

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH
WRENTHAM, MASSACHUSETTS



STRIVING TO KNOW, EMBRACE AND SHARE CHRIST IN A LOVING COMMUNITY

COME JOIN US!

SELF-STUDY COMMITTEE PRAYER

O GOD, WE ASK THAT YOU SEND DOWN YOUR HOLY SPIRIT UPON ALL THE
PEOPLE OF THIS PARISH,

UNITE US IN LOVE, TEMPER US WITH UNDERSTANDING, AND GIVE US THE
WISDOM TO CALL AS RECTOR, THE PERSON WHO WILL GUIDE US TO FULFILL
YOUR PURPOSE.

IN ALL OF OUR DELIBERATIONS, BLESS US WITH CLEAR VISION, GRANT US
LOVE AND RESPECT FOR ONE ANOTHER, AND THE FAITH TO FOLLOW YOUR
WILL FOR TRINITY PARISH.

HELP OUR NEW RECTOR TO HEAR THE WORDS OF OUR CALL, AND WALK
WITH US IN LIVING FAITH,

WE ASK THIS IN THE NAME OF THE BLESSED TRINITY.

AMEN.

**The Parish Profile of Trinity Episcopal Church
Wrentham, MA**

STRIVING...

Introduction 1

TO KNOW...

Wrentham, Massachusetts 2

History of Trinity Church 4

EMBRACE...

The Way We Worship 5

The Way We Work 7

Parish Staff 7

Parish Governance 7

AND SHARE CHRIST...

Our Parish Ministries 8

Worship Ministries 8

Fellowship Ministries 8

Outreach Ministries 9

Education Ministries 9

Parish Support Ministries 10

IN A LOVING COMMUNITY...

As We See Ourselves Now 11

As We Look to the Future 12

The Challenge of Our Finances 12

COME JOIN US!

Our New Rector 14

APPENDIX A

Parish Statistics 16

APPENDIX B

Church Property Layout 17

STRIVING...

Introduction

The Vestry Charge

On June 11, 2003, Trinity's Vestry charged the Self-Study Committee to prepare a candid, thoughtful, and thorough Parish Profile describing Trinity Episcopal Church: who we are, where we have come from, and what kind of community God is calling us to become. This profile will describe our parish history, our current parish life, our mission, and our relationship to the various communities that we serve — geographic, demographic, and spiritual. The profile will serve as a background for the Vestry and Search Committee in selecting a new rector.

The Committee

The Self-Study Committee was comprised of 11 members of the parish, some of whom served on previous Self-Study committees at Trinity or other parishes. Beginning in June of 2003, we started to research and write, meeting periodically throughout the summer and weekly in the fall and winter. Our first task was to develop a Parish Prayer. We found that some of us liked the prayer from our last search, while others contributed original prayers. Ultimately we borrowed liberally from each, and somehow the prayer took shape. As you read this profile, you will hear 11 different voices uniting to collectively portray the mind of Trinity's congregation as we seek to discern God's will.

Methods

In our effort to depict the people of Trinity Parish, surveys and focus groups were used to gather information on the:

- demographics of the congregation;
- past, present, and future participation by parishioners in ministries;
- perceived relative value of our ministries;
- qualities and attributes that they would like our new rector to possess;
- congregation's preferences in worship style;
- characteristics of Trinity that the congregation feels are most important.

Questionnaires were sent to our Parish mailing list of 249 households, and 78 completed surveys were returned (31 percent). Every member of the congregation was given the opportunity to participate in the focus groups, and ultimately we held seven structured forums, representing a broad sample of parish constituencies. It is the prayers, thoughts, and voices of our people that underscore the comments and statistics used throughout this document.

TO KNOW...

Wrentham, Massachusetts

The town of Wrentham, settled in 1660 and incorporated in 1673, reflects its early New England heritage with quaint churches facing a lovely town common. Located in Southeastern Massachusetts, Wrentham is 25 miles southwest of Boston, 30 miles southeast of Worcester, 20 miles north of Providence, Rhode Island, and only 50 miles from Cape Cod resort areas. Wrentham's proximity to major cities offers easy accessibility to airports, theaters, the Boston Symphony and Pops, renowned medical and educational facilities, national sports teams, museums, cultural events, and fine dining. Most of the region's appealing attractions are easily reached by major highways and public transportation. Because of its central location, Wrentham has been growing, and in recent years has evolved from a rural, agricultural area to a charming "bedroom" community for surrounding cities.

