

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

Policy

At Metropolitan United Church, the Sacrament of Baptism is an act of worship in which the Minister, by the cleansing with water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, receives individuals into the Church of Christ.

Pre-Baptism

1. Dates for Baptism are determined by preference of the families. Typically, there is interest in Mother's Day and Father's Day services. Other dates throughout the year are determined by requests received. These requests for Baptism dates are reviewed by the Baptism Co-ordinator and Sr. Minister who ultimately confirm Baptism dates.
2. Families interested in Baptism contact the Baptism Co-ordinator by phone or e-mail.
3. The Baptism Co-ordinator forwards the Baptism Registration form to interested families. These forms are completed and returned to the Baptism Co-ordinator who forwards them to the Office Assistant for processing.
4. The Senior Minister and Baptism Co-ordinator meet with the families to review Baptism procedures the Sunday prior to Baptism week, following the 11 a.m. worship service. If this date doesn't work or the family is from out of town (often the case), the 10-minute meeting takes place the morning of the Sacrament of Baptism at 10:30 a.m.
5. Parents are encouraged to write their child a letter outlining what the Sacrament of Baptism means to them. The letter is presented to the child at a later date – often at confirmation.
6. Certificates of Baptism and Scripture readings selected by the Sr. Minister are prepared by office staff. Booklets entitled *We Are Not Alone, We Live In God's World* and *We Cannot Keep From Singing* are packaged by the office staff in preparation for the Sacrament of Baptism.

Day of Baptism

1. On the morning of the Sacrament of Baptism, the Baptism Co-ordinator welcomes and meets with the families when they arrive at the Church. The Baptism Co-ordinator confirms the pronunciation of each Baptism candidate's name.
2. Families are shown the nursery on the lower level. Parents are encouraged to stay in church after the Sacrament of Baptism to hear the Sr. Minister's message. Babies are welcome to remain in the Sanctuary also; however, if the child is unhappy and parents feel more comfortable taking the child to the nursery, this is an option.
3. Parents are reminded that photos should not be taken during the actual Sacrament of Baptism.
4. The Sr. Minister and Baptism Co-ordinator share responsibility for the reading of "The Holy Sacrament of Baptism" during the Sacrament of Baptism which is conducted near the baptismal font stationed in front of the pulpit. The Baptism Co-ordinator reads the names of candidates being presented for Baptism and welcomes extended family and friends as they move to the front of the Sanctuary.
5. Following the Sacrament of Baptism by the Sr. Minister for each candidate, selected Scriptures are read by the Baptism Co-ordinator.
6. Following the worship service, parents are presented with the Baptismal certificate, a copy of the Scripture that was read, and two booklets *We Are Not Alone, We Live In God's World* and *We Cannot Keep From Singing*.

7. After the Sr. Minister has extended his hospitality to departing congregants after the worship service, he meets with the families and friends at the front of the Sanctuary where photos are taken by the Baptism Co-ordinator.

Post-Baptism

1. The Baptism Co-ordinator is responsible for the Baptism photo bulletin board in the Church hall behind the Sanctuary.
2. The Baptism Book, located in the church office, is updated by the Baptism Co-ordinator every time there is a Sacrament of Baptism. The updating is often done by the office staff, given the office doors are locked on Sundays.
3. The Baptism Co-ordinator makes contact with local families three months after the Sacrament of Baptism to again welcome families to participate in Creation Station, Sunday School, etc.

Related Metropolitan Policies

Annually the Baptism Co-ordinator reviews the Risk Management Policy and this policy. If changes are made to the Sacrament of Baptism policy, it is sent to the Board of Elders for approval.

Related Documents/External Resources

- Baptism record book
- Two booklets *We Are Not Alone*, *We Live In God's World* and *We Cannot Keep From Singing*
- Baptismal certificate
- [United Church of Canada](http://www.uchc.ca) website

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