



temple
BAPTIST CHURCH

TIDINGS

A weekly newsletter for all active members of Temple Baptist Church

The Pastor's Perspective

Dr. Reggie Bridges

What is baptism? **Baptism is a public declaration of one's faith in Jesus Christ.** As such, it signifies that the individual has confessed Jesus as Lord and has submitted to His authority. It is, indeed, a wonderful celebration of salvation, life, and power! In part, we Baptists practice what we call "believer's baptism" because of this. Only those who have willingly and voluntarily surrendered their lives to Christ can identify with that reality; thus, believers only should be baptized. Such was the pattern of the New Testament church. Baptism itself was reserved only for those who had expressed faith in Christ!

Why should we baptize/be baptized? **We baptize believers because we are commanded to baptize them (Matthew 28:19), and we ourselves are baptized because we have been told to submit to baptism (Acts 2:38).** As Baptists, we refer to both baptism and the Lord's Supper as "ordinances" or decrees/commands. (Note: We do not call them "sacraments" because that infers that they have some salvific merit in conveying grace to us. Neither baptism nor the Lord's Supper provides salvation or even sustains salvation. We are saved by our absolute faith in Christ alone!). We are baptized as an act of obedience. As many have pointed out, baptism is one of the first acts of discipleship. And as already stated, we baptize and are baptized to publicly display our commitment to Jesus as Lord. It is our testimony to all that we have followed Christ. Indeed, we publicly and visually identify with Jesus (Romans 6:1-11) through the event.

How should we baptize? In the New Testament, the Greek word for baptize is *baptizo*. It means "to plunge, dip, or immerse." Unfortunately, by the time our first English translation of the Bible was produced, many had embraced various methods of baptism. In fact, the church authorities of the day had allowed and practiced

other forms besides immersion. The translators didn't want to offend their leaders (for fear of punishment!); yet they wanted to remain true to the text. So, their compromise? They coined a new English word "baptize." Instead of translating the word into "immerse" or "plunge," they simply transliterated the Greek word. Interesting, huh? We place people all the way under the water (we dunk them!) because we believe that is what the first century church did. Believers were immersed, and they came up out of the water (cf. Jesus' baptism in Mark 1:10). And what a picture! **There is no better representation of the gospel than baptism by immersion. When people are placed all the way under the water and brought up out of it, witnesses can observe the "death, burial, and resurrection."** Every time we baptize someone, we declare the gospel of Christ! And for the ones being baptized, they declare the gospel's impact upon their lives. Yes, they were dead in their sins, but now they live through Jesus!

Why this brief exposé on baptism? Because the Lord continues to give me opportunity to share this conversation with many in our community. Whether it be children attending WinShape, a young person who stops by to talk, or a lady who wants to get baptism on the "right side" of her salvation, individuals have expressed their desire to publicly identify with Jesus. And, in the weeks to come, we will continue to celebrate baptisms together as a church family. How blessed we are! I encourage you to ponder these thoughts as we see each declaration in the days ahead. We are in the midst of some wonderful moments of the Lord's movement!

Let's also be faithful to make disciples of all people as we "baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit and teach them all that we have been commanded." And when we see that happen, let's rejoice together in worship! See you Sunday!

Minister of Community Engagement

George Lee, IV

The Lord Was Already Working: Recently, I had the privilege of serving as the camp pastor for Breakaway Camp 2026 at Tall Timbers. During the camp, I was given the opportunity to lead an evangelism training using a gospel-sharing tool called the Three Circles. The Three Circles is a simple, relational, and visual way to explain the gospel. It helps people understand God's design for our lives, the brokenness caused by sin, and the good news that Jesus came to rescue and restore us. During the training, I walked the students through the gospel several times. After one of those demonstrations, I asked, "Once we have clearly shared the gospel, what do we do next?" One bold student quickly answered, "Pray for 'em!" "Yes," I responded, "but not yet! First, we need to invite them to choose Jesus."

I wanted the students to understand the importance of offering someone an opportunity to respond to the gospel, so we entered into a time of role-play. Riley, affectionately known as "Rabbit," had been assisting me throughout the training. As part of the exercise, she said, "I see myself in brokenness. I feel like my life is broken, and I don't know how to fix it." I wish I could say that I immediately recognized what was happening and asked whether she wanted to begin a relationship with Jesus. Instead, I continued teaching as though the moment were simply part of the demonstration.

What I did not realize was that the Lord was doing a genuine and powerful work in Rabbit's heart. As our conversation continued in front of the group, I began to sense that something deeper was happening. I paused and asked, "Rabbit, are you just helping me with the role-play, or is this real?" She replied, "No, I'm for real. I need Jesus." It took me a moment to process what was happening. I was in the middle of an evangelism training, teaching students how to share their faith, and a young lady was passing from death to life right in front of us.

I told the group that this was a sacred and special moment that we needed to honor. At the same time, it seemed clear that the Lord had allowed it to happen in front of everyone for a reason. I asked Riley whether she understood the gospel she had heard throughout the training. She said that she did. We prayed together, and then we celebrated her new relationship with Jesus Christ! Over the years, I have seen the Lord do some amazing things in ministry, but this was a first for me. Yet perhaps I should not have been surprised. The gospel had been clearly communicated several times. Questions had been welcomed. Space had been created for students to listen, process, and respond. Why should it surprise us when someone actually believes the good news?

