

A Vision for Trinity

Goals for Mission & Ministry



Trinity

Presbyterian
Church (U.S.A.)

Establishing A Vision for Trinity

To say that Trinity Presbyterian has been through a challenging past few years would be an understatement. From its genesis in 2015 as a result of several congregations deciding to leave the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the resulting institutional and interpersonal challenges that ensued, to the need to find a stable home facility, Trinity is no stranger to tough decision making. Thankfully, God has been, and continues to be, faithful to this community. Now, having found a level of stability, Trinity has begun a formal process of discerning God's call upon our community in the coming years. We know that it is not our job to plan our future; rather, it is our joyful duty to listen to the plan God is already working among us.

We also know that God's voice comes to us in a myriad of ways. It is not just those who are labeled "leaders" who hear God's leading, but each individual in our community who is part of that call. With that in mind, we have been striving to embrace a wholistic and transparent process of discernment, allowing ourselves to be led by God however that may come.

We began a strategic planning process in the Fall of 2017, holding about a dozen small-group listening sessions. These gatherings, held in homes and at the church, provided a venue for over 100 of our Trinity family to gather together, share in food and fellowship, and share their dreams and visions of the next few years. Those that could not attend were invited to share their responses through an online form or written comments.

The feedback from these groups formed the core material that guided our Session in a series of visioning sessions in the Spring of 2018. These times together allowed our Elders time to prayerfully reflect on the feedback from the congregation, responses from our committees, and our own discernment. Out of these times together, our Session wrote and revised a number of goals for our various mission and ministry areas. These were refined by our committees, and now make up the bulk of the document that follows.

It is our hope to use this document as a guidepost for the next 3-5 years, helping us prioritize our efforts in ministry and mission. These goals represent our belief that God has called Trinity to a rich and abundant ministry in Springfield and beyond.

Commended to Trinity Presbyterian Church by the Session

August, 2018

Highlighting the Vision

A Snapshot of Our Goals for Ministry

Worship

We will continue developing worship services that express the diversity and uniqueness of our congregation. We are devoted to making our services more accessible and intergenerational so that all may fully participate in the worship life of our congregation. At Trinity, we worship.

Mission

Trinity is a community dedicated to Mission, and we will continue to build relationships that allow us to share the love of Christ locally, nationally, and internationally. We are dedicated to increasing our congregational commitment to mission, both in finances and volunteer service. At Trinity, we serve.

Connection

Developing strong relationships is a consistent element of many of our goals; whether that be between members of our congregation as we welcome visitors and newer members, between Trinity and mission programs, or as part of our connection to the broader church. At Trinity, we are connected.

Stability

We are devoted to developing Trinity as a community that not only is strong today, but for generations to come. Many of our goals are focused on strength and stability in the way we live our common life together, from making sure our finances are secure to developing transparent and open methods of making decisions together. At Trinity, we are looking to the future.

Goals for Specific Areas of Mission and Ministry

Welcome & Fellowship

- Develop a more robust program to connect with visitors and provide opportunities for them to get connected with the Trinity community.
- Develop a more robust program to connect our newer members with opportunities within the community; expand and formalize our Shepherding Program.
- Develop a wider range of fellowship opportunities for the congregation, offering more variety in type, location, and timing.

Worship & Music

- Be intentional about creating and maintaining an adaptive and accessible worship service so all of God's children may participate fully in the worship of God. Utilize technology and physical space to support this goal (ie use of screens, hearing assistive devices, mobility assistance).
- Structure worship services that incorporate elements (ie music, liturgy, art) that give witness to the diversity of the people of God.
- Develop practices that support strong communication and collaboration in the planning and structuring of worship. Explore effective methods of communicating information about worship (themes, topics, etc) with the broader community.

Christian Education & Faith Formation

- Strengthen Adult Education & Formation activities by providing more variety in type, location, timing, and leadership.
- Balance personnel resources (paid and volunteer) to ensure we are providing the highest quality program while being good stewards of our financial resources. Explore recruiting additional volunteer leaders to bring diversity and depth to CE & FF leadership.

Communications

- Develop regular listening sessions for both Deacons & Session so members of the congregation may share suggestions or concerns more easily. Provide for a designated time during regular meetings to hear a report on that month's listening session.
- Develop & implement a communication and training plan for CCB. Establish goals for when certain elements of CCB will be introduced to which groups.
- Develop a plan to ensure our website and social media are up to date and are an accurate reflection of the Trinity community, tell the Trinity story.

Finance

- Establish clear policies and procedures around best practices. Ensure written policy and weekly practice are in alignment.
- Develop a plan for the triennial transition to a new Treasurer. Explore the possibility of an Assistant Treasurer, both for transition and depth of knowledge purposes.
- Establish policies and procedures to enable and encourage additional methods of financial support (online giving, planned giving, gifts of stocks/bonds, etc.).
- Implementation of an integrated church information, documentation, and financial management software platform that will accommodate present needs as well as future expansion.