Facts about Wrentham¹:

Area	22-23 Square Miles
Population	10,422
Abutting Towns <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Massachusetts• Rhode Island	Norfolk, Foxboro, Plainville, Bellingham, and Franklin Cumberland
Fiscal Tax Rate	\$13.90 per \$1000.00 (FY 2003)
Average Home Price	\$315,000 (FY 2003)
Form of Government	Selectman (5) Town Meetings Town Administrator

Today Wrentham and its neighboring towns are home to a premium outlet mall, Dean College, three local hospitals, Audubon Society and conservation land, the Tweeter Center (a large outdoor performing-arts amphitheater), and Gillette Stadium – home of the New England Patriots football team and the New England Revolution soccer team. Beautiful ocean beaches are only an hour away. Wrentham is proud of its growth, and the town's new library, senior center and condominium village, fire and police station are the latest additions to Wrentham's progress. In addition, the middle school has begun renovations, and improvements to the high school and town hall are also moving forward. There are three beautiful lakes and the town shares a public beach with the neighboring municipalities of Norfolk and Plainville. Numerous recreational activities are available in the area, and Wrentham has also become known as a hub

¹ Town information was obtained from the Town of Wrentham 2002 Annual Report, *The Sun Chronicle Newspaper*, published January 8, 2004, *Newcomers Guide* published June 25, 2003, and the newspaper supplement entitled *Community Guide, Hometown Information for the Milford Area*, published June 2002.

for antiquing. In spite of the region's transformation, our agricultural roots can still be found in the incidence of family-operated farms, some of which offer seasonal apple-picking and sleigh rides.

Schools

For upper-grade students, Wrentham, Plainville, and Norfolk form the King Philip Regional School District. The King Philip Regional Junior High School (grades seven and eight) has 799 students and is located in Norfolk. The high school (grades nine through 12) has 1,130 students and is located in Wrentham.² High-school students have the option of attending Tri-County Regional Technical/Vocational High School in Franklin, Norfolk Agricultural High School in Walpole, or one of numerous private schools in the area.

Wrentham has its own elementary schools, starting with pre-school and extending through sixth grade. The elementary school, which currently has 1,281 students, is situated on a campus within a cluster of three buildings. With three recent additions, renovations, a dedicated staff, and advanced computer technology, it is now regarded as a superior educational facility. Charter schools in Franklin and Foxboro provide additional options.

Trinity is the "home church" to Wrentham, Plainville, and Norfolk Episcopalians. Approximately three-quarters of Trinity's parishioners reside in these three towns. Other churches found in Wrentham include the Original Congregational Church, Saint Mary's Catholic Church, and the Sheldonville Baptist Church. Within the structure of the Episcopal Diocese of Massachusetts, Trinity and 11 other nearby parishes combine to form what is known as the Taunton River Deanery.

² According to the October 1, 2003 enrollment figures published in the local newspaper, *The Sun Chronicle*.

History of Trinity Church

The first Episcopal Church service held in Wrentham was on July 8, 1863 in Cook's Hall. Two local clergymen officiated – The Reverend Samuel Babcock of St. Paul's Church in Dedham and The Reverend G.M. Randall, rector of the Church of the Messiah in Boston.

Services were typically held on Wednesday evenings until November of that year, when regular Sunday services were established. The following spring, 16 residents signed a petition to organize a parish, and on June 6, 1864, members met and chose the name Trinity. Six months later, The Reverend Nathaniel G. Allen, previously the rector of St. Thomas Church in Somerville, was appointed the first rector of Trinity Church at an annual salary of \$850.

The land on which the present church and adjacent rectory stand was purchased on July 27, 1866 for \$700. Groundbreaking ceremonies took place in April 1871, and the cornerstone was laid a month later. On June 30, 1872, Reverend Babcock returned for the first service, at which a child was baptized and a Holy Communion celebration took place. That evening, he preached the first sermon in the new church.

