



**Sunset**  
Presbyterian Church



*we care about you and your spiritual journey*

## **Baptism at Sunset Presbyterian Church**

Below is a brief overview of the position we have taken at Sunset Church regarding baptism. It is not a full theological explanation, but contains the salient points around which both members and leaders can and should agree.

### *Infant Baptism:*

There are multiple views on baptism at Sunset, and we have concluded that this is a welcome feature of our situation. Nevertheless, we should acknowledge and maintain the perspective of our particular denominational and theological tradition. Simply put, we are a congregation of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church. There is, therefore, a default position that is outlined in chapter 28 of the *Westminster Confession of Faith*. Without contradicting this default position, Sunset is able to express our view on this important sacrament in this manner:

*We encourage* Christian parents to observe the sacrament of infant baptism and *we support* the choice to choose dedication. Both require parents to be committed followers of Christ so that they will raise their children to know and love the Lord and his church. When a child makes a personal commitment to Christ, we will affirm that faith in a public setting.

The last sentence is one to note well. For those who pursue infant baptism, we would want them to know that if a time comes where they embrace their baptism and make a clear faith commitment, we would *affirm* that decision amongst the community and celebrate their faith story. Thus, there remains only one baptism, yet it gives us an opportunity to celebrate their own faith, over against the faith of their parents. Variations of faith affirmations have a long history in the church.

### *Believer Baptism:*

We encourage those who have come to Christ as children, youth or adults, and have not been baptized as infants, to be baptized as a public profession of faith. It is often incorrectly believed that Presbyterians reject believer's baptism. This is patently false, and can be seen in the EPC *Book of Order*. Believer's baptism is normative in scripture and in WCF 28.1. Though the mode and moment in time may be distinct, infant baptism is united in meaning with believer's baptism.

### *Mode of Baptism:*

We honor sprinkling, pouring and immersion.



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*Membership:*

At this time, we do not have a requirement for membership at Sunset in order to be baptized. However, the one seeking baptism should 1) be seeking a distinctly Christian baptism; 2) have a high regard for and commitment to the church; 3) not be under a process of discipline at this or another church. Thus, we allow the baptism of a non-member; however, we encourage them to be baptized at their own church to demonstrate their commitment to that body, and that of the congregation to the baptized.

*Process:*

If one is interested in pursuing baptism for themselves or for their infant, there is a well-defined process at Sunset. To initiate it they should contact either their immediate ministry leader or Cindy Heinz in the office.

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