reflect the vision that baptism is a next step offered every first weekend of the month at the end of each weekend service.

### Recommendations:

- Campuses may want to consider having their baptism teams serve at every service the first weekend of the month.
- Campuses may want to cross train another team to be ready to assist with baptisms.
- Some campuses may only need 1-2 team members to be ready for baptisms at each service.
- Baptism Team Leads and/or team members could also do specific follow-up to those who have indicated they want to be baptized (either through Connect card or GrowthTrack) but have not taken that step.
- Equipping Group leaders to offer baptism as a next step to those Group members who have not taken that step is also key.

### FAQs:

*Did GrowthTrack replace the "baptism class" we used to do?*

We no longer do a baptism class because Week 1 of Growth Track puts baptism into the larger teaching of Know God. The overall goal of GrowthTrack is to help guests take their first steps towards discovering purpose. In order for someone to understand their purpose, they need to understand the whole spiritual journey. For this reason, week one of GrowthTrack covers the Know God principle and the doctrines of salvation and baptism. These are then also offered as practical next steps, along with the other next steps of the Know God principle like reading your Bible, prayer, etc.

*As a church, what are the ways we are teaching guests about baptism?*

As mentioned above, baptism is taught in GrowthTrack. GrowthTrack is not the only place that baptism is taught though. Weekend messaging can carry teachings on baptism. Groups can also be a place where individuals are taught about baptism, in both Group discussion and individual conversation. Group leaders are resourced with the Baptism Bible study which can also be found at [CedarCreek.tv/baptism](http://CedarCreek.tv/baptism). The Baptism Bible Study is also a resource that can be offered to individuals to go through on their own.

*How do I know if someone is ready for baptism?*

Whether spontaneous or planned, if a guest has accepted Jesus as their personal Lord and Savior, and understands that baptism is not a requirement for salvation, then they are ready for baptism. Before they are baptized, we believe in having a conversation to ensure that they have a clear understanding of baptism. If there is any question about their understanding of baptism, the Baptism Bible study and/or GrowthTrack may be the next step for that guest. As mentioned above, if they are connected with a Group, using the Baptism Bible study can be a great way for the Group leader to help ensure their Group member understands baptism.

*Why is baptism offered after every service and not just after GrowthTrack?*

It's important for our guests to understand that baptism is the next step after salvation, and a work of the Holy Spirit that can be prompted and done at any time. It's not a requirement or something that is only done as a result of attending GrowthTrack. We want to encourage baptism to happen as a result of accepting Christ at any time – right when they accept Christ, through a weekend teaching, participation in Group or DreamTeam, etc.. In addition, the body of Christ is built up and encouraged when we experience baptism as a church and the goal is to see baptisms increase and be a part of every service during the first weekend of every month as much as possible.

*Why have baptism at send off?*

This is the best way we can elevate the next step of baptism (and the Know God principle) programmatically every first weekend. Having guests ready to be baptized either right at send off, or just as soon as the service ends, will help insure baptism is celebrated and recognized as a vital part of the life of our church, and a marker of fulfilling the mission God has given us in NW OH.

*When a guest comes to Guest Services and wants to be baptized, what is their next step?*

If it's the first week of the month, introduce them to a baptism team member that can help them take that step. If it's not the first week of the month, direct them to [CedarCreek.tv/baptism](http://CedarCreek.tv/baptism) and have them fill out the baptism form, or the paper form in the back of the Baptism Bible Study. Once the form is filled out, our baptism team will contact them with the needed next step information on getting baptized. This would include asking what service they would like to get baptized, what items to bring, where to meet, etc..

*If a guest comes to the 9 AM service and indicates they want to be baptized during the next first weekend 9 AM, do they go to GrowthTrack or do they get baptized at the 9 AM?*

After insuring they understand what baptism is, they are ready to get baptized at the 9 AM during the next first weekend. They can fill out the form at [CedarCreek.tv/baptism](http://CedarCreek.tv/baptism) or the paper form in the back of the Baptism Bible study. This will insure we have their correct information and story so that we are equipped to potentially pastor and care for them beyond baptism. We encourage inviting them to GrowthTrack, either in the meantime or afterwards if they didn't take that step, but they don't have to attend GrowthTrack to get baptized. However, if they aren't sure about baptism, then having them attend GrowthTrack or go through the Baptism Bible study is a great next step before baptism.