

# Trinity UMC Preschool

## Parent Handbook



2019-2020

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## A Letter From Our Pastor, Jimmy Howard

Hello! My name is Jimmy Howard and I am the pastor of Trinity United Methodist Church. Trinity is a faith community; and, we make it our mission to express unconditional love as modeled by Jesus Christ. It is our desire to express this love to everyone who comes to our campus. It is our quest to assist all persons in glorifying God with their lives so that they might enjoy God forever.

I believe that it is vitally important to assist children with formation of their spiritual growth so that they might gain the crucial understanding that God loves the world. Furthermore, children were given special mention by Christ himself. Jesus told his disciples that whoever welcomes a child, also welcomes him (Matthew 18:5).

Finally, I would like to express my deepest and most heartfelt invitation for the parents, extended families and caregivers of our preschool children to please join us in our worship experiences and all other activities as well. We are a committed resource for serving families within our community and beyond. We are deeply honored for you and your child to become part of the Trinity family.

Jimmy Howard

*Pastor of Trinity UMC*

## **A Letter From Our Interim Director, Shelly Black**

Thank you for joining our family here at Trinity UMC Preschool! It is our pleasure to serve the community with the provision of high-quality early childhood education in a safe, warm, nurturing environment.

Trinity UMC Preschool – originally Trinity Playschool, was founded in 1980 by Claudia Myers. It is her strong belief that not only do our parents and our children truly become part of our family, but also that *“Play is the Work of a Child.”*

It is with that in mind that we ensure our classes include dramatic play, reading, art, and open-ended activities, that allow our children to develop in an engaging format that will create life-long learners.

Parents are always welcome as we are partners in caring for your children. We invite you to share ideas, give feedback, and get involved through volunteerism and participation in school events. Family potlucks, community celebrations, and fundraising involvement are just a few ways in which families can contribute.

It is my sincere hope that your experience at Trinity UMC Preschool will be as rewarding to you and your family as it has been for countless other families including my own.

Shelly Black

*Interim Director of Trinity UMC Preschool*

For more information please call the Preschool Office at 704-399-1684 ext. 23

Website: [www.TrinityUMCPreschool.com](http://www.TrinityUMCPreschool.com)

Office Hours: Mon-Fri 8:30 am – 2:30 pm

Contact Shelly Black Directly at 704-533-2234 or email

[shelly@trinityumcofcharlotte.com](mailto:shelly@trinityumcofcharlotte.com)

# **Our Mission**

## **The Purpose & Mission of Trinity UMC - “FEED MY SHEEP”**

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“Jesus has called upon His disciples to take over the feeding and shepherding of His sheep. Through the ministries at Trinity United Methodist Church, Jesus will find the lost, minister to all and send the renewed out into the world.”

## **The Mission Statement & Philosophy of Trinity UMC Preschool**

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### **Our Mission**

At Trinity UMC Preschool, we offer a high-quality preschool education for all children 6 months-5 years old primarily through child-led curriculum and open-ended play in a safe and nurturing environment. With Christ always at the center of our teachings, we strive to help our students and their families develop a deep and meaningful relationship with Christ.

### **Our Philosophy**

We believe that play is the work of a child, therefore we strive to help our children grow naturally, giving them opportunities to help them develop socially, emotionally, and physically, at his or her own rate, through self-discovery and exploration.

We offer our students open-ended materials with limitless possibilities such as paint, wet sand, modeling clay, and blocks. With these and various other natural objects for imaginative play, children explore ideas and concepts, improve problem-solving abilities, and develop both social and emotional intelligence – all in a low-stress environment where there is no fear of making mistakes. Our teachers create lesson plans and curriculum based on each child’s individual abilities and interests, which help to keep our students engaged and eager to learn more.

Our goal is to reach as many children in our community as possible to share God’s love with them. Through the Claudia Myers Scholarship Program, we are now able to reach out to those in our community who would otherwise be unable to send their children to a high-quality preschool program. Preschool should not be seen as a privilege only available to a select few, but as an important part of a child’s educational journey that will help put them on the right path to success throughout their lifetime.

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# Trinity UMC Preschool Registration & Tuition Fees

**Registration Fee** – (non-refundable) to cover insurance, start up supplies, etc.

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- A. First child enrolled from a family - \$75.00
- B. Second child in family - \$25.00
- C. Additional children - \$15.00
- D. Registration Fee must be paid at the time of registration.
- E. Space will be reserved for your child when we have received the completed application form and registration fee.

