

BAPTISM PREPARATION

- Meet at the Elk Lodge (1528 Madison Ave, where we have service), no later than 10:15 (Sunday School class begins at 9:30, if you can come to Sunday School, all the better!)
- At 10:15, we'll give you a brief rundown on baptisms, when you'll come up, etc. We'll cover everything and tell you exactly what to do so, no worries! It'll be pretty simple!
- During the service, at the appointed time, you will change and then read your testimony to the church. After that, you will be baptized.
- Please send written testimony to joel@thegardenbaltimore.com by Thursday prior to baptism. (See below for writing your testimony)
- Bring:
 - Towel
 - Change of clothes:
 - Dark shirt and pants or shorts which are not see-through when wet
 - Try not to wear materials which absorb a lot of water (for example, denim holds a lot of water and drenches everything around it)
 - Your testimony (if you need us to print this for you, just let us know).
- Invite friends! This is a great opportunity to introduce your friends to Jesus. Don't miss it!

HOW TO WRITE YOUR BAPTISM TESTIMONY

Ideally, we appreciate short testimonies, no more than **three short paragraphs (300-350 words)**.

You'll basically want to talk about three main things:

- 1) What life was like before you saved,**
- 2) How you came to hear the Gospel and repent and believe in Jesus,**
- 3) How God has changed your life since then** (perhaps why you are here today)

Each point/paragraph should be no longer than 4-5 sentences (just 12 sentences potentially... easy!) Feel free to include little personal details (i.e. where you grew up, what you studied in school, etc...) in your testimony. These things only take a word or a phrase, but help hearers to connect with your testimony. Your last sentence should be a statement of why you've come to

be baptized. (i.e. "In obedience to Scripture, I come to make a public profession of my faith through baptism." Or something along those lines).

Below you will find an example testimony in terms of word count, honesty, structure, and Gospel proclamation:

I was blessed to have been raised by loving and devoted parents who tucked my first bible into my Easter basket and took me to church on Sundays. I had a sense that God was real but didn't think it was possible to ever understand the Bible or actually have a personal relationship with Him. I figured I would just be as "good a person" as I could be.

Within a short time after heading to college, I proved to not be so good at being a good person. My sins and their consequences sent me into a spiral of guilt and continual destruction. A few years later, I was walking with a friend and sharing my guilt and despair with her, because I knew she shared the same struggles. She looked at me and said, since we've done these things, fully knowing that they are wrong, don't you think we deserve to go to hell? I thought I was going to be sick b/c I knew she was right. I didn't know how I could go on living with that.

In God's mercy, He showed me the way to a new and eternal life. He quickly placed me in a church where he opened my ears to hear the good news....that God loves me so much he sent his own son, who unlike me, lived a perfect life and gave his life for His glory and my salvation. I was overwhelmed with gratitude as I realized that I would undeservedly stand before him blameless one day. This compelled me to turn away from my former life and to devote the life he gave me to His glory. So, I stand before you all today, to be baptized in obedience to Scripture and publicly declare my trust in the finished work of Christ.