On April 10, 1876, the bell was hung in the church tower, and was rung for the first time on Easter Sunday. The 800-pound bell's \$300 cost was paid for by the Sunday School children, who raised money through savings and donations. Also dating back to this era are some of the church's 11 lovely stained-glass windows, which illustrate a variety of biblical scenes and themes. On January 2, 1879, the Bishop of Massachusetts, The Right Reverend Dr. Benjamin H. Paddock, consecrated the church.

In 1900, amid financial difficulties, the parish began to increase in size, and in 1905 the purchase of a piano paved the way for music to be introduced into the weekly services. A. Harrison "Pop" Ewing became the church's lay reader, and two years later he also became Trinity's new rector, succeeding The Reverend George Osgood.

By 1909, the parish had grown to 75 people, the choir included 24 boys, and three teachers oversaw a Sunday School program that enrolled 21 students. In 1915, the William Marcellus Goodrich pipe organ was brought to Trinity in two horse-drawn wagons from North Attleboro's Universalist Church. The organ, which had been built in 1825, was completely rebuilt and improved in the 1960s, and has remained in excellent condition while continuing to be an integral and cherished part of Trinity's worship services.

Historical Milestones

1930: women admitted to the Vestry;

1954: Parish hall completed;

1955: rectory ground broken (located adjacent to the church);

1963: educational wing completed;

1970s: cemetery renovated and improved;

parishioners allowed to purchase lots;

1989: educational wing addition (named for "Pop" Ewing) ground broken;

1990s: reconstruction project to refurbish the 100-foot steeple completed (required capital campaign to raise \$175,000);

1999: healing station added during services;

2002: Saturday evening alternative, inclusive-language liturgy service tried.

EMBRACE...

The Way We Worship

Our Sunday worship is the heart of our Trinity experience. We celebrate the Eucharist with two Sunday services: an 8 a.m. Rite I service and a larger, family-oriented gathering using Rite II at 10 a.m., as well as a children's chapel service. The early service offers hymns and some music with organ accompaniment, and a lay reader/chalicer assists the celebrant during the service. The 10 a.m. Eucharist includes our Associate Priest, acolytes, a banner bearer, ushers, and our choir. A healing station — where parishioners may receive the laying on of hands and have a prayer for healing for themselves or others — is available during Communion at all services. We also offer a simple mid-week Eucharist service, held every Wednesday at 4 p.m. in our chapel.

In addition to the regular services each week, there are special services and traditions that are dear to the hearts of parishioners. Our former rector introduced us to both the somber power of Tenebrae on Good Friday and to the transcendent joy of Easter at dawn. We give thanks every November with congregants of Wrentham's other churches in a combined ecumenical service that is hosted by a different church each year. We move from the bustle and excitement of the Children's Christmas Eve service to the quiet celebration of a time-honored midnight service to welcome the birth of Emmanuel. Whether our services are small and simple, larger and manifested by ancient traditions with incense and Sanctus bells, or impromptu gatherings, we find ourselves nurtured and healed, strengthened and comforted, and gladdened and enriched by each experience of our worship together.

Music at Trinity Church is integral to our sense of parish identity, and Trinity's fine pipe organ is a vital part of both Sunday services. While traditional Anglican hymns provide the foundation of our music, we supplement the use of the 1982 Hymnal with other music from *Wonder, Love and Praise*, and at times use



an in-house produced songbook. The best of a broad ecumenical, eclectic selection is chosen carefully by our Ministers of Music to complement the liturgical season and appointed readings. Other musical offerings range from chapel songs sung by our younger children, occasional traditional and contemporary offerings by our youth and young adults, to our more formal adult choir, which is well-versed in a wide range of vibrant and diverse anthems. Numerous other parishioners also occasionally contribute to the services with their musical talents on the piano, harp, horn, guitar, and bagpipes. In

addition, our Associate Priest has written a setting for service music, which we use along with settings familiar throughout the Episcopal Church. Trinity Church proudly recognizes the importance of music in our worship and gladly offers joyful sounds to our Lord.