## **Monthly Fees for Children whose birthday falls after August 31, 2018**

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- A. \$80.00 per month for one day per week program
- B. \$155.00 per month for two day per week program
- C. \$225.00 per month for three day per week program
- D. \$290.00 per month for four day per week program
- E. \$365.00 per month for five day per week program

## **Monthly Fees for Children who are One and Two Year Olds by August 31, 2019**

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- A. \$75.00 per month for one day per week program
- B. \$145.00 per month for two day per week program
- C. \$215.00 per month for three day per week program
- D. \$285.00 per month for four day per week program
- E. \$360.00 per month for five day per week program

## **Monthly Fees for Children who are Three and Four Year Olds by August 31, 2019**

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- A. \$135.00 per month for two day per week program
- B. \$200.00 per month for three day per week program
- C. \$265.00 per month for four day per week program
- D. \$310.00 per month for five day per week program

## **Monthly Fees for Children in Transitional Kindergarten**

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- A. \$310.00 per month for five day per week program

# Trinity UMC Preschool Policies & Procedures

## Payment of Tuition

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- A. Monthly tuition payments will be due on the first day of each month.
- B. If monthly tuition is not paid by the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month, a \$10.00 late fee will be charged.
- C. Preschool tuition is based on a yearly tuition, which is divided into monthly payments. To keep your child's space, monthly payments must be made, irrespective of the actual days your child attends.
- D. Any accounts delinquent for more than 30 days must be referred to the Preschool Director and the Trinity UMC Preschool Board.
- E. Checks should be made payable to Trinity UMC Preschool, with the **CHILD'S NAME NOTED ON THE CHECK MEMO LINE.**
- F. There is a \$15.00 fee for returned checks.
- G. We accept cash, checks, or credit cards.
- H. Payments are received and processed by our Accounts Receivables Coordinator. All payments should be left in the drop box in the main lobby and should not be given to any other Preschool staff member.

## Drop-In Day

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We do offer drop-in days, if space is available in your child's classroom. If you would like your child to attend school on a day they aren't scheduled, please first check with the Director to confirm that space is available. If space is available, please fill out the proper Drop-In Day Form and place it along with your payment in the payment drop box found in the main lobby. The cost is \$25 per day.

## Sibling Discount

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Siblings of children attending preschool will receive a \$5 discount for each day of the week he or she is enrolled. The discount is taken off the tuition of the child who attends the fewest days of the week.

## Claudia Myers Scholarship Fund

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Trinity UMC Preschool sets aside limited funds each school year to assist families who have established financial need. These funds are specifically designated for families who have circumstances that would prevent their child from attending school without financial assistance. Requests for scholarship assistance will be reviewed by the Preschool Board and held in the strictest of confidence. For further information about scholarship assistance, please speak with the Director.

## Hours & Days of Operation

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Trinity UMC Preschool begins the school year in September and runs through most of May. Within our nine months of operation, the preschool calendar is very similar to the Charlotte Mecklenburg School year calendar. You will find our calendar at the end of this handbook.

**Our school day runs from 9:00am until 12:30pm for all classes each day. Children will bring lunch and snack to eat at school daily.**

- A. The first day of Preschool will be the day after Labor Day (September 3<sup>rd</sup>).
- B. The last day of Preschool will be the Thursday before Memorial Day (May 21<sup>st</sup>).
- C. End of the Year Programs will be during the last week of Preschool.
- D. We are open Monday through Friday 9:00 AM until 12:30 PM.
- E. **Children are not to enter the classrooms before 8:55 AM** (teachers are using the time prior to this to make final preparations for your child to have a successful day).
- F. Be prompt picking your child up at the appropriate hour.

## Summer Adventure Camp

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- A. Our Summer Adventure Camp is made up of a total of eight weeks.
- B. There is a \$30.00 Registration fee per child.
- C. Tuition Fees for Summer:
  - a. Two days per week - \$40.00 per week
  - b. Three days per week -\$60.00 per week
- D. Classes are available Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.
- E. Children must be two years old by June 1<sup>st</sup> through rising 6<sup>th</sup> graders.
- F. No sibling discounts will be given during the summer.
- G. Drop-In days for the summer will be \$25.00 per day.

## Vacation, Illness, and Withdrawal

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- A. If your child is absent from school due to a vacation or illness, these days cannot be substituted, made-up, or refunded.
- B. If a child is withdrawn from school, a one-month notice is required. If you are due a refund of tuition, notice of withdrawal must be made in writing.

