

TRINITY
EPISCOPAL PARISH
CLARKSVILLE, TENNESSEE
EST. 1832

faith ▲ hope ▲ love

Parish Profile 2022





MISSION STATEMENT

Our mission is to seek and serve God in Christ through worship in the Episcopal tradition. We provide opportunities for spiritual growth and ministry to ourselves and others, all within an inclusive community.

Table Of Contents

Who We Are	2	Finances	16
Our Parish.....	4	Challenges	17
Worship	6	Opportunities	18
Outreach.....	9	Community	19
Formation.....	10	History	20
Social Life.....	13	Future.....	21
Leadership	14	Our Next Priest	23

"This church is my family."

WHO WE ARE

"Our family was very welcomed. As soon as we walked in, we felt those connections."



"I love how we care for one another. I can't think of one single time – even when I wasn't able to come faithfully – that Trinity knew of a need I had and didn't meet it. There is just a sense of inclusion."

“What’s different about Trinity versus other churches we have gone to is this: There isn’t an underlying agenda. No silent judgment and guilt. We don’t have to hide certain parts of us.”



faith ▲ hope ▲ love

OUR PARISH

(By the Numbers)

Our recent church survey*
drew 103 participants

When Trinity Episcopal Church is at its best, it is very much a family, a family with many points of view that gathers at the same table. Because Trinity is the only Episcopal parish in Clarksville, with the nearest other Episcopal church being a small mission chapel, and closest sister parish more than 30 miles away, Trinity has been called to, in the words of Paul, “become all things to all people,” resulting in a church community that covers a broad cross-section of Episcopalians.



Members

277

Average Sunday
Attendance, 2021

78

91% white

4% Black

1% Latino/Hispanic

4% other

62%

live within
9 miles

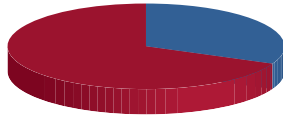
38%

travel more than
10 miles

Theologically,

while overall we lean progressive, our beliefs are spread out among many viewpoints, landing us “very high” in the theological diversity ranking. On whether Scripture is the literal word of God, for example:

32% agree



68% disagree

Despite that theological diversity, we have a very low level of conflict. Our survey found that compared to other congregations, we landed in the 79th percentile for managing conflict successfully. On the statement, “Among most of our members there is a healthy tolerance of differing opinions and beliefs,” for example, 93.5% agreed.

Income

Our household income levels are well balanced.

50% earn less than \$100,000

27% earn \$100,000-\$150,000

22% earn \$150,000-plus



Age

16% younger than 45 | 25% 45-54 | 13% 55-64 | 46% 65-plus

Despite over half of the respondents being over 55, there is a strong desire by all age groups to attract young people. The No. 1 priority in the survey across age groups was to “**Make necessary changes to attract families with children and youth to our church.**”



Education

In part because of the presence of Austin Peay State University, we are a well-educated group, with a large contingent of professors in our midst.

86% college degreed | 55% graduate degreed

Tenure

Under 1 year 7% | 1-2 years 8%

3-4 years 17% | 5-10 years 12%

11-15 years 6% | 16-20 years 9%

Over 20 years 42%

*Survey results from Congregation Assessment Tool
“Vital Signs” by Holy Cow Consulting, 7/05/2022.



WORSHIP

Trinity's liturgical style is best described as broad church, combining a strong Episcopal tradition with prominent lay involvement. Liturgical elements are altered regularly, for example rotating among Eucharistic Prayer and Prayers of the People options, with prayers specific to the season or current events. Our main service includes a procession of the cross with a large choir and five vested lay servers. Prayers of the People are read by laity from the nave. Incense is reserved for Christmas and Easter vigils. On high holy days, we add liturgical elements such as the lighting of votive candles on All Saints and the waving of red pennants on Pentecost. The tone of announcements is casual and warm; and, as one professor put it, "Passing of the Peace is done with aplomb."