The first Sunday of the month has become known as “Children’s Sermon Sunday.” The children of the parish are encouraged to place questions for the rector in a specially-marked box, and during that 10 a.m. service, one of these questions provides the basis of the sermon. The children sit on the altar steps gathered around the rector, who leads them in an exploration of the topic. Many older members of the congregation have come to cherish the insights and wisdom that have come “out of the mouths of babes” during this much-appreciated tradition.

The Way We Work

Parish Staff

Interim Priest	The Rev. Bailey O. Whitbeck
Associate Priest (non-stipendiary)	The Rev. Carlton T. Russell
Parish Administrator (24 hours/week)	Donna M. DeCarlo
Sexton	Robert Pellet
Ministers of Music	
Choir Director/Organist	Lorna S. Russell
Organist	Donald C. Rockwood

Parish Governance

Trinity's Annual Meeting is held on the last Sunday in January. Elections are held for parish officers, Vestry chairs, and Deanery and Diocesan Convention representatives. The Vestry consists of the rector, senior warden, junior warden, clerk, treasurer, and nine Vestry members, often called "chairs," who are charged with overseeing the functional areas of parish life. These "chairs" are worship, evangelism, Christian education, Christian community, outreach, stewardship, building and grounds, communications, and youth. The wardens each serve two-year terms (with a limit of two contiguous terms); the clerk and treasurer hold one-year terms with no limits; Vestry chairs are elected for single three-year terms. Terms for the wardens and Vestry chairs are staggered to allow continuity in leadership from one year to the next in parish affairs. Parish members are nominated for election to the Vestry by a nominating committee composed of the rector, wardens, and three parishioners, or by nomination from the floor during the Annual Meeting. Since the mid-'90s, Trinity has welcomed the participation of our youth in parish governance, and on several occasions has nominated and elected qualified young people to the youth chair of the Vestry. Monthly meetings of the Vestry traditionally begin with prayer and a brief Bible study, and members also take part in an annual retreat.

In 2001, the Vestry voted to implement a new framework to support the mission and ministry of the church. This step was taken to address several issues reflecting the tension between maintaining our heritage and managing growth with grace. This structure is currently composed of seven standing committees with oversight of most ministries of the parish: finance, welcoming, Christian community, buildings and grounds, stewardship, outreach, and education. All of the committees meet simultaneously every month. This allows for more broadly-based committees that encourage increased contacts within the parish to find those people interested in participating in the programs, tasks, and ministries of each standing committee.

AND SHARE CHRIST...

Our Parish Ministries

The ministries of Trinity Church may be grouped conceptually into five areas: worship, fellowship, outreach, education, and parish support. Respondents to our surveys and focus groups provided keen insight as to how we can better develop these diverse ministries.

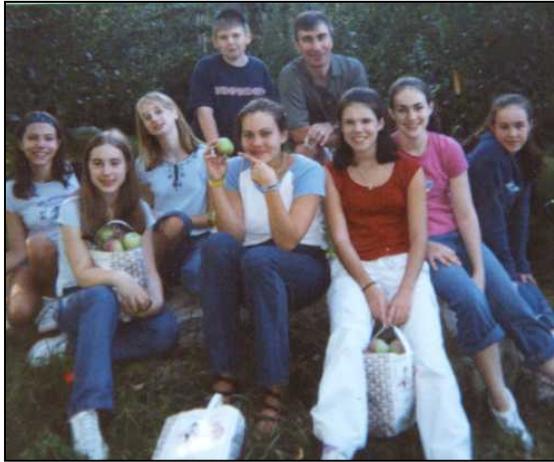
Worship Ministries

The Ministry of the Word and the Ministry of All Faithful People join together in the worship ministries of Trinity parish. All of our services are enriched by the participation of people of all ages, backgrounds, and talents. In the Sunday School chapel service, our youngest children learn by doing; school-age children and adults offer hands and voices as part of the sacrifice of thanksgiving; vestments are maintained; schedules are posted; musical offerings are selected and practiced. Recently, three people have undergone training to be Lay Eucharistic Ministers to bring communion to shut-ins after the Sunday service.

