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WATER BAPTISM GUIDANCE BOOKLET

We're excited that another person has made the decision to publicly declare their faith in Jesus Christ! To help field group leaders feel confident about conducting water baptisms, we have created this guidance booklet to answer the most frequently asked questions.

1. WHAT WILL I NEED?

Water – You will need a space containing water deep enough for the body of the person being baptised to be fully immersed. Possible options are:

- A bath at somebody's home or a hotel.
- A public or private swimming pool (at a leisure centre, hotel or somebody's home).
- A baptistry at a local church.
- A river, lake or the sea!

Clothes – As you will be standing in the water with the person being baptised, you will need clothes that you are prepared to get wet (and of course a spare change of clothes for afterwards). Wearing a swimming costume underneath a t-shirt, along with dark leggings, shorts or tracksuit bottoms is a suitable option.

A Changing Space – you will need to designate a room / area that both the person being baptised (and person/s doing the baptising) can change their clothes in private.

Card / Gift – These are optional; however, providing a card or gift for the person being baptised is a loving gesture that will help to commemorate their special day.

2. WHAT WILL THE PERSON BEING BAPTISED NEED?

Clothes – The person being baptised will be fully immersed in the water and so they will need to wear clothes that they don't mind getting wet. We suggest wearing a swimming costume underneath a dark t-shirt along with some dark shorts, leggings or tracksuit bottoms. When wet, clothes tend to stick to the body and so wearing white or light-coloured tops or underwear should try to be avoided for wisdom and modesty purposes (however, we understand why



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individuals may desire to where white as this symbolises purity). In addition, the person getting baptised will need to bring a spare change of clothes with them for afterwards.

3. DO WE NEED TO SAY ANY SPECIAL WORDS?

Baptism is a public display of faith and therefore, to commemorate this, you may ask the person being baptised a question along the lines of the following:

Q1: *Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that He lived a sinless life, died on the cross, rose again the third day and is now ascended into Heaven?*

A1: *I do*

OR

Q2: *Romans 10:9 states that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus Christ and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved. What is your confession?*

A2: *I believe with all my heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, that He died for my sins and that God raised Him from the dead just as the scriptures say.*

Alternatively, a person may give a personalised confession of faith and/or their personal testimony if they desire. There are no laws to this. The only prerequisite for water baptism is that the person believes.

And as they continued along on the way, they came to some water, and the eunuch exclaimed, See, [here is] water! What is to hinder my being baptized? And Philip said, If you believe with all your heart [if you have a conviction, full of joyful trust, that Jesus is the Messiah and accept Him as the Author of your salvation in the kingdom of God, giving Him your obedience, then] you may. And he replied, I do believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. (Acts 8:36-37, AMPC)

Once they have confirmed their faith, you may baptise them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. You may say something along the lines of the following:

"Because of your belief and confession of faith, I now baptise you in the name of the Lord Jesus!"



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NOTE: In Matthew 28:19-20, Jesus commanded us to and make disciples, baptising in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. For this reason, some people say, “I now baptise you in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost” when they baptise. This is not wrong if you say this, and you may do so; however, to follow the pattern of the early church and the way they instituted Jesus’ commission to baptise, we baptise “in the name of the Lord Jesus” for in Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Colossians 2:9).

(Scripture references: Acts 2:38, Acts 10:48, Acts 19:5)

Prayer – Once the individual comes up out of the water, this would be a perfect time to pray for them. It is important to be sensitive to the leading of the Spirit to see exactly what God wants to do as this is a very holy and significant event in a person’s life. As the person being baptised has an extremely receptive heart at this point, it may be the time in which the Lord wants to baptise them with the Holy Ghost and fire, release certain spiritual gifts, or even to prophesy into their life.

4. WHO NEEDS TO BE THERE?

Through scripture, we see that the minimum requirement is for at least one *believer* to be present at a baptism as a witness (which would be the person conducting the baptism). When Philip baptised the Ethiopian Eunuch, the driver of the Eunuch’s chariot is likely to also have seen what took place; however, Philip was the only *believing* witness present (Acts 8:26-39) and this was enough.

Nevertheless, there may be as many people as the person being baptised desires. Try to make the occasion as special and unique to them as you can. If they want something simple, then that is okay; however, if they want to make a worship party out of it, then by all means!