Four vergers assist the rector in worship planning and logistics. A lead verger coordinates the scheduling and training of acolytes. Our services are supported by a four-team Altar Guild, ushers, and greeters. In all, more than 75 parishioners are on the rotating schedules to serve in worship. Music is provided by an organist, a director, and a choir composed of about 15 volunteers, plus students on scholarship. We also enjoy performances by adult and youth handbell choirs.



Services

10 a.m. Sundays

Holy Eucharist Rite II
(Rite I during Lent), with choir.

7:30 a.m. Sundays

Holy Eucharist Rite I, spoken.

Noon Tuesday

Holy Eucharist, spoken.

7 p.m. Wednesday

Compline, at end of Wednesday
night activities.



"I have a 16-year-old that makes sure I'm here every Sunday morning because he serves, and he wouldn't miss it for anything. The other day he turned around at the car as we were leaving and he said to me, 'I love doing this.' I looked up and said, 'Thank you God,' because this church has inspired him and led his spiritual life."





Far from being a one and done, Trinity Love In Action is an expression of ongoing commitment to established ministries. It brings the entire parish into community with the people around us. It is our liturgy in the world.

OUTREACH

Trinity's outreach, while continuing to provide boots-on-the-ground volunteers, also includes Tithing Outreach, through which a budgeted amount of funding is made available to local charities through grant requests. That program began in spring 2022.

Our main outreach activities include:

Loaves & Fishes: A feeding kitchen program that began in Trinity's kitchen in the early 1980s and is now a multi-church nonprofit. The Trinity Team includes 20 individuals who prepare, cook, and serve 150-200 meals once a month.

Nashville CARES: An HIV/AIDS outreach agency that offers free HIV testing, counseling, nutritional supplements, and medication support. Trinity permanently hosts the Clarksville office in our parish house. Pre-pandemic, we also provided drivers for meal delivery, along with an annual churchwide Christmas basket and dinner event.

FUEL: Ecumenical nonprofit that provides schoolchildren with weekly backpacks of food. We assemble 30 bags a week, though at the height of COVID when other churches dropped off, we increased that giving level to 60.

Project Transformation: Summer reading program engaging children, young adults, and churches in purposeful relationships. Trinity provides 15 volunteers.

Room in the Inn: Volunteers provide dinner and breakfast for up to 16 homeless individuals during the winter months. 20-plus Trinity parishioners participate.

Empty Bowls: Trinity is one of the primary hosts for this annual community-wide fundraising dinner that stocks the shelves for local food ministries.

Host facility: In addition to the above, our facilities are used free of charge for meetings of Narcotics Anonymous, three Girl Scout troops and other community agencies and events as needed.

Love in Action

Trinity's Love in Action (TLIA), begun in October 2017, is where liturgy meets the street. On fifth Sundays, we celebrate the Holy Eucharist while participating in an active outreach ministry.

In the past we have celebrated Nashville CARES, Loaves and Fishes, Project SAFE, and Narcotics Anonymous. TLIA is celebrated off- or on-campus, depending on the ministry and the needs presented.

A good, tangible example of Love in Action took place July 31, 2022. Trinity met at Byrns Darden Elementary. Shortly after 10 a.m., the service began with the Liturgy of the Word in the school's cafeteria. The principal welcomed us. After the Gospel, our priest dismissed us to our workstations to respond to the Gospel through action: gardening and maintenance work, deep cleaning, and organizing of donations. The people reconvened at 11 a.m. for Liturgy of the Table at a makeshift altar.





FORMATION

A variety of programs support a wide range of ages, spiritual needs and schedules.

Youth Group

Our youth program, led by a paid youth minister since 2013, includes about a half-dozen middle and high-schoolers on Wednesday nights for fun, fellowship and spiritual development. They meet as a Sunday School Bible study class as well, with somewhat lower participation. Each year, they organize a Cardboard Village event to spend the night experiencing homelessness, and a Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper.

