



TRINITY
CHURCH
ABERDEEN

INTRODUCING MEMBERSHIP



WELCOME TO TRINITY ABERDEEN

Welcome to Trinity Church!

We hope you've enjoyed worshipping with us and are glad you're considering becoming a member.

The information that follows will hopefully help you understand the blessing, benefits and responsibilities of membership.

This booklet will also give a brief introduction to the church, her history and beliefs. It's worth saying straight away that agreeing with everything is not a condition for membership! But it does help to be as clear as possible what kind of church you're joining.

Of course if you have any questions please do talk things through with David Gibson (Minister), Will Allan (Assistant Minister), or with any of our Elders (see p.5)

Our aim in all things is ultimately to glorify God and enjoy him forever.

For lots more information about us and for contact details, please visit www.trinityaberdeen.org.uk



LONG STORY SHORT

We're 2000 Years Old

Like all Christian churches we find our roots in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus, and the pouring out of his Spirit at Pentecost. In fact, he had been building his people throughout the Old Testament too, so in reality we're even more than 2000 years old!

We're 500 Years Old

As an evangelical, Reformed church we identify with the rediscovery of biblical worship and teaching in the Reformation of the 16th and 17th centuries. In particular the free grace of God in the gospel and his sovereignty in all things are truths we hold dear. Specifically we are part of the Presbyterian church family.

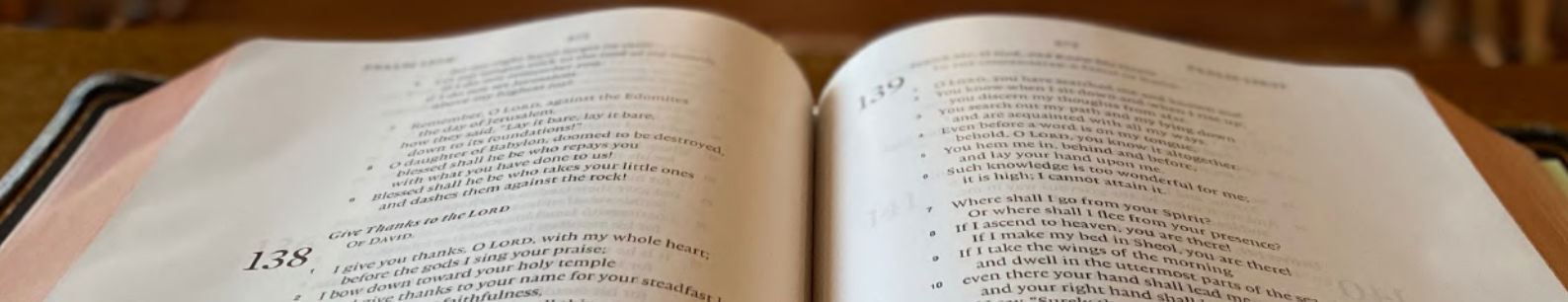
We're 60 Years Old

In the 1950s Francis Schaeffer planted a church in the Alps looking to uphold biblical teaching whilst reaching out to the culture around. This was the beginning of the International Presbyterian Church, our denomination.

We're 10 Years Old

We first met for Sunday worship on 4 December 2011 when a group from a Church of Scotland congregation started Trinity together. We've been renting space since then, but we now own Queen Street church in the city centre (pictured above) with an exciting renovation soon to begin, God willing. So in some ways our story has really only just begun ...

BELIEFS



Trinity Church is a Christian, evangelical church. We hold the Bible as our highest authority, as God's word to us. Everything we believe about God, his world, and how to live in it, comes from our submission to the Lord Jesus as he speaks to us through his word.

We hold to ancient creeds including the Apostles' Creed and Nicene Creed as faithful summaries of the Bible's teaching. Our official doctrinal position is contained in The Westminster Confession of Faith. This is the standard that all Elders subscribe to, we love and teach the truths it contains, but it is not necessary to agree with everything within it to become a member of Trinity.

Holding to the gospel of Jesus Christ as expressed in the Bible means we have good relationships with other evangelical churches in our city and we co-ordinate events together. We hope people from many different church backgrounds feel welcome with us and soon feel at home.

For more information: read The Westminster Confession available on our website: www.trinityaberdeen.org.uk/what

WHAT IS A PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH?