Since we tend to be a middle of the road, broad church, it is not surprising that a plurality of the respondents to our survey had no strong preference for either a contemporary or traditional style in preaching, music, or worship. However, there was a definite trend for a preference for sermons that emphasized spirituality and current events, as opposed to theologically- and biblically-themed sermons. The surveyed adults and youth diverged in their trend towards a preference in worship and music style; in both cases, the youth tended to have a preference for a more contemporary style in worship and music, while the adults preferred traditional music and had no discernible preference for worship style. Overall, the congregation would favor a rector who is able to strike an equal balance between supportive and challenging sermons. The parish is likely to be receptive to new ideas and approaches in worship. To that end, we are hopeful that the new rector is willing to take a strong leadership role in shaping our weekly worship services.

Fellowship Ministries

When parishioners were asked why they chose to attend Trinity, one of the first things mentioned was our strong sense of community. As one parishioner remarked about coming to church, "I look forward to it. There is something special about the people . . . other churches do not have that kind of thing." Fellowship at Trinity takes many forms, and we try to offer such opportunities for all of our members.



Our Youth Group offers our seventh- through 12th-grade youth a chance to gather together for camaraderie and activities. It is an energetic and vibrant group here at Trinity, and as one parent wrote, “I’ve enjoyed watching my kids get involved, get together, and enjoy themselves. They want to come to church more.” The Youth Group is the most meaningful ministry to the junior-high and high-school members of the parish community, and the members look forward to more opportunities for continued fellowship such as youth retreats, and hope that the new rector will readily participate in their activities.

For the grown-ups, the monthly Senior Luncheon allows our seniors to gather for a meal and companionship, and adult parishioners enjoy coffee hour following our 10 a.m. service until the children are dismissed from Sunday School classes at 11:30 a.m. Retreats for adult women and men offer additional chances to establish friendships and enjoy spiritual growth. Parishioners find that signing up for a Saints and Sinners dinner (a serial dinner held in each others’ homes) affords time to get to know people who might otherwise remain strangers. We also gather for occasional potluck suppers, music and game nights, and an annual picnic. At Trinity, we are very fond of breaking bread together!

Outreach Ministries

A true description of Trinity and her ministries would not be complete without highlighting our belief that outreach is an integral and essential part of our being. When asked about the church attitude towards outreach, a parishioner offered, “It is my hope that Trinity will continue in loving acceptance of all people, both within and outside Trinity parish.” Our church currently pledges 10 percent of its operating budget income to fund outreach, a practice that began over 20 years ago. A portion of the outreach budget pays that part of the Diocesan assessment formerly called the Mission Asking, a customary 50% of the assessment. The remainder goes to fund our outreach program budget. The outreach committee allocates these funds to programs in the greater community such as Ecclesia (a ministry to the homeless in Boston), local food kitchens and pantries, and Angel Tree (which provides Christmas gifts to children whose parent(s) are incarcerated). Outreach at Trinity also embraces many other ministries, including our Prayer Chain, the Welcoming Committee, Evangelism, the Prayer Shawl Knitting Ministry, yard sales, and the century-old tradition of our Christmas Fair.

Education Ministries

Sunday School and youth education are extremely important components of life at Trinity, and have been instrumental in helping us to build our sense of community. Several parents noted that they attend the Sunday service in large part because of the Sunday School program. They mention how they enjoy listening to their children talk about their “church school teachings during the week” and that their “children come because they want to.” As our kids have grown, attendance has decreased in the lower grades, but the middle- and high-school classes are routinely bursting at the seams. The size of the teens’ Sunday School classes should be seen as a reflection of the importance Trinity places on youth: our children are made to feel that they are important members of the community.

Our Cribbery through first-grade classes begin at 10 a.m. and include a children’s service held in the small chapel in the education wing. This service is conducted by one of the lay chapel leaders. It has been customary for the rector to join the children on the third Sunday of the month for a chapel Communion service that is modeled on the adult service, but designed to allow the children to participate in the service in ways that are age-appropriate.