Adult Sunday School

Discussion Series: Tackles a different topic or book, with recent topics being “Maus: A Survivor’s Tale” and bridging the gap between science and religion.

Episcopal Traditions: History-focused discussion of church theology and the Book of Common Prayer.

Bible Study: Courses follow either the lectionary or specific books of interest.

Godly Play

The program for preschool through elementary ages follows a Montessori-based story-

wondering-response model, followed by a prayer and feast that connects children to the Episcopal worship tradition.

Wednesday nights

In addition to Youth Group and choir practice, we offer:

Adult classes: Seasonal classes ranging from Lenten studies to book and film discussions.

Children of Trinity: Hands-on stories and play time for infants through elementary school.

Annual programs

Inquirers: Confirmation class held in the spring, both in preparation for confirmation or baptism and as a refresher course for anyone interested in joining in.

Education for Ministry: A new EfM class is opened once per year, providing adults a deeper education in and experience of theology. We currently have two EfM classes, one in-person and another online.



“There have been opportunities from the day we walked in the building for every single one of us. There have always been wonderful caretakers in the nursery, there’s been children’s chapel, there’s an amazing Sunday school program for the young children, and the youth program has taken off.”





“This is my home, this is my family, this is where my friends are. I love 317 Franklin and the people in it and what God is doing here and the people he’s put in my life, and in my way. This is my home.”

“The more involved people are, the more positive attitude they have about themselves, the more things to look forward to. It gives them a sense of purpose.”

SOCIAL LIFE

Our recent survey put us in the 76th percentile for hospitality. On the statement “Our church welcomes and is enriched by persons from many different walks of life,” 97.8% agreed, with 63.7% agreeing strongly.

Trinity Homecoming 190th Anniversary:

Designed to bring the church community back together after COVID, this three-day event included a courtyard Sip ‘n’ Sing and barbecue dinner, a daylong kids festival, and a concert and shrimp boil, ending with the Sunday morning bishop’s visit and reception.

Red Door Committee: This group organizes fundraiser events in support of various missions and needs of the church that fall outside the standard church budget, such as scholarships to church camp or assistance to repair the playground.

Picnics & Parties: This committee has previously had a goal of organizing regular social events. These have included Theology on Tap, a Newcomers Dinner and the annual church picnic. COVID put many activities on hiatus, but our goal is to get these efforts back on track.

Wednesday Night Suppers: Sandwiched between the Wednesday night service and our array of adult classes/Youth Group/choir practice are these weekly suppers, where all can gather to chat and share a meal.

Supper Clubs: We have previously organized these, with eight to ten people in each club, meeting for dinner in members’ homes. COVID put this on hiatus, but our goal is to resume when we can.

ECW: Members meet monthly for Bible study and fellowship.

Daughters of the King: The religious order previously met for prayer and study, but is not currently meeting due to COVID.

Trinity Travelers: This group takes weekend carpool daytrips to museums and historical sites, stopping for lunch along the way.





“The attitude of leadership helps bring about change – this vestry has had an open attitude about change.”

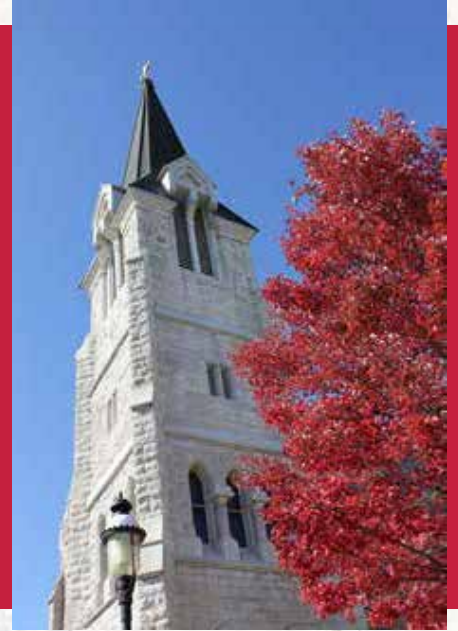
LEADERSHIP

Lay leadership is strong at Trinity Parish. Our recent survey showed that Trinity’s No. 1 driver of satisfaction was when persons who serve as leaders in our church are representative of the membership. And on the question of whether we accomplish that goal, 83.1% agreed.

