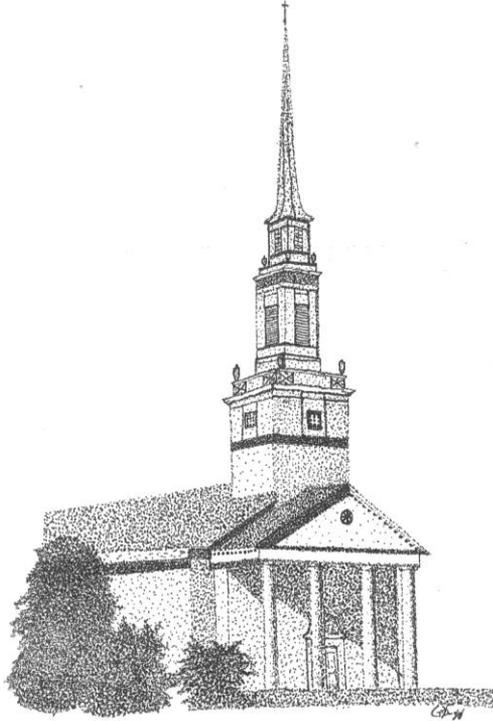


BAPTISM



**TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
CHARLOTTE, NORTH CAROLINA**

This booklet is for parents who wish to have their children receive the sacrament of Baptism at Trinity Presbyterian Church. The following paragraphs include an explanation of the church's understanding of Baptism, the responsibilities of the congregation and of the parents in Baptism, and what the family may expect to happen on the day of the Baptism.

In the Presbyterian Church, Baptism is one of the two actions known as sacraments, believed to be signs of the presence and power of Christ in the Church, and symbols of God's action. In Baptism, Christians receive new life in Christ. As scripture tells us, baptism is an outward and visible sign of the grace (gift) of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Sacraments are always communal. Baptism is appropriately celebrated in a church service, performed in the presence of the congregation. This is a meaningful time for the Trinity family.

Parents of infants/children to be baptized, along with members of the congregation, pledge themselves to surround the child with Christian love and nurture.

The pastor offers statements concerning the meaning of baptism, the responsibility assumed by those desiring baptism for themselves or their children, and the nurture to be undertaken by the church/congregation.

The congregation accepts the baptized child into the fellowship of Christ's holy church, and promises to be present with the family in their Christian journey.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHURCH –

The Presbyterian Church elects members of the congregation to be elders, who serve a term of office on the Session to conduct the business of the church. The Session is responsible for Baptism. Having accepted the pastor's recommendation that a child be baptized, elders participate in the service, instruct parents, and place all baptized persons on the appropriate church membership roll. The Worship Committee assists the pastors and Session in preparing for the Baptism.

Parents may select an elder to represent the Session at the service (or the Pastor will ask the Session to select someone on behalf of the family). Friends or relatives may stand with the family during the baptism (though "God Parent" is not a term traditionally used by the Presbyterian Church.)

Because God's action at Baptism is the central one, Presbyterians believe that Baptism only happens once, and that parents can present their infant children to receive the sacrament. Baptism for adults, teens, and older children is celebrated at Trinity Presbyterian Church. For assistance, please contact one of the pastors for details and instructions.

RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE PARENTS –

By presenting a child for Christian Baptism, parents pledge themselves to join with the church in a responsibility that is both sacred and rewarding.

Parents promise to provide nurture and guidance within the community of faith until the child is ready to make a personal and public profession of faith and assume the responsibility of active church membership.

Ordinarily, one or more of the parents presenting the child for baptism shall be an active member of the church. Exceptions may be made when other close relatives of the child are members of the church: i.e. grandparents, great-grandparents, aunts, or uncles.

Parents will meet with the administering pastor to become familiar with the Baptismal liturgy, to ask any questions they may have of the pastor, and to make sure they are prepared to answer the constitutional questions before the congregation at the time of the Baptism. Once this meeting has been scheduled with the pastor, he (she) will recommend the Baptism to the Session and confirm the date on the church calendar.

ON THE DAY OF BAPTISM -

Parents, baby, and family may gather and wait in the Conference Room or Parlor, or sit in the front pews until the proper point of the service for their participation.

At the appropriate time in the service, the assisting elder will escort the family to the front of the sanctuary (near the Baptismal Font). The pastor will give any necessary instructions on where to stand. The pastor will ask the parents questions of commitment and proceed with the service.

After the pastor has given the child back to the parents, the family may leave the sanctuary following the Choral Response, or stay for the remainder of the service.

Note: Pastors have slightly varying structures and order for baptism. The order of service is always at the discretion of the officiating pastor.

****As with all services at Trinity, there will be no photography during the service. If you would like a video, please call the church office, 704-366-3554, before the service to request that one be made.***