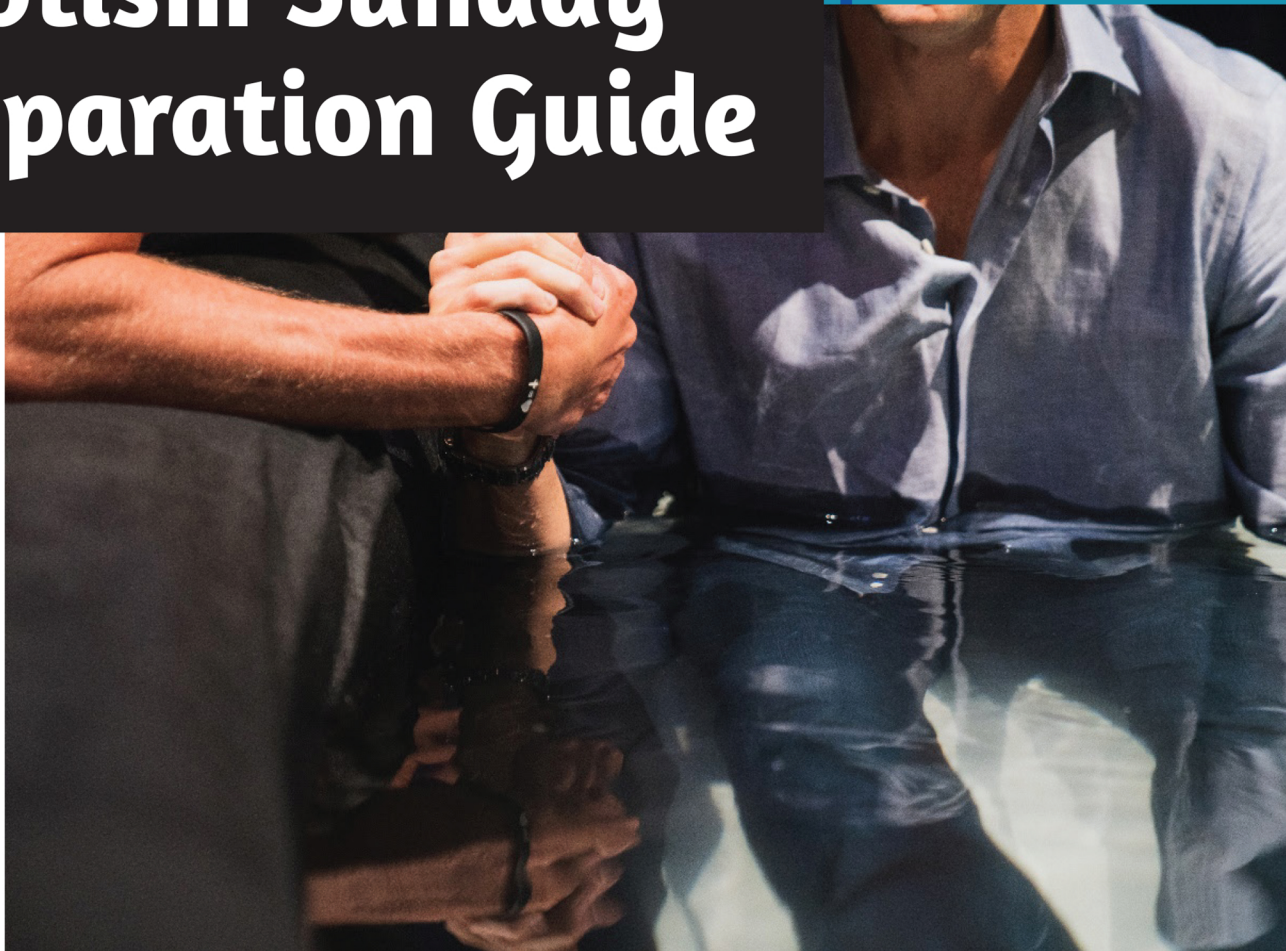




EVANGELISM TEAM

# Baptism Sunday Preparation Guide



“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, *baptizing them* in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”

—Matthew 28:19-20



# Don't Let Baptism Sunday Be Just Another Sunday

Baptism Sunday can be one of the most memorable days in the life of your church by working these 5 action steps.

