

Latest updates (Sept. 16)

Welcome to Trinity's Latest news on Thursday, September 16, 2021

A reminder that as we continue to safely gather, masks are required when in the building at Trinity for worship, meetings, choir, Sunday school or any other gatherings. Thank you for helping us keep this space safe for all who enter.

We have returned to our fall schedule which means worship at 8am in the sanctuary, Sunday school at 9:15 and worship at 10:45 at the pavilion. Adult Sunday school classes begin this Sunday.

This Sunday at 4pm Fundocry (confirmation) begins and it is followed by Food. Fire. Peanut Butter. A youth event from 6-8pm for youth in grades 7-12.

Monday, September 20<sup>th</sup> is the ABO picnic at Kauffman's at 11:30.

This past Sunday, many of us gathered at 9:15 to hear the details of Pastor Bill's last few months from the perspective of Gwen, Sarah and Colin. We are deeply grateful for their time with us, their care for this congregation and the opportunity to be together.

I had the opportunity to share the next steps we will take at Trinity as we continue in this time of transition.

Pastor Mark joined us in May – knowing that his position would be part time, and that his time with us would be 3-6 months. He was appointed by the bishop as a support for myself and the Trinity staff as we responded to grief and continued to care for and lead this congregation. His presence here has been helpful in the areas of preaching, worship leadership and pastoral care with home and hospital visits.

Also, during this time, Pastor Jen has been meeting with Pastor Lanny Westphal who intentionally works with large congregations as they go through transitions. He has been a guide and a mentor to her during this time. He has met with Steve Bobick (Executive Director of PPC) and Pastor Jen to help us navigate this transitional time. Initially the Bishop was hopeful that Pastor Lanny would finish his current call and be able to come to Trinity. Alas, the church he is currently serving is still in the process of calling their next pastor, so the Bishop has moved on to plan B.

This week PPC met with the person the bishop would like to appoint as our next interim pastor. Because this is an interim position, there is no call process or congregational vote. PPC is working through the next steps and details with this process. As soon as it is finalized, we will let you know how we are moving forward.

What we know at this point is that the next interim will be full time and will be with us for 12-18 months.

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Part of the interim's responsibilities will be to help Trinity through the call process, which will free up Pastor Jen to do a few things.

One, she will be able to continue to be a pastoral presence in this place.

Two, she will be able to discern her call to continue as pastor in this place.

What that means is that while Trinity dreams and talks about who God is calling you all to be, Pastor Jen will get to do that at the same time and will be able to prayerfully consider serving here in the future when the next pastor is called.

Truthfully, Pastor Jen is excited about Trinity's future and who God is calling us to be.

We will keep you up to date as this process moves forward.

This is from Pastor Jen:

As our time was wrapping up on Sunday, an individual asked about how we were doing financially. I did not answer the question as clearly as I could have, so I wanted to take a moment to do it now.

Truth be told, attendance and giving have declined over the course of the pandemic. This is not unique to Trinity, it is happening all over.

But you need to know that giving has steadily declined over the last 5 months.

While we are in a position right now to move forward with a full time interim, the finance board will be facing a tough challenge in creating the 2022 budget taking into account how giving has been declining.

In the meantime, we will have a solid stewardship focus this fall so that we all think about how we are called to give in this place.

Our stewardship campaign will be 'Honoring the past, living in the present, building the future.' We will challenge one another to think about and talk about how God gifts us in abundance and how we are called to share those gifts in this place and beyond these walls.

I've said it before and I'll say it again, we are on the precipice of possibility.

Which means we have the opportunity to leap forward into new ideas, ministries, ways of worship and ways to build this community. It's an exciting place to be (even though it's easier to look back with longing rather than taking that leap...) But together, we can do this.

Let us pray,