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Baptism

*“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations,
baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”.*
Matthew 28:19

Welcome! We are so pleased that you are exploring a baptism with us at Huron Shores United Church. The sacrament of baptism honours Jesus’ own baptism, and confirms the person baptized as a member of his body, the church. From the moment we are born we are precious to God. Baptism celebrates being part of the universal community of those who bear the name of Jesus Christ.

What do I need to do?

You apply by contacting the minister. At some point you will need to provide us with the information on the Baptism form, for our records. The minister will meet with you, either in person or electronically. The Council will approve the baptism on the Minister’s recommendation.

Are there requirements?

The only requirements are approval by the Council, and that one parent be baptized, if the candidate for baptism is an infant. If neither parent is baptized, then we can prepare one or both for baptism at the same time as the infant.

Can I have a private baptism?

Since baptism celebrates belonging to a community of faith, we no longer perform private baptisms, except in the case of emergency. The sacrament is conferred during a regular worship service.

What if I don’t go to church regularly?

No problem. We see participation in a community of faith as a blessing – something to be treasured. But we also know that families with small children find it hard to fit everything into their schedule. We hope that you are connected to a community of faith in some way. If not, let’s talk about that.

My partner is atheist/of another faith. Is this OK?

Yes, it is. As long as the non-Christian parent is comfortable and supportive of the baptism being done your own faith is sufficient.

I have no partner; I have a same-sex partner.

We welcome your family just as you are! ALL are welcome in our space.

I want to be baptized myself.

Adult baptism is usually the final step in a fulfilling faith journey. If you are feeling drawn toward exploring your faith with a mentor, and want to express your personal faith through baptism we want to help you on that journey. Please speak to the Minister.

I was baptized in a different denomination. Is that OK?

All Christian denominations baptize using the same words, and so we recognize each other’s baptism. It is about the only rite of the church that we do agree on!

What is confirmation?

Usually, parents will present their child for baptism when the child is very young. At some point, this growing person needs to 'take hold' of their faith on their own, and to confirm it. We do this through a separate ceremony, which is not a sacrament, but which is very important, nonetheless.

What if I don't live in the area?

Many grandparents live in our community and invite their family to return home for baptism. We welcome this connection with 'home.' You might also be a cottager or visitor to the area, who has developed a strong attachment. All are welcome. If you have a home community of faith, we would work with them in the preparations for baptism in Grand Bend.

Can I name godparents?

The United Church of Canada does not have a tradition of godparents, since all of us present will be making promises to support and uphold the candidate for baptism. However, we understand that in other traditions, and perhaps in your family, this is an important part of the ceremony. If you want to invite godparents, we will include them in the service, and ask them to make a promise of support to the candidate.

Can I set the date?

The date is set in consultation with the Minister, with regards to the rhythm of the worship life of the community. That being said, there is a strong likelihood that your preferred date will be the one most appropriate.

How much does it cost?

There is no cost for this sacrament. It is a gift of the church, done by command of Jesus. However, we always appreciate donations towards our upkeep, to keep our community strong for families of the future. An offering is taken up during every worship service, and you may place a donation on the plate as it is passed, or mail or deliver a donation to the church office at any time, or donate through our website.

How long does it take?

The baptism itself will take roughly 10 minutes during a worship service which is between 60-75 minutes long.

I have children attending with me. What do I do with them?

Older children may enjoy joining the children of the congregation in Sunday School. Shy children may want a parent or friend to accompany them. You can slip back into worship at any time. Children are also very welcome to stay with their family for the rest of worship. There is no problem to get up and help a child to relocate or go to the washroom while worship is taking place. We understand that sitting still can be hard on little people. Do not hesitate to help them to be comfortable, even if that means getting up quietly to leave the room.

What about an emergency?

A simple phone call to the Minister will bring her to you at any time of night or day, for baptism or for any need.

*"Our relationship with God and each other strengthens us, and helps make the world a better place.
We welcome and include everyone into congregational life."*