Honor our Past, Plan our Future
United and empowered to worship, connect, serve

Winston Churchill said “We shape our buildings, and afterwards, our buildings shape us.” Through Trinity’s facilities master planning process, we are attempting today to address both present and future needs for our church as we fulfill our mission, “United and empowered to worship, connect, serve.”

Who we are. Trinity Lutheran Church is built on a rich history of outstanding work, exceptional service, and profound faith in God. Our members live a life of gratitude and generosity for all that God has done for us in Jesus Christ. We consider this church our home, we feel a kinship with one another, and we love our sisters and brothers in the local community, the nation, and around the world.

It is that history that has molded Trinity into the vital, essential, and respected Christian Church it is today.

Where we’re going. We now come to a crossroads as we look ahead to fulfill our mission as a 21st century church. To ensure that Trinity’s legacy passes from one generation to the next, we must plan thoughtfully for the future while building on the past. The ability to inspire, teach, and reach our Central Pennsylvania community and beyond depends on how effectively we prepare for the future.

How we’ve identified goals. Trinity is working with Kairos and Associates consultants to ensure a careful and responsible examination of our current state, and to gauge our appetite for moving forward. Our work with Kairos has identified goals to guide us on the path ahead.

All goals are tied to our mission. Some of the goals are reflected in ministry and staffing proposals, and others are reflected in our facilities master planning process, an initiative that is a part of our strategic plan the congregation approved in 2014. All these goals are tied to our mission statement, “United and empowered to worship, connect, serve.”

- United. We propose supporting the work of the wider church through becoming again a congregation that helps prepare the next generation of church leaders through an internship program. Accordingly, we hope to create an internship fund to ensure continued support of these future leaders, including vicars. We also seek to make a further commitment to the
ELCA’s Always Being Made New campaign, a major fundraising effort for new and renewing ministries, world hunger, and seminary support.

- **Empowered.** We propose strengthening Trinity’s volunteerism by funding a staff position and related ministry for volunteer engagement and leadership development. We have great capacity to impact our community and world by being empowered followers of Jesus.

- **Worship.** We propose making enhancements to our worship spaces in the nave and chapel, as listed below. We also wish to retire any obligations associated with the steeple renovation and to undertake improvements to the parking lots outside the church.
  
  ✓ **Replacing portions of the back wall of nave with soundproof glass** will make Trinity feel more like one unified congregation rather than two separate ones (traditional and contemporary); will allow everyone, particularly guests, to see/locate the worship space immediately when entering the church; will project a more welcoming and open space for worshipers and event attendees; will appeal to families with children or anyone who needs to leave the service but who would still like to see what is happening in that service; will be less distracting for worshipers in the Nave since the doors will not have to be opened and closed by folks outside the Nave who want to see where we are in the service.
  
  ✓ **Improving the lighting and audiovisual capabilities** will allow better message reception and retention; will allow folks to see better, particularly in the balcony; will allow Trinity to make more effective adjustments to lighting and sound.
  
  ✓ **Providing a ramp for easier access to the chancel area** will make folks with mobility issues feel more comfortable, less conspicuous, and more included.
  
  ✓ **Reconfiguring seating** will provide flexibility and increase functionality, thus resulting in more efficient use of church resources; will be more inviting for folks with mobility issues because they will not have to worry about sitting apart in separate designated areas.
  
  ✓ **Reconfiguring the chancel area, including moving the location of the choir so it faces the congregation**, will increase the functionality and usability of the area; improve the acoustics so that the sound of the choir will be more pure as it faces the congregation as one unit; will allow the worshipers to feel more connected with the choir.
  
  ✓ **Bringing the altar forward** will bring it closer to worshipers so they feel more connected; will allow far better visibility from all parts of the nave.
✓ Combining and enlarging the sacristies will provide better storage and more efficient work areas; will be inviting to volunteers, who will also feel more valued when they do not have to work in such cramped spaces.
✓ Adding flexible, comfortable seating to the chapel will improve functionality for multiple uses, resulting in more efficient use of church resources; will be more accommodating, attractive, inviting, and comfortable for people who attend weddings, funerals, visitations.
✓ Renovating the bathrooms near worship spaces will remove the outdated feel of those facilities and be more attractive to all users.

- **Connect.** We propose enhancing various areas of the Gathering Space and narthex.
  ✓ Expanding, renovating, and opening up the Gathering Space by removing the wall that separates it from the narthex will result in greater community building, better functionality, and more usage options; will make folks feel more communal in an area that invites fellowship; will be more inviting and less confining for users; will provide users with improved traffic flow; will open up the area to look more like one church rather than two congregations; will improve sight lines.
  ✓ Providing comfortable seating areas will encourage conversation and fellowship; will increase interaction among all users; allow people a greater opportunity to meet others (guests and members alike).
  ✓ Reconfiguring and improving classrooms for small group gatherings will allow opportunities to invite more people from the community; will attract new members and groups; make users feel more comfortable and connected in updated spaces; will allow better space utilization and functionality; will allow everyone to locate classrooms much easier without having to navigate internal and confusing hallways.
  ✓ Reconfiguring the interior traffic flow by creating a linking corridor between the Gathering Space and new office area/education wing will be attractive to guests; will make the elevator more visible and easier to locate; will result in better traffic flow, better internal circulation, and a more direct route from place to place; will create a positive impression with more natural light from windows.
  ✓ Reconfiguring the parking lot and adding better lights and signage will result in greater safety; will increase parking spaces; will create a much better first impression.

- **Serve.** We propose enhancing our facilities to provide better service and greater safety and security for our members and guests.
✓ Improving the building’s security, particularly the children’s areas, is a must in today’s environment and will provide comfort and peace of mind to parents of children and to all who enter; will allow Trinity to better fulfill its obligation to protect children and others in our charge; will decrease our liability.

✓ Creating a clearly visible new weekday entrance with an elevator in the education wing will give all who enter greater mobility and accessibility; will provide a single source of weekday entry; will result in a better first impression to guests.

✓ Adding a classroom for preschool will provide potential for Trinity to enroll more children in preschool; will increase our visibility and service to the community; will strengthen our relationship with our preschool by focusing more on it and adding value.

✓ Moving the offices to the first floor of education wing at the new single point of weekday entry will result in far greater security when staff is there to welcome, screen, assist, and direct all who enter; will make all folks feel more invited and welcome; will allow Trinity to project a more professional image because staff is immediately visible; will allow even more collaboration among staff with a more open office area.

✓ Moving the Sunday nursery closer to the worship spaces will appeal to parents of children who now must navigate stairs and hallways to get to the nursery; will make parents feel more comfortable and secure when they know their children are close by and easier to get to; will appeal to visitors/guests who see that Trinity places priority on the comfort, security, and needs of parents with children.

Next steps. Over the coming weeks and months, we will engage with the congregation to better explain the vision and to seek consensus on a pathway forward. For goals and proposals that the congregation agrees to and accepts, we hope to accomplish them through a generous response to a capital appeal; such an appeal could commence in spring 2018.

As of this writing, we would expect that any approved projects would happen in multiple stages. While nothing has been determined yet, our hope is that any “first” stage would include at least the steeple, parking lot, and projects that impact improved security for children’s facilities. We would also hope to allocate funds toward the vision of an internship fund.