



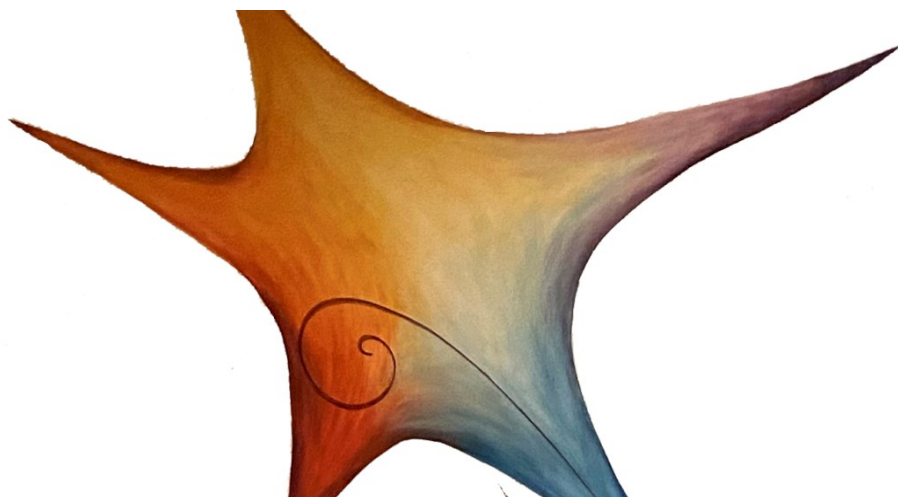
# TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Serving in Christ's Love and Sharing the Good News


## A movement to share Christ's Love

Each movement is part of the overall vision for Trinity to thrive in the next three years and beyond.

- Movement to Greater Advocacy
- Movement to Connection with Each Other Through Small Group Ministry
- Movement to Care for Children and Families with an Outward Focus
- Movement to Create Ways of Being Church with Expanded Digital Ministry
- Movement to Converge Systems and Leadership Around Baptismal Promises



## MOVEMENT TO GREATER ADVOCACY



This is a movement through strategic conversations and action, to reduce the pain and suffering of people and the earth that God made. Trinity will begin with an emphasis on creation care, food insecurity, antiracism, and support for 2SLGBTQIA<sup>1</sup> people in our community and across the world.

We will do this by learning together through conversations and as we use our voice to name abuses of power that keep people oppressed. Our commitment is to better understand how following Jesus calls us to respond to injustices as we put our faith into action.

Advocacy will function as a thread throughout all ministries of the congregation. Our love for all people is the lens through which we interpret all we do and the decisions we make. This is how we show God's love.

This is a nonpartisan faith-response to the pain in our world. Christian advocacy and justice begin with empathetic compassion for others as we live out our personal and shared convictions that we are loved and called to love others. (*John 13:34*)



### Our goal is to begin by:

1. Partnering with the synod to locate the Neighbor 2 Neighbor Latinx outreach within the ministry of our congregation with Deacon Lidixe Montoya serving as Trinity staff 50% of the time.
2. Paying special attention to using nongendered language in worship and other expressions of Trinity's life together.
3. Convening community leaders around issues of injustice facing our community.

<sup>1</sup>2SLGBTQIA: An acronym for Two-Spirit, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and/or Questioning, Intersex, Asexual, and the countless affirmative ways in which people choose to self-identify.

# MOVEMENT TO CONNECTION WITH EACH OTHER THROUGH SMALL GROUP MINISTRY

Reconnecting the members of Trinity to each other and to shared faith practices by encouraging and normalizing participation in small groups is the Second Movement. We understand that groups are relational at their core, so multiplication of groups will happen when people share the story of how these groups have impacted their faith and life.

**What will we do:** Encourage participation in a wide variety of small group offerings. For example:

1. **Congregational Conversations:** (2022–2023)  
Fall, Advent, Lent book conversations online, in homes, at church, or in other places.
2. **Affinity Groups:** (Winter, 2023)
  - A. Bible Studies: 4–6 week study groups for people of all ages, including intergenerational groups meeting online, in homes, at church, or in other places.
  - B. Learning Communities: 4–6 week learning opportunities on topics of interest by people in our church or community, held online or in person.
  - C. Parents of All Ages: 6–8 week gatherings of caregivers in affinity groups such as caregivers of young children, of youth, of special needs children, empty nesters, caring for aging parents, caring for people with health needs, etc.
3. **Grassroots Groups:** Form your own group (not limited to members only).

## Metrics:

The goal is for 50% of confirmed Trinity members to be participating in a small group activity in the first year. Ongoing evaluation and iterations of the small group ministry model will inform the next few years. The behavior shift we envision for the Trinity community is movement from lonely to connected, an increase in faith language, a willingness to take leadership roles, and a curiosity about engaging friends. What are people saying about feeling connected more deeply with each other? Are people comfortable including non-church friends? How are people sharing leadership? How are people growing in their personal faith practices of study, prayer, service, generosity, and worship?

