

TRINITY MINISTRY ACTION PLAN

At the March Church Council meeting, Pastor Tracey presented a Ministry Action Plan for Trinity.

An abbreviated form of that plan is printed below. It was developed in response to:

- Our church consultant report
- Conversations and recommendations from the Trinity Vision Team
- Conversations and recommendations from members who studied Lasting Impact: 7 Powerful Conversations That Will Help Your Church Grow.

One of the most significant conversations to take place in the Lasting Impact class was the recognition that, all across America, people are attending church less frequently. Although Trinity has received 21 new members (including six confirmands) since July, 2014, churches today need to experience far greater growth in order to increase overall attendance and participation.

WISE USE OF RESOURCES

It is especially important for a congregation of our size to make good use of our limited resources – people, property, time, energy, talents and dollars – by focusing on our mission and vision. It is not wise for us to expend more energy, time or money than is needed for that which is not essential to the work of the Church, i.e. achieving its mission and vision.

We need to be wise stewards of our property and facilities; to manage and design them for maximum ministry effectiveness. Research reveals that relationship matters more than any factor today in church growth. We have taken some wise “first steps.”

- We have seen a significant increase in young families with our new children’s ministry area. We need to also have an awesome youth space. Money is already available to re-design the youth space so that it demonstrates the value we place on our young people. This is critical if we hope to attract young families.
- Selling the Graves House provided more than half of what was needed to tuck point the 6th Street side of the church building.
- Next, we must turn the Education Building into an asset by renting or utilizing it in a way that not only mitigates expense but builds ministry partnerships.
- We need to re-design the parlor and chapel. For minimal cost, we could make some changes that would provide space that is *welcoming* for small groups to gather, movie nights for the kids, people to congregate for coffee before and after worship, community groups to meet.

People looking for a church are looking for relationships; not only with Jesus but with other people. Therefore, welcoming space for fellowship is critical.

Just as we need to make wise use of property, we need to make wise use of human energy and time. We have a small congregation with too many committee positions to fill. People only have so much time and if they spend it all in meetings, they have no time left to DO ministry. We need a stream-lined governance structure.

WHAT BRINGS GROWTH?

What impacts church growth most dramatically today? SMALL GROUPS and COMMUNITY OUTREACH.

- Growing churches are known by their community involvement. There is nothing wrong with the mission we are currently doing. But most of our current mission involves raising funds for other charitable organizations. We need to expand beyond fund raising to connect directly to people in our community.
- We need to develop a Discipleship Process that focuses on those already here and those we are trying to reach, those new to the faith and those well-seasoned. It requires a multi-faceted approach that expands our current format to develop Sunday morning short-term, basic studies that are entry points for newcomers. It involves designing a process to “grow” small groups that will meet in different places, at different times and on different schedules to match the lifestyle needs of the participants.

This Ministry Action Plan came with two recommendations:

1). To examine Trinity’s governance structure to consider a more stream-lined approach, a small team of laity will take a four month period (beginning in April) to visit no less than 4 churches within an hour of Trinity, including those that have transitioned to a single-board structure, as well as those that have considered and decided against such a change. The team will pose a uniform set of questions for each church. At the conclusion of four months, they will present their findings to the Church Council and, if they so determine, recommend a transition to a single board structure. If that proposal is approved, that same team will then take one additional month to meet and design a *potential* single board structure for Trinity. They will present that proposed structure to Church Council. Subsequently, two congregational meetings will take place in the month of September to explain the proposed change to the entire congregation. In early October a Church Conference would need to be held to vote on this change. If approved, it would take effect in January, 2017.

2) To examine a re-design of the parlor and chapel. A team of laity will evaluate uses of the space that match Trinity’s mission and vision. Then, after prioritizing the ministry goals, they

will seek out three local/regional interior designers to provide a redesign plan for this space based on those ministry goals. This process should be possible to complete in a period of 3-4 months. The team would then bring those plans (with cost estimates) back to Trustees for discussion. After an additional month, Trustees would make a design recommendation to Church Council for approval. If approved, Finance would take up to two months to make a recommendation regarding how to “finance” the cost of the re-design.

Both of the above recommendations were approved at the March Church Council meeting. Members of the Governance Structure Team are Peggy Reen, Matt Oates, Frank Cederquist, Bob Lilly, Mel Shoaf and Pastor Tracey. Members of the Parlor Re-design Team are Norma Singley, Gail Billings, Mary Jo Risk, Chris Erwin, and Pastor Tracey. Please feel welcome to talk with team members if you have questions or ideas.