
EGLINTON ST. GEORGE'S UNITED CHURCH

Your Child's Baptism

What is the Sacrament of Baptism?

We believe that baptism, whatever the age of the candidate, is the sole rite of initiation into membership in the Church. The service celebrates the graceful initiative of God in calling and claiming us and the faithful response of the people, both as individuals and as a community.

What happens at Baptism?

In response to God's gracious initiative, the parents, or adult candidates for baptism, *and* the whole gathered community make a profession of faith. The Church community expresses its willingness to receive and support the families in the nurture of all children in their midst. Using the visible signs of water, laying on of hands, anointing with oil and other gestures, the sacrament celebrates God's invisible grace poured out on us. It is our expectation that all requesting baptism here consider Eglinton St. George's United Church their Church home. As such, parents requesting baptism of their children will normally be active in the life of this congregation.

What about Godparents?

It is the tradition of the United Church of Canada to regard the *congregation* as godparents. The whole congregation makes a promise to provide for the spiritual nourishment and Christian Education of your child and all children in our care (which is the role of the godparent in the truest sense of the word).

In the past, godparents were often seen as a child's legal guardians. Today, when godparents are named,

it is an *honorary position* only. If you wish your child to have legal guardians, they must be named in your will. If you have chosen godparents, they are invited to come forward at Baptism but have only an *honourary role*.

How do we prepare for baptism?

Preparation begins with the parents of each child having full intention to help carry out the promises made at Baptism. **It is the expectation of our congregation that at least one parent will be a member of good standing in this congregation.** Sometimes a grandparent or another sponsor may be chosen to make the baptism commitment if this is not the case.

Arrangements for Baptism include the following procedures:

- (a) Complete the 'Request for Baptism' form and return to Church office.
- (b) A visit with Connie Capes-Leslie, or one of the other ministers—final confirmation of the baptism date is made at the time of the visit.
- (c) Plan to attend the Baptism preparation meeting on the Saturday morning prior to Baptism Sunday. This meeting will be conducted by the ministerial staff on behalf of the Church. This meeting is from 10:30 am to 11:30 am in the South Studio and includes a rehearsal for the following day. Please bring the candidates for baptism to this meeting. If possible, if child care arrangements can be made for other children at home that would be helpful. If other children in the family will be attending the preparation meeting, please inform Connie ahead of time.

What happens on Baptism Sunday?

On the morning of baptism, the families gather at 9:50 a.m. in the Hearth Room for photographs and to prepare for worship. Just prior to worship at 10:30 a.m., baptismal families (with godparents) will

be seated in alphabetical order in the front rows of the church. They are presented to the congregation by one of its officers, following the opening prayers of the Service.

ORDER OF SERVICE FOR THE SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM

(10:30 a.m.)

We unite now in the Sacrament of Baptism.

Presentation of Children for Baptism
(children are presented one at a time in
alphabetical order by their parents)

Questions of Intent

to the parents: As their parents, do you present these children earnestly desiring, that by holy baptism, they be made members of the church of Jesus Christ? If this is so, please respond **"WE DO."**

to the congregation, standing: Friends, as a baptized and baptizing church, will you receive these children in Christ's name, as we have been received, promising to support them with constant love, wholesome example, Christian teaching and faithful prayer? **"WE ARE WILLING, GOD BEING OUR HELPER."**

Statement of Faith

Let us repeat together the United Church Creed:

**We are not alone,
we live in God's world.
We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus,
the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others
by the Spirit.**

We trust in God.

We are called to be the Church:

to celebrate God's presence,
to live with respect in Creation,
to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.
In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.
We are not alone.
Thanks be to God.

(The congregation may be seated.)

Baptismal Vows: *(to the parents)*

I ask you before God and this congregation, do you profess your faith in one God, Creator, Christ and Spirit? If so, please respond: **"I DO."**

In the presence of this community of faith, do you commit yourself to following the way of Christ in your public and private life? If so, please respond: **"I WILL, GOD BEING MY HELPER."**

Will you nurture your child, and together grow in faith? If so, please respond:
"I WILL, GOD BEING MY HELPER."

Will you encourage your children to participate in the life of the Church, so that they may be strengthened to serve God faithfully in the world?

Response: **"I WILL, GOD BEING MY HELPER."**

Prayer of Blessing *(while the water is being poured the minister shall say:)*

We give you thanks, O God, for by the gift of water you give us life. Over the water the Holy Spirit moved in the beginning of creation. Through the waters of the Red Sea you led your people Israel into the land of promise. In the waters of the Jordan, your child Jesus was baptized - anointed by the Holy

Spirit to lead us into everlasting life. Now may your Spirit be upon us and what we do, that this water may be a sign for all of new life in Christ. Amen.

Sacrament of Baptism:
(children are baptized one at a time in alphabetical order)

What is the name of this child?

_____ I baptize you in the name of God; the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, One God, Mother of us all. Amen.
(The child is baptized with water.)

With the sign of the cross, I mark you as Christ's own forever. *(The child is anointed with oil.)*

May the power of the Holy Spirit work within you, that being born of water and the Spirit, you may be a faithful witness of Jesus Christ. *(The ministers lay hands on the child.)*

(The minister presents the child to the congregation while saying:)

In the name of Jesus Christ, the head of the Church, I declare that _____ has now been received into the holy catholic church, of which we are a part. May God keep him/her safe forever.

Baptismal Response (sung by choir)

Closing Prayer and Blessing

(revised—July 2009)



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UNITED CHURCH

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