

*Crescent Fort Rouge United Church
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BAPTISM POLICY

Baptism symbolizes our unity with Jesus Christ, with all God's children, with our community of faith and with the Christian church in every time and place. We believe the several dimensions of Baptism to include the following:

.As a sacrament of the Christian church, baptism is a symbol of the means of God's grace. It acknowledges the free and unmerited love of God, a love that has always been there for our children and for all of us. In baptism, we claim that love for our child.

.In baptism, we follow the example of Jesus who was himself baptized by the Holy Spirit through John and declared to be the child of God. (Mark 1:8—11)

.The presentation of a child for baptism is the rite of initiation into the holy catholic (universal) Christian community. It is the act whereby each of us is welcomed into the church family and reminded of our identity as the followers of Jesus Christ.

.It is a blessing of the church upon the child and the acknowledgment in thanksgiving and celebration that the child is God's own. The congregation welcomes a new life in its midst and promises to uphold and support the child and his/her parents in their faith journey.

.In the case of adult baptism, an adult makes his/her own profession of faith and commitment to a new life in Christ.

The Baptismal Service at Crescent Fort Rouge

Baptism will normally take place within the context of regular Sunday worship. As the congregation through which the child enters the Christian life, we consider our commitment to nurture his/her growth in faith, a vital component of the sacrament.

An exception to the above would be made in a crisis situation. In this case, the minister and an elder representing the congregation would respond to the request for this expression of God's love and grace.

Church membership of one or both parents is certainly encouraged, though not required. The church is prepared to receive those who express a sincere commitment to their own growth in Christian faith and a desire to raise their child(ren) in that faith.

God-parents are not a part of the United Church tradition. However, should parents wish to name persons in this role, they are welcome and will be included in the service.

Other congregational members will participate in the service through introduction of the child(ren), reading of scripture, pouring of water and the lighting and presentation of candles.

The congregation would be pleased to provide sponsors. These persons would participate in the service itself and then would maintain a personal contact with the family.

There is no set schedule for baptism. Dates will be arranged depending upon the liturgical calendar of the church and convenience of the parents. In preparation for the service, the minister will arrange to meet with the parents.

We ask that no photographs be taken during the service. The minister will be available for photos following the service if so desired. Videotaping may be done, provided it is done discretely.

Baptism is a part of public worship and therefore, there is no fee charged.