## Costs:

1. Staff time to design, register, and launch groups in–person and online. We may need more Zoom accounts to manage online groups.
2. Inspiration from the Live Committee to encourage engagement, support registration, support leaders, and collect stories.
3. Potential resources for small group leaders.







## MOVEMENT TO CARE FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES WITH AN OUTWARD FOCUS

### **Equip and encourage caregivers to teach the faith in their homes.**

The Third Movement begins by listening deeply to discover the needs of caregivers. We need to consider all caregivers engaged in Trinity's ministry in any way. This includes Noah's Ark, a potential future daycare center, and all those who gather for worship in person and online.

We recognize that this is not a one-size-fits-all model. Caregivers of different ages need different resources. This goal begins as parents anticipate the birth of a child and flows through the life stages. The intention is to build a holistic plan for supporting caregivers across the generations.

We will experiment with new ways to engage caregivers in faith practices online and in-person based on what is learned through our listening. Some ideas include:

- Faith to Go
- Podcasts
- Family meet-ups
- Seasonal resources
- Small groups
- Active engagement for all ages

Our goal is to create safe spaces for caregivers to ask their God questions, to explore faith practices, and to increase their assurance that God loves them. This will help increase mental health and encourage people to turn to Trinity as a church they can trust to support their own lives as they care for others.

#### **Costs:**

1. This may require additional staff resources to launch an effective ministry for caregivers. (Spring, 2023)
2. Explore the need for an enhanced focus from the Serve Committee, informed by caregivers who will volunteer to guide and encourage others to engage in this growing ministry. They will help build the support system and create a plan for ongoing evaluation to learn as we lead this expanded ministry. (Spring, 2023)
3. We may need more Zoom accounts to manage online groups.

## Open a Faith-Based Daycare

This goal is focused on serving people across income levels as we live out our baptismal promises. We will maximize Trinity's facilities and love for children to launch a full daycare that would build on the wonderful traditions of Noah's Ark.

### Phase One: Feasibility Study (2022–2023)

Research specific needs for childcare for infants to school-age children.

- Interview other faith-based childcare centers to determine how this daycare center is structured within Trinity.
- Learn more about current needs for childcare.
- Learn more about the additional care options we may offer surrounding daycare.
- Learn more about physical space and amenities needed to facilitate a daycare.

Make a plan to nurture faith formation through this daycare.

Build a business plan to support facility changes or additions based on licensing requirements.

Make a staffing plan for a quality faith-based program based on partnerships that may be formed.

Engage partners in the community and the congregation to start strong for a launch in the fall of 2023 as we begin with our existing facilities.

- Are there other congregations with whom we should partner?
- Are there business or civic partners who will partner or invest?
- Are there grants for application?

Note: The size of this program will be determined based on the research in this phase.

### Phase Two: Pilot the Daycare Center (Fall, 2024)

- Identify metrics for determining the success of the childcare in relationship to our hope to offer faith-based childcare to a wide-variety of income levels (i.e sliding scale for 50% of families).
- What training do teachers need to support the mental health of children? Of parents?
- What is the plan to grow the childcare center beyond Trinity as community needs dictate? Are there other congregations or partners with space?
- What will it take to scale this? How big is too big?

**Phase Three: Consider additional services to support the needs of children and families. (Fall, 2025)**





# MOVEMENT TO CREATE WAYS OF BEING CHURCH WITH EXPANDED DIGITAL MINISTRY

The expectation for ministry opportunities to be both in-person and online present an unprecedented opportunity for Trinity to take digital ministry to a new level. We will strive to become leaders in the missional frontier of online ministry.

## **Phase One: Learn from others (Fall, 2022)**

Interview congregational leaders across the country who are becoming excellent in the work of digital ministry. Pay attention to how the online worshipping community and in-person church connect to each other, manage the sacraments, and encourage faith practices including giving, serving, prayer, study, and care. By listening, we can gain information regarding the cost of these ministries, including staff and equipment.

## **Phase Two: Experiment with online ministry offerings (2022–2023)**

Use what we learn to expand online offerings to include the possibility of digital small groups, digital caregiver support, and so much more.

### **Costs:**

1. In addition to our current staff, we imagine this is similar to Trinity sending a missionary to serve people using digital tools. This may include adding a pastor, deacon, or other leadership to maintain the integrity of our theology and traditions as they lead an expanded online presence.
2. The Proclaim Committee, together with our digital communications ministry coordinator, will engage volunteers who are already using social media and online tools to learn, grow, connect, and live their lives. They will help build the support system and create a plan for ongoing evaluation to learn as we lead this new ministry.
3. We may need different hardware, software, and Zoom accounts to manage online groups.



