

BAPTISM AT RIVERS UNITED CHURCH Revised December 1995

Baptism is one of two sacraments (the other being Holy Communion) in the United Church.

The Sacrament of Baptism is an affirmation and celebration of God's love and grace in Jesus Christ.

Baptizing a child does not change that child's status before God.

The act of Baptism states and gives thanks that even before we are born God has acted in the life, death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ to give us full, abundant and eternal life.

We baptize into the Church of Jesus Christ.

A child is also baptized into a particular Christian community (congregation).

Parents and the congregation are asked to make promises.

Parents re-affirm their own Christian faith

and commit to nurture and encourage their child to grow in faith and in commitment to Jesus Christ.

The congregation promises to provide Christian education, a Christian example and to hold the child and parents in prayer.

Normally, then, Baptism takes place during a Sunday worship service. Exceptions can be made, such as when a family member is ill.

In such cases, members of the Worship Committee would go with the minister, to represent the congregation.

Normally Baptism would take place in the church which the parents are currently attending.

We understand, though, the desire of some parents to *come home* to have their child baptized.

We will consider baptizing on behalf of another congregation and would be in touch with that congregation on the parents' behalf.

Godparents are optional in the United Church.

We assume parents have primary responsibility for the Christian education and nurture of their children.

If parents want godparents, they may come forward as well and will make a promise about encouraging the child

to grow in Christian faith.

Requests for Baptism must be approved by the Board,
through the Worship Committee,

after parents have met with the minister to discuss the meaning of Baptism
and the commitment involved.

Baptism Questions and Promises

1. Do you believe in God, the Creator of the world,
in Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world
and in the Holy Spirit, the Teacher and Guide within the world?

IDO.

2. Will you do your best to nurture and educate your child
in the Christian faith,
that s/he might come to know Jesus Christ
as Saviour, Lord and Friend? **WE WILL.**

If parents feel they are not prepared to accept the commitment
which Baptism asks, but would like to give thanks and seek God's blessing
on their child, we would consider a Dedication Service.
This service includes Scriptures, prayers and blessings.
It can take place as part of a regular church service or at home.

The Board of Rivers United Church