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# Baptism

In the Anabaptist church, each person chooses to be baptized. We believe this choice is very important. Anabaptists do not baptize babies or young children. We baptize people who are old enough to make a choice. What is that choice?

## **Believing in Jesus: A Choice to Be Saved**

When we choose baptism, we turn from sin and turn toward Jesus. We have faith in Jesus. We try to follow Jesus. We do the things he told us to do. We love God and other people. Our faith in Jesus connects us to life that lasts forever, even after we die.

## **Belonging to the Church: A Choice to Belong**

When we choose baptism, we join the church. The church is the family of God. God is like a parent. We are all God's children. We pray and worship God together. We enjoy good times together. We comfort one another when we are sad. We help one another. We work together, doing good things. We tell others about Jesus.

## **Sharing Our Gifts: A Choice to Serve**

When we choose baptism, we agree to share our gifts. These gifts are not things that come in a box. They are gifts that the Holy Spirit gives each person to share with everybody. Some people preach. Some people heal. Some people have great faith. Some people teach. Some people welcome others. There are all kinds of people with all kinds of gifts. Each person in the church is different. Each person in the church is important. We all have special gifts. We need everybody to make a whole church.

## **Baptism Is a Beginning**

The choice to be baptized is only the beginning. We grow in faith as we follow Jesus and share the gifts God has given us. We do this with other people who have also made the decision to be baptized and who are members of the church. We help one another learn, grow in our faith, and serve others as the family of God—together.



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## What if I Was Already Baptized?

You can join a congregation in other ways if you have already been baptized. One way is to tell your congregation that you believe in Jesus, you want to follow him, and you want to be a member of the congregation. If you are a member of another congregation, you can move your membership to your new congregation. Talk to your pastor about these options.

### Pray:

God, thank you for the church community. Help me decide I choose to be baptized: to follow Jesus, to be part of a church family, and share my gifts with others.

### Do:

- Think about being baptized. Do you have questions? What is exciting about it? What are you worried about?
- Talk to your pastor about being baptized. How do they do that at your church? Ask your pastor your questions. Tell your pastor what you are excited about.
- Visit the river or baptistry where people at your church are baptized.
- Draw a picture of you or someone else being baptized.