

## **Sacraments, BAPTISM and COMMUNION**

A sacrament is a symbolic action, or ritual, by which people of faith encounter the presence and goodness of God. In a sacrament, ordinary things like water, bread, and wine are used to point us to God and God's love, reminding us of the sacred in life. In the United Church, we celebrate two sacraments: baptism, the ritual that formally recognized we belong to the Christian community, and communion, a symbolic meal initiated by Jesus. These are of central importance to our faith.

### **BAPTISM**

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.

In the church, we celebrate our gratitude for this new life, the single rite of initiation into the Christian community, the church. A sacrament is a holy act, a ritual of our faith. It says that God's love surrounds us from the moment we're born and continues through the course of our lives.

Baptism takes place during a regular Sunday service. When children are baptized, their parents or godparents make promises before God and the entire congregation to raise them in the Christian faith. Adults seeking baptism make the promises themselves. It's a significant commitment to bring a child to church every Sunday, so during a baptism, the congregation also pledges to support parents and their children, to help with the Christian education of the children.

If you wish to have your child baptised at Gibson Memorial United Church please contact the office for a Baptism form. <mailto:gibsonmemorial@nb.aibn.com>

### **COMMUNION**

The Lord's Supper, Eucharist, Holy Communion—these different terms refer to the same sacrament shared by most Christian denominations, a symbolic meal.

Communion is celebrated at a table that suggests the dining table in our homes. At the communion table, we acknowledge that Jesus Christ is the host and all are guests. The meal uses the symbols of small pieces of bread and a taste of wine or juice to remind us of Jesus' last supper with his followers and of God's enduring love.

The United Church invites all who seek to love Jesus to share in this family meal. For information on the schedule of Communion Sundays please contact the office or check out the calendar.

## **INCLUSIVENESS**

Jesus welcomed everyone, whether they were poor, rich, or just getting by; ill or healthy; self-made or educated; popular or a loner; secure or full of doubts. **Gibson Memorial United Church**, a congregation of The United Church of Canada, prides itself on welcoming everyone the way Jesus did, regardless of age, race, class, gender, orientation, or physical ability.

The church works hard to appreciate people of all ages, from grandparents to newborns. Children aren't viewed as adults-in-waiting, nor are they on display for the amusement of the adults. They're full and welcome participants at the heart of each congregation, bringing ideas and unique talents that can inspire the entire church.