The students from second grade through 12th grade attend the regular 10 a.m. service and then proceed to class after Communion. The Episcopal Church curriculum provides the basis for classes in grade one and grades three through six. The full-year focus for second-graders is the Eucharist, and we celebrate their achievement in a special Communion service at the end of the church-school year. The junior-high class uses a small-group style to discuss the lectionary lessons and learn about the history and structure of the Episcopal Church, while senior-high “rap sessions” help the young people to talk about the issues they confront in their daily lives and in the larger events of the world, incorporating the power of prayer and of the Spirit to help them confront these challenges.

We also strive to provide our children with rich educational experiences including Vacation Bible School and our Palm Saturday celebration. During this Saturday our younger children experience the events of Holy Week through a Prayer Walk. They symbolically travel with Jesus entering into Jerusalem on Palm

Sunday through His Resurrection on Easter morning. After the Prayer Walk, the youngsters interpret what they have witnessed and shared through arts, crafts, and music, and bake the Eucharistic bread that will be used by the full congregation on Palm Sunday.

Although we have a strong emphasis on youth education, adult Christian education has not been neglected. Many of our adult-education programs appeared in the surveys as part of reflections of memorable experiences people have had while attending Trinity. Such affecting programs have included EFM, Faith Alive, Lenten programs, Bible study, Women’s Group, book study groups, and the Men’s Breakfast. Survey respondents hoped for “Christian Education to continue to grow and prosper” with a continuation of book and Bible study, as well as small discussion groups such as Women’s Circle to “get more people involved in the spiritual aspect.”

Parish Support Ministries

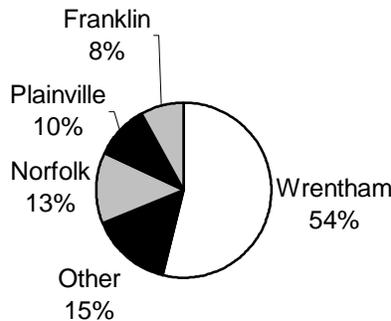
Trinity has many ministries that help support the life of the parish, including governance, financial oversight, and property issues. As described in other sections of this profile, the individuals who participate in these ministries cope with some of the most difficult challenges faced by Trinity. We also have an active communications ministry which keeps the people of Trinity informed about parish news and activities through the publication of *Tidings*, the monthly newsletter, and our parish Web site: www.trinitywrentham.org. Because pastoral care has been recognized as an area of concern to the congregation, we established a small pastoral-care group whose members are on call to assist parishioners in times of crisis when our priests are unavailable.

IN A LOVING COMMUNITY...

As We See Ourselves Now

Trinity is a dynamic parish, drawing members from a broad geographic region. The area has seen considerable changes in demographics and industries over the last 10 years, leading to a fairly constant turnover in population in the area. This is reflected in the fact that of the respondents, 36% of the congregation has been attending Trinity five years or less. The congregation also has a strong contingent of long-time members, with 37% of respondents having been members for 15 years or more. As might be expected for a congregation in an area with changing demographics, a wide range of ages is represented at Trinity. Half of the adults in the congregation are 50 or younger, and of that group, the majority are in their 40s. Weekly attendance levels have been consistent in recent years in spite of the transient economic nature of this region. A large majority of the adults in the congregation are cradle Episcopalians or Roman Catholics. Our parishioners attend services regularly, with the majority attending on a weekly basis, and most attending the 10 a.m. family service. There is a significant seasonal variation in attendance, with more than half of the congregation taking vacations in the summer months.

Geographic Distribution of Trinity Church Parishioners



While church location is, without doubt, a prime factor for many people choosing a spiritual home, indications are that many current parishioners chose to join Trinity Church because it is so very welcoming. Many of our parishioners had been dissatisfied with their former church, and joined because of relocation, marriage, or other lifestyle changes. For many of those in transition, the Episcopal Church simply “felt right;” it was the “middle way.” For others it would be a place where they “rediscovered ... their faith.” Almost universally, Trinity Church is described as a friendly church — a place with a comfortable, relaxed atmosphere, a place for fellowship and making friends, and a spiritual community where people know and care about each other. People speak of being recognized, and of the importance of the rector’s welcoming and friendly manner. Many people expressed their appreciation for Trinity’s inclusiveness, and some for its lack of a formal dress code. Interdenominational marriages have found a nurturing blend, and established parishioners gladly extend an invitation for “new people to experience the warmth and love of this great place.”