A 12-member elected vestry meets monthly, and the wardens, treasurer, parish administrator and rector comprise an Executive Committee. While the vestry handles financial, facilities, and general mission matters, a 12-member Parish Ministries Council meets monthly to coordinate our ministries and committees.

For the past seven years, Trinity has employed a full-time parish administrator to support the rector, so that the rector can devote more time and energy to the calling of the priesthood. Other part-time employees include a youth minister, choir director, organist, and three childcare workers.





FINANCES

Trinity is fortunate to find ourselves in sound fiscal condition. We have a 2022 budget of \$434,800 which is funded through pledges, plate offerings, and an Endowment Fund stipend. In the years that we have a surplus, we accumulate these funds to prepare for longer term maintenance on both of our buildings.

In our 2021 stewardship campaign, we had 11 new pledging families for a total of 119, reflecting an increase of \$8,840 in the total pledged amount over the prior year. Roughly 86% of Trinity's membership participates in pledging. While we have a solid range of income levels, our contribution levels have room for growth. Trinity's average percentage of income given is 1.8%, which is low compared to the Episcopal Church average of 2.3%.

Our only debt obligation is to the Trinity Endowment Fund for \$92,000. This is what remains from repairs to our facilities following a 1999 tornado, along with expenses from a recent organ repair. Our expectation is to fully repay this interest-free obligation within the next six years. We own property behind our church that is becoming a valuable asset in the downtown area. We are looking to use this property as a means to expand our church in the needed areas.

CHALLENGES

“Like most organizations, 20 percent of the people do 80 percent of the work.”

Our recent church survey put us in the transitional category: We have a medium-high level of satisfaction and a medium-low level of energy. Those 55 and older who had been here longest expressed a high level of satisfaction. That was balanced by a lower response by newer parishioners and those 54 and younger.

There’s a sense that many of the initiatives and programs that were going strong five years ago have had “the wind knocked out of their sails” by COVID. Participation in our children’s programs and youth ministry, which had been improving at one point, seems to stagnate generationally. It’s been an ongoing struggle to keep any momentum.

Our congregation’s morale is in the 55th percentile, and on the statement “Overall I am satisfied with how things are in our church,” 32.6% tend to agree, 37% agree and only 17.4% strongly agree.

While the congregation seems to be good at inviting people in and making them feel welcome, and our readiness for ministry index is at the 72nd percentile, we continue to struggle with getting enough people involved in ministries and programs.

“There are times when if I didn’t have to be here (as a volunteer), I wouldn’t.”



OPPORTUNITIES

Like all other churches, Trinity's congregational life was disrupted by the COVID pandemic. While the core of our worship life held strong, many other pieces fell apart. Our challenge now is to ensure that they come back together in the right places, perhaps even building something new.

Our parish has distinct opportunities to re-form, with the military community at Fort Campbell and the student population at Austin Peay State University both being vast groups of young people who need the connection and spiritual growth that we can offer. We've previously had active ministries to those military families, and to the students through a Canterbury Club, but those programs have faded over the years and are ripe for resurrection.

And we are primed for that to happen. Our recent survey showed congregants want to bring in more young families. This was the top priority for all three age brackets. We know this anecdotally, too: Trinity members, both young and old, appreciate and yearn to see more children, teens and young adults playing a loud, active role in our worship and activities.

Those 65 and older also put a high priority on developing spiritual generosity for more financial support. Our average percentage of income given is only 1.8%, while the Episcopal church average is 2.3%. That means we have lots of room for growth in giving; the income is there, but people aren't giving as much as they could and should. Inspiring our congregation to understand the importance of stewardship could not only help with our spiritual growth but also create new opportunities for programs and facilities.

