

Summary Points of the Reason for This Bylaws Change

- We are not proposing any change to the way we “make disciples and baptize them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.” We will still, always, baptize new Christians by immersion.
- We are addressing the issue of **Christians** who have professed and practiced their faith in another tradition and how they may be invited to join Broadmoor.
- The proposal provides for Christians from other traditions to be given the choice of joining by baptism or statement of faith. The statement of faith option would include their affirmation that they have been baptized, and, if baptized as an infant, went through a confirmation process.
- I will still talk to any prospective new member from another tradition about baptism. I would be honored to baptize anyone for whom this experience would be spiritually meaningful.
- We will soon complete the booklet “Who Are We?” that will guide every new member through our faith and practice here at Broadmoor. We developed it from the 2010 Visioning Report, made the contents available online and in print, and presented and discussed it this past summer at the July Family Gathering.
- We are not doing away with immersion or offering the mode of sprinkling.
- Nothing we are proposing changes any of our priorities as a church. The proposal, in appropriate circumstances, will encourage membership of practicing and dedicated Christians in Broadmoor. Membership enhances our opportunities for discipleship.
- We are addressing here a practice, not a point of theology.
- We have long faced a situation that the NT simply does not address. Baptism in the NT was for believers immediately following their commitment to Christ. In re-baptizing practicing Christians we are engaging in a practice that would have been foreign to the writers of the NT.
- We do not have any guidance from the NT as to what would have occurred if a member of First Presbyterian Church in Ephesus had come to join First Baptist Church of Corinth.

In our discussion tonight (11/30/11),

- You have the right and expectation to voice your opinion. I personally will ensure that right, whatever your stance on this particular issue. The right to free expression is a Baptist distinctive.
- You also have the obligation to love one another, that is more important than your right to say whatever you want. With that in mind, I urge and expect the following:
 - Do not project an intellectual or spiritual superiority over your brothers and sisters in Christ.
 - Take very special care with what you say and how you say it. People have very deep opinions and feelings about this issue. No conviction is void of an emotional context. You may not mean to offend (I certainly hope no one is intentionally offensive!), but “listen” to your words from the perspective of someone who disagrees with you. Be loving in your speech and especially respectful of those who hold another opinion.
 - My personal goal is to preserve and deepen our unity at Broadmoor. This unity does not mean unanimity! We will not all agree on this issue. A vote will not be 100%! I pray daily that after we have resolved this issue, we can all say “I love and support Broadmoor Baptist Church.” I count on you, whatever your opinion, to manifest that character in public forums and private discussions. God will then bless us through this process.
 - I commend this passage of scripture for setting the tone of our discussion: “Do nothing from selfishness or conceit, but in humility count others better than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests but to the interests of others. Have this mind among yourselves which is yours in Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 2:3-5)

Dr. Terry Ellis
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