## Inclement Weather

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The primary concern when inclement weather strikes is the safety of students, parents and staff. In the event of inclement weather, parents will be notified via email and Facebook (Trinity UMC Preschool public page) for all delays and closings. Although we do take into consideration the decision of other local schools, we do reserve the right to operate on our own accord. If no



announcement of delay or cancellation of school is heard, you should assume school is scheduled as normal.

If, during the regular Preschool hours, snow or ice begins to form, please come immediately. Do not let the roads get bad while waiting for an announcement from Trinity UMC Preschool or other area schools.

Days missed because of inclement weather will not be made up.

## Communication

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### Newsletters

We love to include our families in regular school-wide events and activities. To help keep you abreast of these events and important dates, you will receive a monthly newsletter from the Director via email at the beginning of each month. It will be sent to the email you provided on your application form. It will also be posted on the bulletin board outside the Director's Office and on our website at: <http://www.TrinityUMCPreschool.com>

You will also receive a monthly newsletter from your child's teacher. This will include important information about the curriculum and lesson plans for that month and wonderful talking points for you and your child about what they are learning.

### SchoolVine

We also use a system called SchoolVine to communicate with our parents. We will be sending important information from the administration, updates from your teacher, and personal communications with pictures of your child's day.

### Conferences

Please remember that the teacher's first responsibility is to the children. Arrival and dismissal times are not good times for serious conferences. The Director or Teachers will be more than happy to setup a time outside of school hours for a personal conference. If our staff feels the need for a conference, the Director or your child's teacher will reach out to make an appointment with you directly.

### Parent Concerns

We have an open-door policy where parents are encouraged to stop by and openly discuss issues or concerns. Please remember, while your child is at Trinity UMC Preschool, that any and all questions concerning your child's safety or well-being will be taken very seriously by our staff. **As a general rule, we ask that you discuss your concerns with the teacher first.** If this does not seem to help, then contact the Director and arrange for a joint conference with the teacher and the Director.

## Birthdays

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We welcome you to celebrate your child's birthday at school. This is a special time for him/her. Beginning this school year, the preschool staff asks that **all birthdays be celebrated without food**. Our program includes many children who have special dietary needs or food allergies. With this in mind, we ask that you celebrate your child's birthday in the classroom in a more creative way. Here are some suggestions: bring in a favorite story to read, a game to play, an art experience for children to enjoy, or bubbles for blowing. Children may also bring a non-food goodie bag to give his/her friends.

Each year we will celebrate special days/holidays with the children. We ask for a Parent Coordinator in each classroom, along with other volunteers, to organize these "parties" for the classroom. You may sign up to help with a party in your child's classroom at the beginning of the school year.

It is a policy of the school that **no birthday invitations** may be handed out for private parties, unless each child in the class is being invited.

## Clothing & Personal Belongings

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- A. Each child should bring a complete change of clothing (shirt, pants, underwear, and socks) to be left at school. These items should be placed in a large zip lock bag and marked clearly with your child's name. Each item of clothing should also have your child's name inside.
- B. Clothing should be durable and allow children freedom of movement.
- C. We also require children to wear tennis shoes to school each day for safety reasons. Open-toed shoes, crocs, jellies, patent leather shoes, and cowboy boots are not good choices for school. We ask that these shoes not be worn to school.
- D. Please dress your child to enjoy outdoor weather. We go outside each day (weather permitting), even in the winter months.
- E. **Children's personal toys should not be brought to school**, with the exception of Show and Tell days or "comfort toys" that will help your younger child feel more secure.

## Lunches

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- A. Children will eat lunch with their teacher and classmates each day.
- B. Attention is given to teaching children about healthy food choices and, to that end, parents are encouraged to pack healthy snacks/lunches. If you need suggestions on what to pack your child for lunch, please talk to a member of our staff.
- C. Please be aware that the teacher will not be able to leave the class to microwave a meal or retrieve it from a refrigerator. Plan to pack hot/cold meals accordingly.

## Potty Training

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- A. It is our policy to work closely with parents during potty training and use the same methods that you use at home.
- B. Children will never be held back in an age level because they have not been potty trained.
- C. Please keep in mind that while a child may do quite well at home, it may take longer to be accident free in a classroom setting.
- D. While we do know that occasional accidents are part of potty training, children are required to wear pull ups to class as long as they are having accidents 25% of the days that they attend. We feel that this requirement will not make a child regress in the potty-training process if it is handled correctly.