As Christians, we are a resurrection people, and our hope is that Trinity is a resurrection parish, one ripe to become much more with the right spiritual leader at the head of our flock.

COMMUNITY

Clarksville is a city of about 166,000 located 45 miles northwest of Nashville. The city has experienced rapid population growth in recent decades, increasing 25% from 2010 to 2020. The city continues to be shaped largely by two institutions and one geographical feature: Fort Campbell and Austin Peay State University, along with the confluence of the Cumberland and Red rivers.

Fort Campbell, home of the 101st Airborne Division, has given us a young but transient influx of soldiers and their families, along with a steady flow of veterans looking to set down roots in a welcoming community. A great many of our businessmen, volunteers and city leaders are veterans, and those veterans bring a significant amount of international flavor to what would otherwise be a typical Southern city. We would certainly not have the Korean and German influences we now enjoy if not for the presence of so many Clarksvillians who have spent time working and raising families overseas.

Austin Peay State University, which traditionally has had a liberal arts-related mission but serves a great many career-focused nontraditional students with a 10,000-student enrollment, has brought a cultural flair to the city, with classical music and visual arts programs. The professors and students at this fast-growing university have spun off arts communities,

influencing and supporting efforts such as the Roxy Regional Theatre and the annual Clarksville Writer's Conference. Partly as a result of APSU's influence, there is a high degree of education among Trinity's members, with 86% of member respondents having a college degree and 55% having a graduate degree.

Schools and Economy

The Clarksville-Montgomery County School System is one of the better in Middle Tennessee, consistently outperforming the state average in test results. There are several private schools, the largest being Clarksville Academy.

The Cumberland and Red Rivers meet in Clarksville and have become increasingly important quality-of-life features, particularly with the development of the Clarksville Marina.

A 6,000-seat arena and Ford Ice Center is under construction downtown in a partnership between local government, the Nashville Predators and Austin Peay State University, for hockey, basketball and concerts.

The local economy is diverse, with a mixture of light industry, regional retail, government employment and agriculture. Among the newer industries to open in Clarksville are a Google data center, an Amazon fulfillment center, and production plants for Hankook Tire and LG Electronics.



HISTORY

Trinity Parish was formed in 1832, nearly half a century after the founding of Clarksville. Trinity was the fifth parish in the Diocese of Tennessee, which was established two years earlier. The parish survived its early years with the help of local Presbyterians who believed in the value of an Episcopal presence to the community.

During the Civil War and the occupation of Clarksville by Union forces, the parish became a center of reconciliation. The Reconstruction era saw Trinity's most concerted effort to develop a broader membership, as it became the diocesan leader in evangelical endeavor. Four new missions were established in the city and county, one of which, Grace Chapel, still persists.

With energetic leadership in the 1870s and 1880s, Trinity was at the height of its success and enjoyed an unparalleled reputation and influence in the diocese. In 1873, structural weaknesses were found in the first church building, and it was demolished, replaced by the current church building, completed in 1877. Clarksville's origin as a place of trade for tobacco farmers is reflected in the circle of tobacco leaves designed into Trinity's rose window.

The period during and after World War II has been one of rapid change and diversification for Clarksville and Trinity. While Trinity continues to serve its traditional population of local Episcopal families, it also attracts a variety of people from the military, the university, and business families whose companies have transferred to Clarksville. In 1999, the sanctuary and parish house were severely damaged by a tornado. In the midst of the rebuilding effort only one year later, our priest, the Rev. David Murray, died of an unexpected illness. The sustained and successful restoration and recovery, while painful, has resulted in a stronger, more unified, and welcoming parish. We returned to a restored church building and new parish hall in 2001.



