

The Sacrament of Baptism



**The Donway Covenant
United Church**

What is Baptism?

Baptism is a symbolic action that signifies the new life God gives us as we become part of the church community. Baptism uses water as a symbolic cleansing that signifies the acceptance of new life within the church family. The sacrament of baptism is also the rite of initiation into the Christian community, the church.

In the United Church of Canada, baptism is for all ages. We believe the gift of God's love doesn't depend on our ability to understand it, so we baptize people as infants right up through adulthood. When children are baptized, orientation is provided to parents or sponsors to equip them for the child's Christian nurture. During the ceremony, which takes place as part of a regular worship service, everyone in the congregation pledges support for the child and their parents.

From "A Song of Faith":
(United Church statement of faith)

"Baptism by water in the name of the Holy Trinity is the means by which we are received, at any age, into the covenanted community of the church. It is the ritual that signifies our rebirth in faith and cleansing by the power of God. Baptism signifies the nurturing, sustaining, and transforming power of God's love and our grateful response to that grace."

Baptism is not a requirement for God's love. We believe people who die without baptism are in no way condemned, lost, or damned. Baptism in the United Church is recognized by all denominations of the Christian church that practise infant baptism. Similarly, if someone has already been baptized in another church at any age, the United Church recognizes their baptism and welcomes them as Christians.

Statements and Promises

(at least one of the parents needs to be able to make these statements and promises “in good faith”)

Do you believe in God, who has created and is creating, who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh, to reconcile and make new, who works in us and others by the Spirit?

I do, by the grace of God.

Desiring the freedom of new life in Christ, do you seek to resist evil, to live in love and justice and in your daily life, follow the way of Jesus?

I will, God being my helper.

Will you join with your sisters and brothers in this community of faith to celebrate God’s presence, to live with respect in creation, to love and serve others?

I will, God being my helper.

Will you share your faith with your child/children, growing with him/her/them in faith, hope, and love?

I will, God being my helper.

What about Godparents?

Godparents are optional in the United Church of Canada; in a real sense the members of the congregation take on the role of godparents.

Nevertheless, godparents chosen by baptismal families are welcome to participate in the service by standing with the family and participating in the statements and promises.



I want my child to be baptized...

I want to be baptized.

What now?

The first step is to contact the church. An appointment will be arranged for you to meet with the church minister to discuss the meaning of baptism and the life and work of our congregation.

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