



Executive Summary – Trinity United, North Bay Status Report – February 21, 2023

Jesus Calls Us

In the Gospel stories, Jesus famously *calls the disciples out*. His call to “*follow me*” often meant that people left their families, their jobs, their communities. Jesus still calls-- but for us at Trinity, Jesus *calls us deeper in*: to deeper engagement with our families, our friends and neighbourhoods. We are called to serve and enrich North Bay, our home. We continue to heed the call of Jesus-- discerning the signs of the times, honouring our great history, seeking partnerships, and exercising imagination and creativity.

Trinity: Evolving from Strength to Strength

In 1882, Reverend Silas Huntington and other Methodist leaders responded to the call of Jesus. They established the oldest Christian congregation in North Bay. Starting in a railway box car, they soon graduated to a clapboard church on Main Street (1884). Within a couple of decades, they had a sturdier dwelling on Ferguson near McIntyre (1887). In 1906, they laid the cornerstone of our present church sanctuary.

In 1925, the North Bay Methodist Church joined with other Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational churches in creating the United Church of Canada. That’s when we adopted the Trinity name! Initially, we had an attached manse, then for a time, a nearby separate one. Responding to our own growth and a need for local gymnasium space, we added Cochrane Hall in 1956. In recent decades, we have adapted our worship space to accommodate community musical and dramatic productions. The pandemic years pushed us to incorporate innovative safety and technological infrastructure.

Throughout our distinguished history, Trinity has changed our location, facilities, shape, denomination, *even our name*, as we continue to heed the call of Jesus. “Faith Forward 2030” seeks to plan our next evolution, as we approach 150 years of faithful service.

Trinity: We Belong to This Community

Churches exist to serve their communities as hubs of celebration, witness, and service. For generations, Trinity has bravely provided for our community's varied needs and circumstances. Trinity is deeply embedded in North Bay's downtown: connected to other communities of faith, to social agencies, and partner organizations. These include historic partnerships with the likes of: Scouts and Guides, various 12 Step Groups, the JOY Band, Dreamcoat Fantasy Theatre, Mothercare, Gateway Theatre Guild, and the Rapport Singers. Between our own groups and many partners, there are over 40 distinct groups regularly using our space. Trinity is central to a great network of community, creativity, fellowship and service. As we contemplate next steps, we will need to continue the consultations we've already begun, to appreciate deeply the needs and visions of our partners, sister churches, and the wider community.

Responding to the Call of Jesus

We look back, inspired by a history of evolving innovation. *We look around*, witnessing the faith, strength, and tremendous human resources with which we are blessed. *And we look forward*, preparing for the next step in the adventure to which Jesus calls us. As we do this, we acknowledge and offer gratitude for the land in which Trinity United Church occupies, lands that are the traditional and current territory of the Anishinaabe of Nipissing First Nation. We are mindful of broken covenants and strive to be guided by the principles of right relationship and reconciliation as we continue to seek ways to live with justice and respect with all those who call these lands home. In 2021, the United Church of Canada launched its new strategic plan, framed around the call towards “**Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship, and Daring Justice.**” That call to courage must inform our next steps!

Faith Forward 2030

As we look ahead to 2030, our latest challenges include an aging demographic and an aging and progressively costlier church building. It's time to consider another change in our journey from our current position of strength. We are called to be the embodiment of **Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship, and Daring Justice** and over the coming months this is what we all need to come to grips with on how we should go about responding to the call.

Your board feels that all the members of our community need to become aware of our current situation to prepare everyone for thinking about our next steps. To this end, we have posted a much more complete Faith Forward 2030 status update on our church website at www.trinitynorthbay.ca in addition, some printed copies are available at the back of the church and from the church office over the next month or so. We would urge you to access this information so that we're all informed as we move forward.

To this end, Trinity's Board intends to create a “Faith Forward 2030 Task Force” to reflect Trinity's leaders, members, and wider community. This group's mandate will be to help guide our decision process as together we decide how we will respond to the call.

And now, we look forward.....