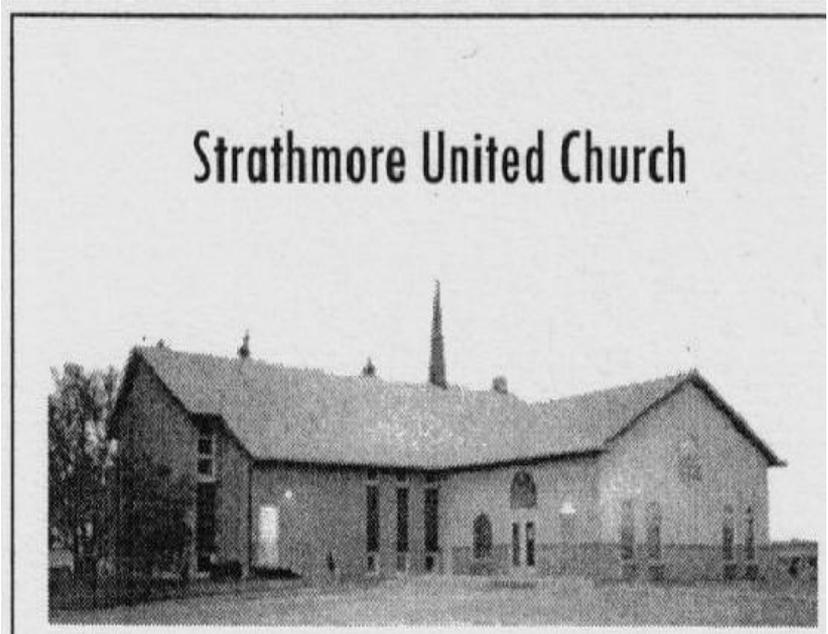


Baptism with Strathmore United Church



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Baptism

Baptism is a symbolic action that signifies the new life God gives us as we join the church community. Baptism uses water as a symbolic cleansing that signifies the acceptance of new life within the church family. The sacrament of baptism is the single rite of initiation into the Christian community, the church.

The United Church offers baptism to all ages. We believe the gift of God's love doesn't depend on our ability to understand it, so we baptize people as infants right up through adulthood.

With children, instruction is given to parents or sponsors to equip them for the child's Christian nurture. During the ceremony, everyone in the congregation pledges support for the child and his or her parents.

Baptism is not a requirement for God's love. We believe people who die without baptism are in no way condemned, lost, or damned. Baptism in the United Church is recognized by all denominations of the Christian church that practice infant baptism. Similarly, if people have already been baptized in another church, the United Church recognizes their baptism and welcomes them as Christians.

Baptism is a very special moment on the journey of faith. It is a moment when God's presence and blessing meets us, and it is a moment when we make our personal commitment of faith to be part of an active Christian community.

*This definition of baptism is copied from:
(<http://www.united-church.ca/beliefs/overview>)*

Some common questions:

Do I have to be a member to have my child baptized at Strathmore United Church?

- No, anyone who wishes to be baptized can request a baptism.

What's the difference between baptism, christening, and confirmation?

- A child under the age of consent may be baptized at the request of his/her parent or guardian. When the child reaches the age of understanding, the child is invited to attend confirmation classes, to confirm his/her beliefs. Previously baptised adults may also request confirmation as an affirmation of their faith, or to enter into membership with the United Church.
- Christening is a ritual at which a child is named.

Does my child become a member of the United Church when he/she is baptized?

- No, membership happens at the time of confirmation when your child has reached the age of consent. An adult who is baptised does become a member of the United Church at the time of baptism.

Can baptisms happen any time? Any place?

- Baptisms are witnessed by a community of faith, and need to happen during a worship service. You may choose *almost* any Sunday that is best for you. Baptisms are **not** normally held during the liturgical seasons of Lent, Advent, or Christmas. These seasons are traditionally times of study and preparation.

Do I need to attend classes or receive special instruction before the baptism?

- Yes, it is important that the adults who care for a child understand the promises they are making on behalf of the child.
- The parent(s) or guardian(s) of a child who will be baptised are asked to meet with the minister to learn about the United Church of Canada, and Strathmore United Church.
- Adults requesting baptism will be asked to attend confirmation classes prior to being baptized.

Do I need to attend worship services?

- You are invited to attend worship services at any time, whether or not you are considering baptism. We do ask that you attend worship prior to the baptism so that we can have a chance to get to know one another.
- Baptism is a ritual which welcomes the one being baptised into the family of God, as experienced through the life and work of this congregation. If you are requesting baptism, but have no intention of participating in the life and work of this congregation, we need to ask: *why are you requesting the baptism?*

What am I committing myself or my child to when I accept baptism?

- You are affirming your Christian faith, as well as essential agreement with the United Church Creed, the Strathmore United Church mission statement and behavioural covenant. These belief statements are included in this brochure.

- The congregation also makes promises to support and nurture the faith of the one being baptized. ***Both the congregation and yourself have a mutual responsibility to honour the promises made to one another at the time of baptism.***

What role do god-parents play in the baptism of a child?

- The god parents make essentially the same promises as do the congregation. The god parents are usually more involved in the daily life of the person being baptised, and thus may have a more direct influence in honouring the covenant. There is no legal relationship as a god parent, though there is a moral relationship.

What does baptism cost?

- Nothing and everything. There is no fee charged for a baptism service. However, the promises that are made either on behalf of a child or for yourself are a lifelong covenant with God. This covenant involves everything that you are and all that you have.

Common misconceptions about baptism:

- To give thanks for the birth of a child. (*baptism is that, but also much more.*)
- To protect children from going to hell if they should die.
- To continue a family tradition. (*this is important only if the form as well as the function is honoured*)

Please bring YOUR questions to the meeting with the minister prior to baptism.

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 in 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. AMEN

Mission Statement for Strathmore United Church

Strathmore United Church exists as a welcoming community of faith, to equip people for Christian Discipleship and to support each other in our faith journey as we go into the world to make a difference for Christ

Behavioural Covenant **of Strathmore United Church**

We, the members of Strathmore United Church Communitate of Faith, as disciples of Christ, covenant to put into practice the following behavioural principles, which are based on the teachings of Jesus Christ:

- We will support and care for one another.
- We will recognize and celebrate the contribution of each member of our church community.
- We pledge to respectfully listen to one another, always keeping in mind that the Holy Spirit works through each and any of us.
- We will honour our commitments in carrying out the life and work of our church.
- We will take ownership of our individual feelings and refrain from being critical or blaming others.
- We will seek to reach consensus as much as possible on significant congregational decisions, but where it is not possible; we will seek to be loyal to the decision of the majority.
- As an inclusive church community, we shall strive to create a safe atmosphere for openly expressing our own opinions, questions and feelings.
- We will promote open, respectful communication in all aspects of the work of our church community.
- In acknowledging that conflict is natural and inevitable, we will strive to deal with differences in the most direct way possible (*as guided by Matthew 18:15-17*)
- In dealing with matters of concern, which are unresolved, we covenant to work through the leadership of the church community in seeking an appropriate solution.

If you would like to be baptized yourself, or if you are requesting that a child in your care be baptized, please complete this information form, and give it to the minister. *(Contact information is on the front page)*

Baptism Form for:	
Requested date of baptism	
Parent or Guardian Names	
Birthplace	
Date of Birth	
Home address	
Home phone	
Email Address	
Maternal grandparents	
Paternal grandparents	
Godparents	
Other	