FUTURE

As we recover – with God’s help – from the COVID pandemic and its impact on our personal, spiritual and community lives, we have again faced the recurring refrain: We need to recruit more volunteers. This is a manifestation of a deeper issue, which was reflected in our survey results, that we need to do more to connect our newer members to ministries and programs, to enrich their spiritual lives and to help Trinity’s steps toward bringing about the kingdom of God. To accomplish this, this summer we began taking the first steps toward implementing Invite Welcome Connect (www.invitewelcomeconnect.com), a framework and process to build evangelism and involvement. This has been rolled out to the vestry, Parish Ministries Council and at this writing is being introduced to the various committees, with the congregation as a whole coming up next.

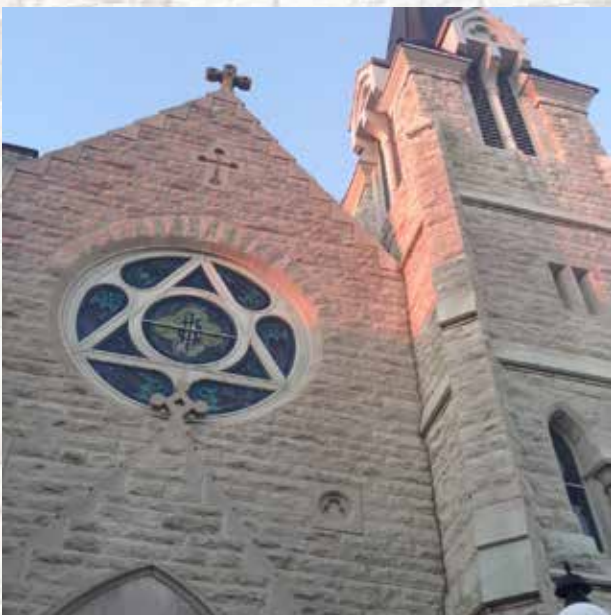
We are excited about an upcoming and much-needed renovation of our kitchen, thanks to a generous offer by one of our parishioners.

In coming back together, more and more parishioners are expressing a desire to return to outreach programs, small group gatherings, formation, and meaningful relationships. We are looking forward to clear and engaged leadership that will help us build and direct our energies to share the impact of God at work in our lives and the world.





“My hope for the future is that we can continue with our liturgical tradition that I find so moving and wonderful but that we can find a way, as we grow, to continue to have those relationships that are so important. For our community, for my child, for me, that’s what it’s all about – that relationship, with each other, and with God.”



“I’m ready for someone who is dynamic.”

OUR NEXT PRIEST

“I want a priest that inspires me to bring my best self to church and take my best self to others the other six days of the week.”

In recent years Trinity has had a priest who was strongest in administration, another strongest in the pulpit, another in pastoral care. For this search, our survey and discussion process has led us to these three keyword priorities:

Interpersonal: Adult congregation members have expressed the importance of pastoral care, and our youth want someone who will increase their sense of belonging and someone they’re comfortable engaging with. Both expressions suggest our desire for a priest who can connect personally with congregation members.

Spiritual and Passionate: Many of us are seeking a leader who can refocus, clarify and direct us on the role of our church, guiding us by example and by preaching on our mission to individuals, the community and the world.

Charismatic: Our congregation consistently and across demographics has called for someone who can attract younger families, energize our existing members and lead us to new ways to bring about the kingdom of God in the world.

We’re excited to meet whomever the Holy Spirit brings to us next!



faith ▲ hope ▲ love

Vestry

Kate Smith,
senior warden
Howell Foust,
junior warden
Paige Barbeauld
Merriel Bullock-Neal
Laura Harpel

Jan Hodgson
Liz Holt
Ben Kimbrough Jr.
Jack Mitchell
Brian Schafer
Privott Stroman
Jennifer Williams

Search Committee

Sheila Foust,
co-chair
Jan Hodgson,
co-chair
Lesli Eiland
Adam Fleming
Will Green

Beth Mabry
Lisa Mejeun
Titus Neville
Brian Schafer
Joshua Sharpton
Chris Smith
Ric Williams



317 Franklin St., Clarksville, TN 37040
www.trinityparish.com • 931-645-2458