

HOLY TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH, ELK RIVER



Our Mission Statement

Holy Trinity is a diverse, multi-cultural, church unified in Holy Communion and grounded in the Gospel. We embrace all people as equally beloved children of God. We are committed to acting as the hands and feet of Jesus, expressing God's love in the world while lifting each other up in community.

Holy Trinity is seeking a part-time Priest-in-Charge to be our spiritual leader and coach to help us live up to our Baptismal promises.

Who we are

She/he will find a small, vibrant, welcoming, and loving faith family. Visiting priests have commented that they "felt the love and welcome" when they were here. We work hard, and most members are involved in activities that support the church and/or the surrounding community. The Vestry has provided strong leadership, especially in the absence of a priest. We have an outstanding office administrator. We have an organist with years of dedicated service.

Liturgy is important to us. In addition to regular Sunday celebration of the Eucharist, we have had (pre Covid) Wednesday noon services during Lent, Ash Wednesday evening, Holy Week services including an Agape service and supper, Blue Christmas evening, Thanksgiving and Christmas eve services, occasional Morning Prayer, and Compline. Currently, we offer services live in the church and online on YouTube. Men and women participate in reading the lessons, the prayers of the people and serve as chalice bearers and acolytes. Fellowship is an important part of after-service and most stay for this.

The men of the parish, with some help from the women, take care of the grounds and the church building. The Women's Group meets monthly and with some help from the men, hold annual fund raisers such as the Fall Bazaar, Spring Book, Brat and Bake sale and other activities throughout the year. Our Pastoral Care leader has expanded our activities with a "prayer chain" of persons who pray daily for parishioners who request this; promoted the training and licensing of several Eucharistic Visitors, contacting persons in need, etc. A Prayer Shawl group meets weekly to help with mailings and Sunday bulletins. They also knit and crochet shawls, chemo caps and premie caps. Other groups include the Altar Guild, liturgy committee, and finance committee, acolytes and Sunday School. Parishioners are encouraged to participate in the active life of the Parish.

Parishioners support CAER, the local food shelf; Open Doors for Youth, a program for homeless teens in the Elk River area; Feed My Starving Children, Meals on Wheels. We hold an annual Blessing of the Animals and blood drive. Since parishioners come from surrounding communities, they also support their own local food shelves, etc. We have an aging congregation, and those able have stepped up to offer rides as needed to those who can no longer drive.

Holy Trinity founded Guardian Angels Senior Services in 1962. Today, Holy Trinity maintains the chair as well as a majority on the board of directors. Guardian Angels is an independent, a not-for-profit organization. Our participation on the board is to assure the continuance as a faith-based entity. Parishioners volunteer in many activities in support of Guardian Angels. An annual corporate meeting is held at the church for the CEO to report to the congregation consent members.

Our Plan for the Future

We do not have a strategic plan. We recommend that the Vestry take the lead in developing one. Key elements to be included are as follows:

During a time of declining church membership and attendance we plan to grow. It is important that we grow in diversity and inclusiveness. We especially plan to become a place that attracts younger families. The recent addition of a couple of young families is helping us understand how the church can best serve them. At their request, we are starting day and evening Bible study groups.

We intend to increase our visibility in the community. This can be accomplished in many ways. One is by initiating and participating in ecumenical ventures with other churches in our community. There are other opportunities for outreach: community social justice groups, a growing immigration population, encouraging civic awareness and responsibility. We have been shy about Evangelism, needing a plan, coaching and encouragement to reach out.

Our financial stewardship is lacking. We talk about tithing, but our reality is very different. Current data says the national average for congregational giving is 2.5%. The survey conducted in preparation for this search shows that we are donating 1.89% of our income to the church. We believe that in giving we receive. We can do better. This needs to be a key part of the strategic plan.

As with most congregations, the impact of Covid had serious consequences. The choir disbanded, attendance and membership dropped. We suffered a reduction in pledges. Unable to meet in person, we suffered the loss of that great sense of connection, of fellowship and caring that permeates this church. We are working at getting this back. You can feel this at fellowship after Sunday services. We have had three new families join us recently. Our organist is interested in expanding our music using other instruments and some contemporary offerings.

Next Steps

What are we looking for in a priest? Revealed in the CAT (Congregational Assessment Tool) the following eight most critical abilities, in order, are what we hope to find in interested candidates.

- Preaching – Capacity to inspire and connect people to God’s word
- Pastoral care – Capacity to engage people empathetically and care for persons in need
- Strategic leadership – Capacity to cast a vision and lead toward that vision
- Change management – Capacity to lead through periods of change
- Negotiation – Capacity to help deal with conflict through training and mediation
- Teaching/Training – Capacity to equip members with new skills
- Administration – Capacity to manage the church operationally
- Community catalyst – Capacity to make Holy Trinity a presence in the community

Our previous priest was approximately 25% time. We hope to make this a half time position. Hours outside of Sunday worship are flexible.

If you feel called to discern this part-time Priest in Charge opening, please send a cover letter articulating your sense of fit, your resume and your OTM (Office for Transition Ministry) portfolio, if you have one, to:

Karen Olson, Canon for Ministry – karen.o@episcopalmn.org

Detailed information is available in the links and pdf attachments listed below.

Web links:

Holy Trinity Website (Under serious construction!) <https://www.holytrinityelkriver.org/>

Guardian Angels of Elk River, Inc. <https://www.guardianangelsmn.org/>

Elk River Area Information (Chamber of Commerce) <https://www.elkriverchamber.org/>

pdf attachments available from Karen Olson:

Holy Trinity Annual Meeting Report

2022 Parochial Report

A Brief Holy Trinity History

Vital Signs generated from The Congregation Assessment Tool 8/23/22

Open-ended questions from the 8/23/22 CAT