

SOME QUESTIONS FOR YOU TO THINK ABOUT

- 1) What are the reasons that underlie your request for Baptism?
- 2) Are you seeking Baptism as a response to what you know and understand of God and God’s love or out of social or family pressure.
- 3) Do you want you and your children to live in relationship to God in Jesus Christ and to the Church which He called into being?
- 4) Are you now, or do you intend to become involved in the life and worship of the church?
- 5) Will you, with God’s help, be faithful in living the faith you will confess and the promises you will make?

All of the above are offered as a way to open conversation—accept this brochure as an invitation to dialogue. The congregation of The United Church in Meadowood is eager to share with you the joy of Baptism. God’s love is for all people and will, we trust, bring meaning and fulfillment for all people.

CHURCH OFFICE TELEPHONE
256-7002

MINISTERS REV. SHELLY MANLEY-TANNIS
 DEA. RICHARD MANLEY-TANNIS

ADMINISTRATOR ANDREA HURST

Reviewed and approved by the Council of
The United Church in Meadowood
2008



**THE UNITED CHURCH IN MEADOWOOD
BAPTISM INFORMATION**

The congregation of The United Church in Meadowood is pleased that you are thinking of having your child baptized.

As one of two sacraments celebrated by the United Church of Canada, Baptism is a very significant event in the nurture of your child’s spiritual life. It is an equally important event in your parenting vocation, requiring commitment and devotion. Baptism, like marriage, should not be entered into unthinkingly. If your faith and the church play a vital role in your lives, and in your life as a family, then in all likelihood they will be important to your children. The Christian training and spiritual nurture of your children is an exciting adventure.

To help you make this decision, the Council of this congregation has developed this pamphlet. It is designed for three purposes:

- 1) To help you come to be more aware of the meaning of baptism and why it has a central place in the church’s faith and life.
- 2) To make as clear as possible the nature of the commitment you will be asked to make should you decide to participate.
- 3) To inform you of the specific guidelines which have been drawn up regarding preparation and planning before the event.

The United Church in Meadowood Council hopes that with the help of this brochure, Baptism Preparation Class and personal contact with our ministers, you will be better equipped to make your decision. You may decide that you are not ready to make the commitment—that is quite all right. However, if you are ready, then we would like to support you in that decision.



WHAT IS BAPTISM?

Baptism is the celebration by Christians of their belief in the love of God for the people God created. It is an occasion of joy in the church, for it is an acting out once again of the story of the beautiful gift of love which God has bestowed on us and our children. Water is a central element in our celebration of Baptism, symbolizing new life, the birth of creation where God's spirit hovered, and helping us remember that Jesus himself was baptized in the waters of the Jordan River. While some Churches fully immerse baptismal candidates, we pour or sprinkle a small—but visible—amount of water on the child's head.

When children are baptized they are acknowledged as members of God's family, members of the body of Christ. Baptism happens, in the presence of the whole community—adults and children. During baptism promises are made to bring up the child in a Christian home. Baptism marks the formal beginning of the Christian faith journey.

The congregation also promises to help raise the child in the knowledge and understanding of our Lord. It is, therefore, our understanding that the child will attend Church and Sunday School regularly, to enable the congregation to keep these promises.

A REQUEST FOR BAPTISM:

Under the rules of the United Church of Canada, the Council of The United Church in Meadowood (acting on behalf of the congregation) is responsible to oversee the Sacrament of Baptism. The Council's responsibility is to see that parents understand the meaning of Baptism. This is accomplished through the minister, representing the Council, meeting with the parents or persons requesting Baptism. This request would be presented to the Council, which must give final approval for the Baptism.

Baptism is for the children of those parents, one or both of whom, have been baptized or confirmed in a Christian Church. It is our hope that you are or will be involved in the life, work and worship of our Church, so that this involvement may support you in your promise to raise your child in a Christian home.

If you are not a member, preparation for church membership is available to you and we invite you to consider it. If you are a member, but have not been active, please give some thought to renewing your commitment to Christ and the Church. The ministers would be happy to discuss this with you.

WHAT ABOUT PARENTS FROM OUT OF TOWN?

The usual practice is to encourage the parents to have their children baptized in the congregation where they attend church—this is the congregation that must accept responsibility for that child. However, circumstances sometimes warrant the Baptism to be held in this Church. This request would be presented to the Council which must give final approval for the Baptism.

If you do not live in our community or have moved from our community, we would be pleased to write a letter of introduction to a church in your community.

GODPARENTS:

Godparents are not part of the tradition of the United Church. The responsibility of saying special vows with respect to supporting the child and nurturing it in faith is taken on by the congregation. However, parents coming from other church traditions, may wish to have godparents for their children. These arrangements can be made—the meaning given to this will need to be spelled out between parents and godparents. They are welcome to stand with the parents during the Baptism but may not have a special part in the service.