Personnel

- Develop a plan to ensure all personnel (paid and volunteer) are informed of relevant policies and procedures and are in compliance with any necessary training or screening. Coordinate these efforts with the Risk Management Task Force.
- Establish a plan to routinely evaluate the personnel needs of the congregation and provide guidance to the Session on what needs may be best met by volunteers and in what cases we may be best served by paid staff.
- Further develop our procedures for routinely evaluating our paid staff, including shared staff, for adequacy of performance and compensation.

Generosity & Engagement

- Develop year-round programming to help foster the spiritual gift of generosity in the congregation. Establish a plan for clearly communicating the impact of generosity in the congregation and broader community.
- Develop additional options for the congregation to provide financial support (online giving, planned giving, gifts of stock/bonds, etc) and plan educational events & materials to help inform the congregation about these options.
- Develop a plan to increase engagement and volunteerism in the congregation: clear communication of opportunities, process for connecting individuals with opportunities, and methods of followup and coordination.

Mission & Public Witness

- Establish a plan to routinely communicate the work of the committee with the congregation, including both what we have done and what we are working toward, especially opportunities to get involved.
- Establish a primary Mission Focus Area for the congregation. Develop a plan to direct a majority of M&PW resources (funds & volunteers) to agencies, projects, and programs that are in alignment with the Mission Focus Area.
- Develop a program to encourage consistent engagement in the work of Mission by members of the congregation. Coordinate this work with the Generosity & Engagement committee.

Congregational Care & Deacons

- Further develop and improve coordination between the Congregational Care Committee and Deacons & their Deacon Groups. Establish clear areas of responsibility and procedures for what care is provided when and by whom.
- Strengthen relationships between church officers and the congregation before serious or critical pastoral situations arise. Explore the possibility of sending cards or notes at some frequency or developing a pen-pal program for youth and young adults.
- Establish expectations for the long-term development and growth of the Deacon Group program.
- Explore the opportunities for further involving youth in care through a Youth Deacon.

Trustees and Building & Grounds

- Determine the future facility needs of Trinity.
- Develop a plan for meeting those needs: short, middle, and long term.
- Develop a plan for meeting the financial burden of facility needs in a way that is sustainable and in keeping with the vision and ethos of Trinity.

Statements of Trinity

The following statements help provide one view into the personality, mission, and direction of the Trinity family. They were written in the beginning days of our congregation and continue to serve as guideposts to who we are and what we believe. They are included here for reference.

Mission Statement

Welcoming you to share the joy of Christ

Vision Statement

We gratefully accept the responsibility to share the love of Christ. Through thoughtful worship, learning, and fellowship, we nourish minds and hearts. Always open to hearing the word of God in fresh ways, we joyfully wrestle with the challenges of what God calls us to become.

Core Value Statements

We share the gifts that God has given us to respond to needs of our congregation and community.

We welcome and respect all people—including those of all gender identities, sexual orientations, ethnicities, and financial situations—to worship, serve, and fellowship together.

We encourage questions and discussion that cultivate lifelong learning.

We seek to serve Christ in our daily tasks, and to live holy and joyful lives.

We affirm that human knowledge and the teachings of Christ are not mutually exclusive.

We are called to be responsible stewards of God's creation.

Core Belief Statements

All humans are created equal in God's eyes. We're serious. Everyone is welcome.

God loves everyone, and so do we! We are all imperfect, and God still loves us. Getting to heaven isn't earned. It's a gift given to all of us because Christ died on the cross.

In gratitude for that gift, we accept responsibility for a life of evangelism.

Evangelism...the "E" word... We live to share Christ's love with everyone without requiring they be like us or fit a certain mold. Presbyterians recognize Christians are called to share the good news of Jesus Christ. Just as Jesus cared for the whole person, we share God's love in Christ through many activities. Among these are:

Feeding the hungry

Working for justice

Supporting education

Providing ministries of healing

Nurturing relationships

The church is a faith community of people, not a building, a place, or a pastor. God calls us, men and women alike, to leadership and ministry. Our members and pastors share these roles in every aspect of the life of the church.

Our congregation is strengthened by new voices and connections. Relationships and conversations with each other inspire us to be more compassionate, forgiving, and faithful people.

We celebrate two sacraments – baptism and communion. We recognize baptism from any Christian church. Everyone is welcome at the communion table.

Just as we each have multiple roles in our lives, so, too, does God. As the Father, God guides us to care for others and for the world. As the Son, God gives us grace, which we accept and share. As the Holy Spirit, God comforts, strengthens, and inspires us – sometimes in ways we cannot even understand.

The Bible is the inspired word of God, written by people in their time and in their tongue. While we do not believe it to be literal or inerrant, we see timeless truth in its stories and wisdom in its teachings. We must work hard to study and interpret this divine and unique guide for our lives in the world today.

We know we will struggle with our beliefs and our relationship with God, and believe struggle can strengthen those very things.

Predestination is good news! God has a plan for the world, and it's a plan of love!