

Infant & Child Baptism at Knox



What is baptism?

Baptism is a sacrament of the church that originates in the ministry of Jesus. At the beginning of his ministry, Jesus stood in the Jordan River and was baptized.

Since that time, baptism has emerged as the Rite of Christian Initiation; namely, the sacred ritual by which a child or adult enters into the Christian faith community. In the early church, it was typically adults who were baptized, usually by full immersion. At the time of baptism, they became members of the Christian faith community.

In the 4th century, infant baptism became much more common. It was a time of high infant mortality and parents wanted to ensure that their children were welcomed into the community of faith.

Thus, in the case of infant and child baptism, the parents make the promise to God and to the community that they will raise their children in a spiritual environment. When the child reaches an appropriate age, they can then consider becoming a member of the Christian church through Confirmation.

Baptism is also a symbol of God's unconditional love and grace being poured out upon the individual being baptized. Like water, God's love flows everywhere, immersing us and bathing us in the wonder of God's grace. It is love and grace that is freely offered and given throughout our lives, not just at the moment of baptism.

As part of the baptismal service, parents are invited to speak on behalf of the child and to make promises to God, to their child and to the congregation.

Parents promise...

... to make an effort to become involved in a Christian faith community

Parents will also pledge their commitment to the ongoing spiritual development of the child.

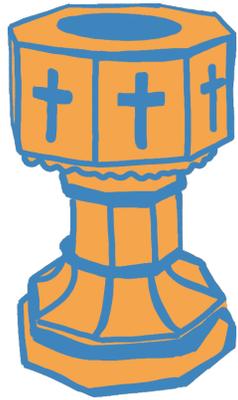
The congregation promises...

... to support the child being baptized with ongoing love and spiritual guidance, and to provide spiritual learning opportunities

Water and font...

Water is the essential element of baptism. As it is poured out, the splash and flow of the water reminds us of God's grace being poured upon us. Flowing out in all directions, embracing our lives.

The font is the bowl holding the water that will be sprinkled on the forehead of the person being baptized. Sprinkling is the most common form of baptism in the United Church of Canada.



F.A.Q.

Must I be an active member of Knox to have my child baptized?

No, we do hope, however, that you find our faith community to be a support.

Must the parents be baptized themselves?

Yes. At least one of the parents must be baptized.

Is there a fee expected for conducting a Baptism?

No. Baptism is a sacrament - a sign of God's love and grace freely offered.

Must I attend the Baptism Seminar?

Yes. We ask that you meet with the Minister. This will ensure that you understand the meaning of baptism before you make any commitments.

May I have my child baptized privately?

Usually not. Baptism marks the entry of the child into the Christian faith community, and thus is joyfully celebrated in the midst of that community.

Who do I contact when I am ready to have my child baptized?

Contact one of the Ministers through the office to begin a conversation about your decision.



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Godparents...

In our United Church tradition, it is the congregation which acts as the sponsor for your child. It is they who make promises to support you and your child with their ongoing love and care.

We do recognize that families need a broad network of support in raising their children. Therefore, you are welcome to name friends or family members to stand with you, as Godparents, to pledge their love and support.