## ***Plan for filling more than the baptistry.***

Simply planning to fill the baptistry can be a step of faith where churches have not recently baptized. What better way for any church to communicate confidence in the gospel than involving your church leadership in planning a special Baptism Sunday soon after Easter? This guide can help.

## ***Pray for what only God can do.***

Baptism is the public celebration of a work that only God can do – bringing the spiritually dead to life! Therefore, call your people to pray for the lost during large, small, & leadership gatherings.

Hillvue Heights Church in Bowling Green set a faith goal for baptisms and called people to pray. Church members were invited to take cards with a specific number listed and devote themselves to praying that at least that many people might be saved. One prayer warrior enthusiastically came to the pastors on a Baptism Sunday, asking, "What number are we on?" Tears overflowed her eyes when she learned that her grandson, who had just been baptized, was the one who matched the number for which she had been praying for months!

## ***Prioritize what we are commanded to do.***

Only God can save, but every Christian is called to be a witness. How can you mobilize church members for gospel conversations? Every evangelical church will faithfully proclaim the hope of salvation made possible through the resurrection of Jesus on Easter Sunday. How many churches have an intentional follow-up plan to help those who are saved be baptized as soon as the following week?

## ***Provide quality invite tools.***

Many churches are rediscovering the power of inviting the unchurched to baptisms. One of the creative adaptations when gathering large crowds that became challenging during the pandemic was scheduling baptisms at different times throughout

the week. Baptismal candidates were encouraged to invite a more intimate gathering of friends as their baptisms were filmed or streamed to involve the larger church family.

Pastors were surprised that many who came were unchurched. They came because of an invite from a friend who was celebrating a significant moment in his or her life. They heard their friend's testimony, saw the gospel powerfully illustrated, asked questions, and some came to faith! Takeaway? Provide quality invite tools and new believers will invite lost friends! Some churches provide cake and refreshments following the service for those being baptized and their special guests as an opportunity for connections and gospel conversations.

## ***Proclaim the gospel expecting a response.***

Baptism illustrates the power of the gospel to change lives. Consider allowing people to share their testimonies verbally through video or responses to questions. Preach a sermon clearly communicating the importance of baptism. Then be prepared to help people take that step. How can those who are ready learn more about baptism? How will you follow up with those being baptized to help them keep taking next steps of discipleship?

## ***Planning for #BaptismKY***

"The decision to respond with a public profession of faith through baptism is a significant moment in the life of a new Christian, so we must plan ahead to care for them well as they take those steps. Preparing well to incorporate the baptism into a worship service eliminates potential distractions and provides a powerful testimony that encourages the congregation to praise God."<sup>1</sup>

# Sample Timeline

## 6-8 weeks prior:

- Set date for baptism Sunday & mobilize leadership for prayer.
- Order baptism supplies.
- Plan how to mobilize people for gospel conversations.

## 4-6 weeks prior:

- Begin planning celebratory worship experience.
- Schedule a baptism class for those praying about taking the next step.
- Begin visiting with those needing to follow through on baptism.

## 3-4 weeks prior:

- Consider filming testimonies or working with baptismal candidates on how to share effectively on baptism Sunday.
- Confirm availability and roles of volunteers.
- Begin promoting.

## Weekend prior:

- Emphasize from platform, social media, & publications that baptism Sunday is next week.

## Week prior:

- Review plans with worship/music team and volunteers.
- Make sure all resources are in place to celebrate baptisms.
- How will you call people to surrender their lives to Christ and take the next step of baptism?

## Baptism Sunday:

- Celebrate life change through the gospel.
- Call people to surrender their lives to Christ and take the next step of baptism, provide easy next steps.
- Connect with guests.

## Weeks following:

- Connect those baptized to Sunday School/small groups or discipleship group.
- Follow up with those who responded to invitation & all guests.
- Send a written encouragement to those baptized.