That moment reminded me of an important truth: **The Lord is always working, even when we do not immediately recognize it.** Sometimes we are so focused on teaching the lesson, completing the program, or following the plan that we fail to notice what God is doing right in front of us. But the gospel is not merely information to be presented. It is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes. May we continue to share the gospel clearly, relationally, and faithfully. May we also remember to invite people to respond to Jesus. We never know when the Lord may be preparing someone's heart to move from brokenness to restoration—and from death to life.



CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION

SAVE THE DATE

Come join us for a weekend of celebrating our Centennial Year!

SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 8

Sunday Morning we will have our normal Sunday Schedule
and Saturday will be a come and go time of fellowship!

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7 | 2 - 5 P.M.
FELLOWSHIP HALL

LEARN MORE AT EVENTS.TEMPLE.LIFE

 **SERVICE PROJECT**

SERVING STUDENTS & SCHOOLS

JULY 5-AUGUST 16

Women's Committee service project for a supply drive for all
of our local schools' care closets providing various items from
school supplies to uniforms.

Learn more at events.temple.life

 the family of **Ruby Garner**,
grandmother of Zach (Olivia) Garner,
great-grandmother of Dawson Sills.

the family of **Mervin Etoy "Toye" Taylor, Jr.**,
father of Chris (Angie) Taylor,
grandmother of Sarah Kate, Jack Henry,
and John Robert.

the family of **Jason Martin**,
brother of Jenn (Andy) Carter.

 **ANNUAL OFFERING**

STARTING SUNDAY, JULY 19

From The Minister of Pastoral Care

Dale Oden

WOW! WOW! WOW! That's what Sadel and I were saying over the past couple of weeks as we enjoyed the beautiful cruise you gave us for our fifty years of ministry here on the staff at Temple Baptist Church. We are grateful for your kindness in providing such a wonderful trip.

We drove over to Atlanta and had a couple of days with our daughter Angela and family before and after the cruise. We flew to London and were met at Heathrow Airport by a driver who took us to South Hampton for one night. Then we boarded the Norwegian Sky for ten days of sailing around Scotland and Ireland. Along the way, we made stops in eight different ports. It was a fun-filled experience! If you have time and would like to hear more, just give us a call and we will gladly tell you more. (ha)

The afternoon we sailed out of the port at South Hampton, people gathered around the ship to wave goodbye to people on the shore. I looked and standing near us was a five-year old boy wearing a Louisiana Tech Bulldog shirt. I then met his daddy, who was a Tech graduate, as were his mother, granddaddy, and grandmother. Later that evening, we met two other ladies who grew up in Monroe.

Sadel and I are so thankful for this very generous gift that the church provided. We have been blessed to be here at this church for all these years! Thank you for your love and support. To God be the Glory!

Please put on your calendar our **Senior Adult Summer Bible Study** which is scheduled for **August 16-19**. That's just a few weeks from now. Dr. Argile Smith will be with us to lead us in a study of the **"I Am" statements of Jesus**. This should be another great study!

In case you haven't heard, the new **Senior Adult Cookbook** has arrived. There are some fantastic recipes from our great Temple cooks. They are available in the Church Office for \$10.



THE TIDINGS (USPS #020005), Published Weekly except Christmas by:
 Temple Baptist Church, Periodical Postage Paid, Ruston, LA 71270
 Postmaster send address changes to:
 Temple Baptist Church, 1515 South Service Road West, Ruston, LA 71270

Label here

Phone: (318) 255-3745 • Fax: (318) 255-0134
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Week-at-a-Glance

July 12-20 - Calgary GO Team Mission Trip
July 14-16 - Tiny Trekkers Summer Camp (JP)

Sunday, July 12

9 a.m. - Discover Temple Class (Rm 216); Blended Worship (Sanctuary);
 livestream at live.temple.life; Contemporary Worship (GS);
 Life Groups for all ages
 10:30 a.m. - Contemporary Worship (Sanctuary); livestream at
live.temple.life; Life Groups for all ages
 3 p.m. - The Springs Worship Service (The Springs)
 4 p.m. - Movie viewing of "A Great Awakening" (Sanctuary)

Monday, July 13

6 p.m. - Mary Martha Women on Mission
 6:30 p.m. - College Evangelism Study (Rm 216)

Tuesday, July 14

9:30 a.m. - Senior Adult Ladies Bible Study (Rm 216)
 12 p.m. - Jr. High Lunch with John (Youth Rm)

Wednesday, July 15

5 p.m. - Family Night Meal (FH; Cost: \$5/person, \$3/child under 8,
 \$15 max/family; Menu: Philly Steak Sandwiches);
 College Summer Bible Study (Rm 216)
 5:30 p.m. - Women's Bible Study (Rm 270)
 5:45 p.m. - Men's Bible Study (Rm 264); Women's Bible Study (Rm 275);
 Junior High Worship (Youth Rm)
 6 p.m. - Prayer Meeting/Bible Study (FH); Children's Summer Sontastics
 (JP); Coed Bible Study (FLC Glass Classroom)
 7 p.m. - High School Worship (Youth Rm)

Thursday, July 16

12 p.m. - High School Lunch with John (Youth Rm)

Broadcast Hours: Sundays: 9 a.m. Channel 11 (KAQY); 9 and 10:30 a.m. livestream (live.temple.life)
Family Life Center Hours: Monday, Tuesday, & Thursday: 8 a.m.-7 p.m.; Wednesday and Friday: 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
The Journey Place Playscape Hours: Monday 9 a.m.-4 p.m.; Tuesday-Thursday 2:30-4 p.m.