One parishioner said, “At our other church we only went on Sundays; we weren’t involved,” while another said, “It’s more than meeting people; I’ve made good, deep friends that do a lot together in extended activities.” Respondents also remarked how the numerous activities that inspire involvement create “a stimulating and challenging environment for parishioners to think about their faith and involvement.” As one parishioner so aptly said, “Ideally our parish should have plenty of opportunities for *all* to grow as a family and take an *active role* in running the church as a spiritual body, and as a service to the community and one another.”

Our survey responses and forum comments exude our sense of family, but as with any intimate group, we are not strangers to disagreement or tension. There are those who feel that they are on the outside looking in, or that their voices go unheard. One said, “I am concerned that friends of mine who wished to become involved were made to feel unwelcome” while others said, “Work is done by a small group; we need more doers.” Another felt that “Trinity needs to become a friendlier and more of a family-feel church”; that “It feels like the current focus on ministries is creating a division and damaging effect in the church.” Efforts to plan for the growth of the parish from pastoral to program size, called Initiative 2000, meant facing the different “comfort levels” inherent in size issues. Some say that the “church should stay the same, happy as it is,” while others look to “a growing church. We should not accept that we’re small and cannot grow.” Through it all, in heeding our mission statement, we continue to try to bring people together, so that we can be “a united Trinity where we all join together for worship and fellowship.”

As We Look to the Future

We found issues of parish growth to be of significant importance to most parishioners, with many expressing a desire for us to grow in numbers and spirituality without losing the feeling of community that we so highly value (which some expressed as “keeping our small-church flavor”).



Some people want to see more programs. Fellowship, ecumenical activities, and formation of support groups were mentioned, and there is concern for involving *all* parishioners, and for sharing responsibility and for finding others to take on leadership roles.

Trinity Church’s parishioners, it seems, not only want growth in numbers, they also want growth in knowledge and spirituality, in outreach and service, and in a fellowship that welcomes all. Factors that might challenge growth, particularly in size transition, are those related to finance, physical plant, parishioner commitment, and readiness to endure the rigors of change. Strong clergy support and the dedicated active involvement of many more of today’s parishioners will be essential if Trinity Church is to achieve the full spectrum of growth that our people desire.

The Challenge of Our Finances

Economically, our congregation is as diverse as its geographic and age ranges. Annual incomes range from below \$50K to above \$150K, with the majority of the respondents of the survey having annual incomes of \$100K and below. The majority of active adults in the congregation pledge on a regular basis, as do some of the junior-high and high school youth. In spite of a somewhat unstable economy over the

past few years, along with Trinity currently being in transition as we search for a new Priest, our pledges, have remained fairly stable during this difficult period (see chart in Appendix A). There are, however, ongoing financial challenges for Trinity that are perhaps greater than other parishes face. This is largely due to our historic yet beautiful physical structure, which requires considerable financial backing to repair and maintain. The parishioners feel strongly that through fellowship — and a strong and caring spiritual leader who is able to get more people involved and committed to a deeper relationship with God — a firm budget will fall into place. As one parishioner stated “Stewardship is not [just] serving on a committee, but willingness on [the] part of congregants to participate in the stewardship of time, talent, and treasure that keeps this parish functioning (the practical side of the ministry of all faithful people).” When asked if they would consider increasing their pledge to help support the ministries of the church, the majority of the congregation indicated that they would. A significant number see parish growth as a way to “widen the pledge base”; they dream of “a time when pledges would cover financial needs [so] we could concentrate on the spiritual side of life.” One person commented, "We are constrained financially. But that draws us together."

While it is clear that most survey respondents have concerns about church finances, stewardship, and “adequately supportive giving,” concerns with larger events of the church have also impacted our pledges.



COME JOIN US!

Our New Rector

When asked about what they see as the primary roles of our new rector, 71% of the survey and forum respondents felt that we need a spiritual leader. They also felt that our new rector should have strong



preaching skills, participate actively in the life of the parish, be dynamic in the areas of pastoral care and counseling, and facilitate our growth. The characteristics that they most wished our new rector would possess were being approachable and an inspiring preacher, as well as being caring, compassionate, open-minded, and willing to take the time to really get to know us.