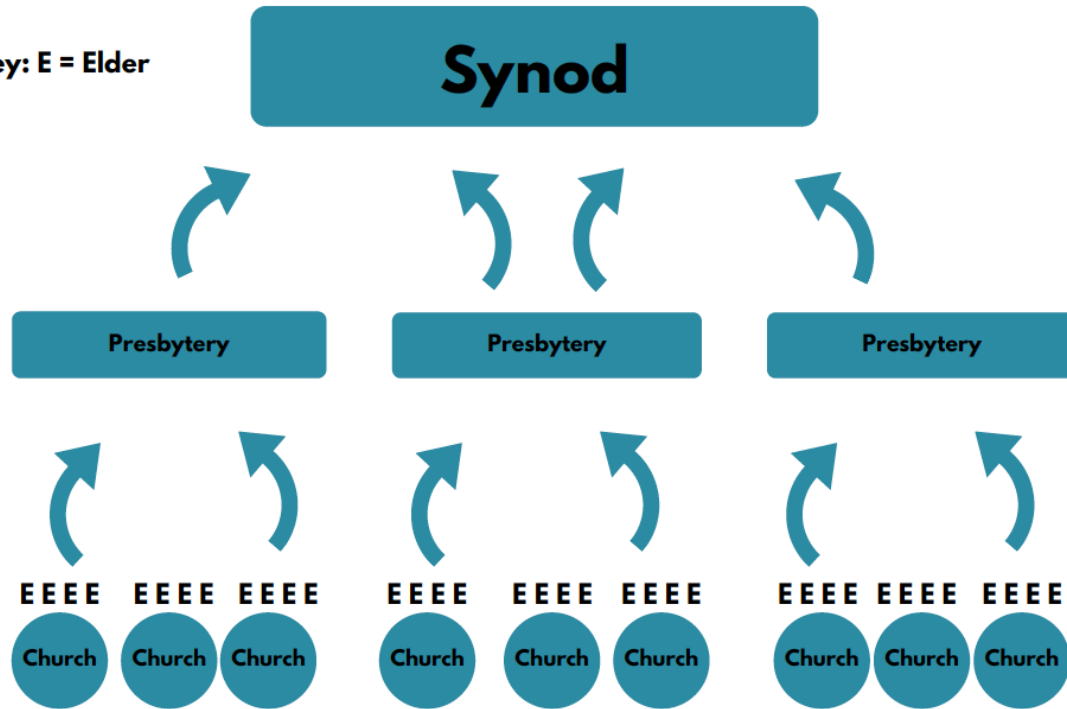
The word 'church' in the Bible can refer to a local congregation (Acts 15:41), to a regional group of churches (Acts 9:31), or the whole people of God (Matt 16:18, Eph 5:23). It is right that our church structures, and therefore our membership, try to reflect this as much as possible in a fallen world.

We also see in the New Testament that churches did not exist independently, but rather submitted to the governance of Elders gathered from a number of congregations (Acts 15). This is what Presbyterian churches seek to do.

'Presbyter' is an English version of the Greek word used in the New Testament for an Elder, and 'presbyterion' is the Greek word for a council of these Elders, used for example in 1 Timothy 4:14. So each congregation will have its own Elders, but four times a year these Elders gather at Presbytery for accountability, fellowship and dealing with any present concerns or future plans for the church. Once a year, our separate Presbyteries meet together for Synod. In essence, then, a Presbyterian church simply means an Elder-led church. Our Ministers usually lead our worship but all our Elders lead our church life.

Key Passage: Acts 15

Key: E = Elder



TRINITY'S ELDERS



Rev. David Gibson
david@trinityaberdeen.org.uk



Simon Barker
simon@trinityaberdeen.org.uk



Lawrie Fairns
lawrie@trinityaberdeen.org.uk



Rev. William Allan
william@trinityaberdeen.org.uk



David Macleod
davidwm@trinityaberdeen.org.uk

Church Office:
Trinity Church
10 Urquhart Road
Aberdeen
AB24 5LL
info@trinityaberdeen.org.uk

For more information see: www.trinityaberdeen.org.uk/who



International Presbyterian Church

The International Presbyterian Church (IPC) was set up in 1954 and now has congregations across the UK, Europe and Asia.

For more information visit:
ipc.church

IPC Vision Statement

“

To glorify the Triune God by planting and establishing churches throughout the world, which proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord, trust the whole Bible to be God's word, affirm the Christian Creeds, and hold the Reformed Confessions.