# More Ideas for Baptism ministries

Teach and preach often on significance of baptism.

Develop a process to disciple new believers immediately upon profession of faith.

Teach carefully on baptism in your membership class.

Provide a "Why Be Baptized?" brochure with scriptural truths, pictures, and testimonies.

Publish the "Why Be Baptized?" brochure content to website and/or church app. Consider including videos.

Celebrate baptisms by inviting friends, family, & members of Sunday School or small group to stand in support of one being baptized. Applaud baptisms!

Provide quality invite resources.

Consider planning a reception for guests of those being baptized following the service.

Include testimonies either through prerecorded videos or brief interview at water's edge.

Provide sound system so that congregation can hear testimonies clearly.

Capture the baptism on video or by high quality photo to share as gift for the family.

Invest in baptismal folders, frames, or ways to present certificates, pictures, and meaningful memories.

Have extra greeters serving to provide great experience for guests.

Build a baptism team to assist with all baptisms.

Provide shirts with a message such as "I Have Decided," "Risen," etc. for them to keep.

Post pics before and during baptism to social media tagging lots of people.

Constantly emphasize baptism as the next step after committing your life to Christ. Have signups everywhere.

Give a follow-up booklet and next step discipleship tools to each person baptized.

Develop a "Baptism Party in a Box" that includes ideas for parents to celebrate with children and know how to continue discipling children.

Encourage Sunday School or small groups to plan time on the Sunday someone is baptized to hear their testimony and celebrate together.

Promote baptism with posters around the church. Include one-line testimonies.

Always have the baptismal pool warm and chlorinated before services.

Provide handkerchief or hand towels with the church's logo as keepsake.

Plan baptisms on significant dates when family or guests are likely to attend.

Build a baptism Sunday into an extended spiritual growth campaign. Build on the momentum.

Consider special offsite baptism days during warmer weather at a lake or slow-flowing river.

**Send us your ideas!**

***Celebrate by posting lots of pics using #BaptismKY.  
We may tag & repost to celebrate with you.***

## ***Hillvue Heights Baptism Team Process<sup>2</sup>***

Baptismal candidates meet with a pastor or staff member to confirm their salvation and desire to be baptized. Then a baptismal date is set.

When they arrive at the church, they are greeted by the baptism team.

1. They register with their contact information, which is where the baptism certificate is mailed.
2. They are given a size appropriate "RISEN" t-shirt, which they wear while being baptized and keep as a memento.
3. After changing into baptism clothing, a picture is taken with them holding a name board so we can later match pictures with the correct person.
4. We then give them a handkerchief (to go over their mouth and nose while being baptized and they will also keep). We proceed to go over the procedure of how they will be baptized – how to stand, what questions they will be asked, etc.
5. Another team member is upstairs helping the pastor get waders and robe on and reviewing names of those being baptized. Names of participants are written on a board for order and pronunciation.
6. Participants are brought upstairs to the baptistry. They meet with pastors for prayer.
7. During the baptism a team member takes photos of participants.
8. After baptism, participants go downstairs to change into dry clothing. Plastic bags for wet clothing along with an assortment of brushes and blow dryers are available as needed.
9. The participants are congratulated. Some are given a Bible, if needed. All are given a card with our website to retrieve their photos and a sticker with their name and baptism date on it to put in their bible.
10. The adults are given a card with details of a Next Step Bible Study which they will be invited to attend. They also receive a handmade cross that our lead pastor and his wife have prayed over as memorabilia of this special day.

### ***For More Evangelism Helps***

Go to [www.kybaptist.org/evangelism](http://www.kybaptist.org/evangelism) or reach out to your Evangelism Team at (502) 489-3576 or [evangelism@kybaptist.org](mailto:evangelism@kybaptist.org).

The Cooperative Program giving of Kentucky Baptists enables us to help churches reach Kentucky and the world for Christ.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.namb.net/evangelism/baptism-sunday/#guide>

<sup>2</sup> Shared during Refocus Evangelism Training. For similar resources, go to [www.kybaptist.org/refocus](http://www.kybaptist.org/refocus)