## Discipline

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At Trinity UMC Preschool, we use positive guidance methods in order to help children learn self-control and self-direction without loss of self-esteem. Teachers encourage children to use words to solve problems with others and find a balanced schedule of activities suited to each child's development. Our teachers use a variety of methods to encourage children's cooperation, including the clear statement of limits in positive terms, redirection, choices between acceptable behaviors, and positive reinforcement through praise and encouragement of good behavior. Teachers work closely with parents to understand each child and to determine which methods work best for him or her.

## Health & Safety

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The health and safety of the children in our care is always our top priority. All doors into the building are locked during school hours. The main entrance will be unlocked for parents during arrival from 8:55am-9:10am. The main entrance will also be unlocked during dismissal from 12:25pm-12:40pm. If you arrive to drop-off or pick-up your child outside of those times, please ring the doorbell found to the left of the door.

### Arrival

Please be considerate of teachers and children by having your child at school promptly by 9:00am. Many teachers begin the school day with a group time. Late arrival means a disruption of this important activity.

As we begin our school year, we ask that parents separate from children at the door to their classroom. This makes for a shorter and easier adjustment period for all. Teachers will be at the door to greet you and your child. After children adjust to their new environment, parents are welcome into the classroom at any time.

**After seeing your child into his or her classroom, please sign your child in at the classroom door.** We ask that you leave an accurate number where you can be reached that day.

## **Dismissal**

We are finished with our planned activities at 12:30pm each day. Each child must be signed out daily. **If someone other than the parent is to pick up a child, we must receive notification from the parent of that child. This notification should be in writing.** Teachers will provide paper and pencil on top of cubbies for your convenience. Any person picking up your child should be listed on your child's application as having your permission to do so. To ensure each child's safety, only those persons listed on your child's application as having permission to pick up your child will be allowed to take your child unless other notification is given to the Director or Assistant Director. Again, this notification must be from the child's parent. Parents should inform any person picking up a child that we will ask for identification if needed.

If you arrive early to pick up your child, please knock on the classroom door and let the teacher bring your child to you. Teachers are better able to keep the attention of the group in this way. We ask that parents please be prompt picking up children from school.

We understand that occasionally an emergency situation may arise that will prevent a parent from reaching the school by pick up time. Please call the Preschool Office in the event of an emergency. The Director or Assistant Director will need to pass information along to teachers and reassure your child.

For non-emergency situations, parents should be aware that there is a policy regarding late pick up of children. This policy states that parents will receive a verbal reminder the first time they are late. There will be a charge of \$5.00 for late pick up on the second and third offenses. The late pick up fee increases to \$25.00 beginning with the fourth offense. There is a 10-minute grace period in place; no parent will be charged if a child is picked up by 12:40pm.

## **Illness**

Please help us keep a healthy classroom environment for children and teachers by **consistently and conscientiously** observing the following guidelines:

- A. Your child must be free from fever, vomiting, diarrhea or rash for 24 hours before returning to school.
- B. Your child should be kept at home if he or she has a cold with a frequently running nose and/or persistent coughing or sneezing that may be communicated to other children and/or interferes with normal play.
- C. Any child with pink eye or red eyes with drainage should be kept at home until eyes are clear and free of drainage.
- D. If your child is behaving in any way that would indicate to you that he/she is not feeling well (lethargic/unusually tired), it is in the best interest of the other children and teachers to keep him/her at home for the day.

If your child should become sick or be injured at school, a parent will be contacted to pick him or her up immediately. For this reason, it is very important that parents sign in each day and

leave an accurate number for these emergencies. If we are unable to contact either parent, we will call the persons listed on your child's application as emergency contacts.

If your child becomes sick with a contagious disease (chicken pox, pink eye, etc.), please notify the Director so we, in turn, can notify parents of children exposed.

If your child is absent from school for two consecutive days, we would appreciate notification to the Preschool Office. The Director or Assistant Director will pass on information to your child's teachers.

Classroom teachers are not allowed to administer medication at school. If you have an extreme circumstance requiring your child to need medication while at school, please notify the Director. Trinity UMC Preschool has a process in place requiring completion and submission of specific forms and authorization from both parents and the child's physician for medication to be given at school. If your child is taking medication that alters his or her behavior, please make sure teachers are aware of these changes.

For the safety and well-being of all children, the Preschool Board reserves the right to remove a child from the program for actions considered dangerous. The staff will be glad to assist you in finding a more appropriate environment for your child.