”

For more information visit: ipc.church

UK CHURCH MAP





WHAT IS MEMBERSHIP?

All Christians are by definition members of Christ's body, the church. As soon as God works in us so that we come to Jesus for forgiveness we're united to him and so adopted into his family.

But this spiritual reality needs to find its outworking in a specific congregation. As believers we have the privilege and responsibility of serving Christ in and through his church (Eph 4:16).

Elders are given responsibility under Christ to care for his church, and will one day have to give account for how they have shepherded the flock (Heb 13:17). They therefore need to know for whom they are specifically responsible. Equally, Christians are told to submit to their leaders: but which leaders?

Church membership enables us to answer both these questions. It is a formal recognition that we are committed to, under the care of, and in submission to, this particular church.

Key Passages: Hebrews 13:17; 1 Peter 5; Ephesians 4



WHO CAN BECOME A MEMBER?

It is important to say that the door to membership has the same dimensions as the door to salvation. In other words, if you belong to the Lord Jesus you can belong to us. This means that the membership process is not aiming to add anything to what Jesus requires of all his followers but simply formalise it.

Therefore to become a member:

Firstly, you need to be a Christian. This means you are able to say you have committed your life to Jesus Christ and seek to live your life following him.

Secondly, you need to have received Christian baptism as a child or an adult.

The following page outlines the eight statements which are asked of those wishing to join Trinity Church - confirming their faith and committing to worship with, love and serve this local congregation. These statements simply seek to make clear what it means to be a Christian in a local church: the intention is that any follower of Jesus Christ should be able to affirm them.

It is normally the case that you would not be a member of two churches at the same time.

A close-up photograph of a woman with dark hair smiling warmly, with a young child's face partially visible next to her.

MEMBERSHIP VOWS

- 1 I know that God exists as a personal God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit and acknowledge that Jesus Christ was God in the flesh.
- 2 I acknowledge that I am a sinner, not only in thought, word and deed, but in my very nature; thus if God were to judge me as I deserve he would have to condemn me.
- 3 I know that when Jesus Christ died on the cross, he paid the penalty for my sin and did everything necessary to make me right with God.
- 4 I know God's promise that 'he who believes on the Son has eternal life' and have personally repented of my sin and trusted Christ as my Saviour, so that I can say without presumption that I am a child of God.
- 5 I intend to serve Christ and to make him Lord over every area of my life, realising that this may be costly and that I will need to depend daily on God's strength.
- 6 I recognise the authority of the Elders of this congregation of the IPC and I am willing to accept their discipline, if that should ever be necessary.
- 7 I promise to support this church by prayer, giving, and caring practically for individuals.
- 8 I commit myself to fostering healthy relationships in this congregation, recognising that this includes stifling of gossip and expressing any criticism in a positive and humble way to the person concerned.



HOW DO I BECOME A MEMBER?

Normally people become members through one of three ways:

By public profession of faith

For those who have previously been baptised as an infant but have never made a public declaration of their faith before, or for those who have never been members of any church before. This is a great way to encourage the rest of the church family.

By baptism

If you have never been baptised, this is the way to recognise what God has done in your life.

By transfer of membership

Where someone has previously been baptised and a member of another church, the Elders will welcome you into membership on the basis of your profession of faith.

All three of the above normally take place in a Sunday service and involve being asked some straightforward questions (similar to the vows on the previous page).



FAQ

What about my children?

Children of one or more believing parent are included within Christ's church on the basis of covenant promise (Psalm 103:17-18; Acts 2:39), and are disciplined from their first breath (Psalm 22:9-10). We recognise this with baptism, but children remain 'non-communing' members until they are able to give their own profession of faith (non-communing means that they do not take the Lord's Supper.) The age at which a child can make this profession of faith will vary from individual to individual and so is a matter of discussion between the parents and elders. No one may vote in members' meetings until the age of 18.

What specifically do members do?

Members commit to the church as they seek to faithfully fulfil their vows (p.9). They vote in members' meetings on any issue put to them by the Elders. In particular, the appointment of any new Elder or Deacon needs to be received by a vote of the members.

What do I do next?

If you're interested in becoming a member, please talk to one of the Elders who will let you know the next steps.

It will help if you read as much as you can of the 'For more information' and 'Key Bible Passage' recommendations in the previous pages.