## MOVEMENT TO CONVERGE SYSTEMS AND LEADERSHIP AROUND BAPTISMAL PROMISES

As parents holding our babies at the font, we make five baptismal promises we intend to keep. Those promises often fade by the time we cut the cake. We will combine those promises with adaptive discipleship to create an effective and nimble committee structure to meet the changing needs of our congregation and God's world.

### **Live Committee: to *live* among God's faithful people**

- A) Encourage, support, and develop a ministry of care and openness to strengthen the connections between all members and the church.
- B) Address areas of need or updating for fellowship, stewardship, education, and spiritual growth for the people of Trinity.
- C) Develop, facilitate, and evaluate the day-to-day and long-term goals for church facility usage, operations, and safety compliance issues.

Note: This aligns with our Second Move to start small group ministries that reconnect the members of Trinity to each other and to shared faith practices by encouraging and normalizing participation in small groups.

### **Listen Committee: to *hear* the Word of God and share in the Lord's Supper**

- A) Work with our CYF team to coordinate and oversee curriculum and program planning, development, and review for all educational programs and opportunities including Sunday school, vacation Bible school, confirmation, and youth and young adult ministries in our church and community.
- B) Provide for worship enrichment, sacramental participation, educational opportunities, and worship fellowship ministries.

Note: This aligns with our Second, Third, and Fourth Moves.



**Proclaim Committee: to [proclaim](#) the Good News of God in Christ**

- A) Research and develop expanded communication methods for the ministries of our congregation.
- B) Seek to find ways to stimulate the enthusiastic witness of our members.
- C) Provide public witness in our community by sharing and inviting others into God's creative and redemptive mission at Trinity.

[Note: This aligns with our Fourth Move to create ways of being church with expanded digital ministry](#)

**Serve Committee: to [serve](#) all people following the example of Jesus**

- A) Provide service opportunities for the purpose of helping our congregation and community learn and grow as we address local, nationwide, and worldwide social issues.
- B) Recommend the allocation of benevolence monies annually to align with God's mission at Trinity.
- C) Engage ministries of care to reach those who are experiencing physical, emotional, or financial issues that inhibit their well-being and spiritual growth.

[Note: This aligns with the Third Move to care for children and families by supporting caregivers with new ministry resources.](#)

**Strive Committee: Strive for God's justice and peace in all the earth**

- A) Encourage our congregation and community to be aware of and to use positive opportunities to influence effective change through convening conversations and personal action.
- B) Provide appropriate educational materials and opportunities for dialog so all people of all ages can participate as informed citizens.
- C) Engage with outside organizations and resources to remain current in justice and peace topics (i.e. JONAH and other faith-based community organizing groups, ELCA social statements, etc.).

[Note: This aligns with the First Move of advocacy, through strategic conversations and action, to reduce pain and suffering of people and the earth God made.](#)





# FINAL THOUGHTS

## A Movement not a Monument as our Baptismal Promises are Kept

Trinity Lutheran Church is following the movement of the Holy Spirit through the biggest time of change in our world since the Reformation. We offer a strategic plan that is only the beginning. Each move will reveal more of the congregation's call to be the church in ways it has never imagined. The practice of adaptive discipleship, listening, interpreting what is heard, and experimenting is a new way of life.

The privilege of leading through such a time as this includes moments where we courageously push into an unknown future. It is exciting to join God in this movement. There are also risks; that we might slow down, get distracted, and return to the ways we have been church in the past. However, if we stay in that comfortable space, we will not be faithfully using the gifts and resources of this congregation. The church is not ours to keep as we like it. The church is God's always, and ours to steward for a season.

Congregations all around us are in fast decline. The pandemic has increased this momentum. Our vision is to carry our traditions and values into the future by learning as we go. We are making bold decisions because we believe that this congregation has so much to offer Eau Claire and the world around us.

## INSPIRATION

### For a New Beginning

—John O'Donohue

In out-of-the-way places of the heart, Where your thoughts never think to wander, This beginning has been quietly forming, Waiting until you were ready to emerge.

For a long time it has watched your desire, Feeling the emptiness growing inside you, Noticing how you willed yourself on, Still unable to leave what you had outgrown.

It watched you play with the seduction of safety, And the gray promises that sameness whispered, Heard the waves of turmoil rise and relent, Wondered would you always live like this.

Then the delight, when your courage kindled, And out you stepped onto new ground, Your eyes young again with energy and dream, A path of plenitude opening before you.

Though your destination is not yet clear, You can trust the promise of this opening; Unfurl yourself into the grace of beginning, That is at one with your life's desire.

Awaken your spirit to adventure; Hold nothing back, learn to find ease in risk; Soon you will be home in a new rhythm, For your soul senses the world that awaits you.

# TRINITY LUTHERAN CHURCH

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Reconciling in Christ Congregation of the ELCA

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