

# Christian Baptism for Youth and Adults

## A ministry of Knox United Church

To desire Christian Baptism for yourself is a good thing.  
The Spirit of God is moving in your life.  
We are honoured to celebrate that with you!

*The congregation of Knox United Church offers this brochure anticipating some questions you may have.*

### What is baptism?

Baptism is for people of any age. Baptism is a *ritual act* through which we express and engage spiritual meaning. It is an *ancient ritual* that has been used by various religious groups to mark a “before” and “after” in a believer’s life. It is a *rite of passage* into a new stage of life. In the Judeo-Christian writings we call the Bible, John the Baptist had a ministry of baptism. He baptized people as a *sign of spiritual cleansing and preparation* for the one who was coming - Jesus. Then he baptized Jesus Christ the fully human one who shows us the way to the reign of God’s justice and peace.

### What is *Christian baptism*?

It is a deep and rich well of meaning. Baptism is:

- A *sacrament*, or mystery. It is more about what God is doing in your life than about what we do together at your baptism - as Minister, congregation, and baptismal candidate.
- A *symbol* of God’s loving embrace. As you respond to God’s love in baptism, you will enter into an act of divine hospitality welcoming you into the family of God.
- A *sign* of dying and rising with Jesus Christ and entry into a realm of life Jesus called God’s reign of justice and peace on earth. Baptism marks the beginning of a life-long commitment to a journey, walking the path of Christian spirituality in the way of Jesus until your baptism is completed at the end of life.
- A *celebration*. Welcoming you as a new member of the covenant relationship we have with God in Christ is a time of joy. In the United Church of Canada, we believe:

*The covenant of baptism celebrates the fullness of God’s grace throughout the story of salvation - in creation and in exodus, in wilderness and in exile, in birth and in death.*

*In his baptism, Jesus received the Holy Spirit and was declared God’s beloved. Jesus opened himself to repentance and forgiveness, and marked a new beginning in his ministry. In our baptism we are similarly claimed, called, and commissioned. ...Baptism is the sole rite of initiation into full membership in the Christian community.*

*Celebrate God’s Presence, A Book of Services p.321*



### The place of baptism – the place of water

The *font* is the *bowl* holding the water poured over the one being baptized, or the *pool* in which the person being baptized is immersed. At Knox we offer the font at which baptism is administered by hands full of water on the head from the bowl - the most common mode of baptism in our United Church tradition.

### What kind of promises do I offer?

You will be invited to make these promises

- ◆ Profession of faith in God
- ◆ Commitment to seek justice
- ◆ Commitment to follow the way of Jesus Christ
- ◆ Commitment to the mission and ministry of the Church

*Celebrate God’s Presence p.322*

The congregation of the baptized also vow to be your companion, and to offer its support in providing programs in spiritual formation, companionship, education, and service.

**You may have a sponsor stand with you at your baptism.**

This baptized person (or persons) of your choice is invited to accompany you in support of your act of faith and commitment at your baptism. Often a sponsor is simply the entire congregation.

**Are there any fees related to Christian baptism?** No.

**Do I have to join this congregation?** Yes.

A life of Christian faith is a unique path lived in the company of others on a similar journey. The baptismal font is a place where we celebrate our covenant relationship with God and enter a *new* commitment together because you are joining the faith community's journey. This congregation welcomes you and vows to lovingly and intentionally open as many doors as we can for you to walk through to a deeper level of belonging and spiritual life. We take seriously the vows we make for you, and celebrate the opportunity to fulfill them. At Knox United Church, you will find spiritual direction, teaching, support, companionship, opportunities for service that make a difference, and a continual invitation to engage the mystery of God's love at community worship.

**Where and when will the service of baptism happen?**

Except in cases of medical emergency, the sacrament of baptism for adults is offered at these Sunday morning public services of worship in '08 and '09

- The Third Sunday of Advent (December 7<sup>th</sup> in the sanctuary)
- The Third Sunday of Lent (March 15<sup>th</sup> in the sanctuary)
- June 21<sup>st</sup> (in the Labyrinth)

The congregation is the celebrant of baptism. The Minister baptizes with the congregation – his or her hands acting for the people.

**How do I request Christian Baptism?**

Contact Rev. Drew Strickland 403-266-6450 [drewid@knoxunited.ab.ca](mailto:drewid@knoxunited.ab.ca).

You will be contacted to meet together to talk about the meaning and logistics of the sacrament and to respond to your questions. As we approach the date of your baptism a baptismal seminar is held (usually the Sunday prior at 10am) for all baptismal candidates to meet and share their spiritual journeys, as they feel led, to discuss arrangements and to rehearse the service. It is a privilege and honour to be your baptizing Church community.

*Knox United Church*

An affirming community of faith  
within the United Church of Canada



506 Fourth Street SW, Calgary AB T2P 1S7  
Office: 403-269-8382 [www.knoxunited.ab.ca](http://www.knoxunited.ab.ca)

*God is here for everyone*