There is a sense that our next rector will need “lots of energy” and must be “welcoming and outgoing.” One person said that it would be wonderful if we could find a person “who is

spiritually in love with his or her parishioners and can lead in a good direction without seeming to lead.” Others felt that we need “someone who really cares about teaching others about God,” “believes what [he/she] says,” and “will have the breadth to deal with all of us.”

Pastoral care has been recognized as both a great strength and a great need at Trinity. It is the hope of our members that our new rector listens well, gets to know people, and is caring, loving, and able to offer pastoral visits and counseling. Visits by the rector are important to those in crisis situations, are homebound, or in need, and therefore we are seeking a good shepherd who takes note of his/her flock. It is also the hope of Trinity’s people that their second home, the church, be well-maintained.

While Trinity Church sees itself as a diverse yet welcoming church family, it is hoped that the new rector will be able not only to further inspire the members of the parish, but also bring a rejuvenated sense of unity to the church. We look for a new rector that can “pick a new person out of the crowd,” and not “play favorites” — someone who can “foster an environment in which we are urged to love one another and be open to listen to each other even if the person’s views differ from ours.”

Our children are very important to us, and as parishioners have noted, “Without the young, we will be extinct one day,” and “The vitality of the children and young people is one of our special strengths to be nourished.” On any given Sunday during the school year, “The age ranges at the 10 a.m. service can be 80 years!” We hope our new rector can be there for the eldest and youngest among us, and be able to recognize that while we are in different places in terms of age and spirituality, our new leader will consistently be able to speak to and reach all of our levels of understanding.

It is hoped that our new rector will be willing to become truly a part of our community and take the time to get to know us before requesting changes. Parishioners want their new rector to be able to adapt to the church around him or her, and not employ a “This-is-the-way-it-is” approach. We look for one who motivates and guides us rather than dictates to us — a person who “listens to all ideas yet puts forth [his/her] own ideas with love.” Generally, the respondents hope to welcome a rector who “has a vision to understand our strengths and weaknesses,” is “approachable, a great motivator . . . and can inspire a greater involvement in the church,” “has the ability to give and take; the ability to listen and modify their position,” and “will see our uniqueness and help us grow it.”

Summary

We at Trinity Church have offered prayers together weekly that the Holy Spirit would anoint all persons who come seeking to worship God. The love of our Christ has initiated and tempered our thoughts with insights and understandings in this profile/search process, to be able to reach out to the rector whom God has chosen to serve here. We ask to be guided by their prayerful presence and that God’s purpose may be fulfilled in each of us. In our decision-making we have been blessed to express clearly our vision of mission. We offer love and respect for one another and await the opportunity to share the same with our new rector. We as one of the shepherd’s folds will follow God’s will for this parish. The calling to our rector would be that he/she might hear our words and come to walk with us, together in a living faith, in the midst of the Blessed Trinity.

ACTS 20: 28

KEEP WATCH OVER YOURSELVES AND OVER ALL THE FLOCK OF WHICH THE HOLY SPIRIT HAS MADE YOU OVERSEERS TO SHEPHERD THE CHURCH OF GOD THAT HE OBTAINED WITH THE BLOOD OF HIS OWN SON.

Appendix A

Parish Statistics

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
*Average Weekly Attendance	230	220	226	214	150
**Sunday School Enrollment	125	143	154	155	140
Baptisms	26	28	21	23	19
Confirmed and Received	0	18	0	11	19
Marriages	5	4	7	6	5
Burials	8	14	8	8	9
Number of Pledges	126	140	133	143	140
Amount Pledged ³	\$107,041	\$117,351	\$133,664	\$140,734	\$140,002
Average Yearly Pledge	\$805.00	\$838.00	\$1,000.00	\$984.00	\$1,000.00
Plate and Non-Pledge Envelopes	\$7,248.45	\$11,016.89	\$12,008.30	\$10,892.92	\$9,056.75
Total Income	\$147,344.12	\$161,648.94	\$176,224.80	\$175,167.42	\$171,649.77
Total Expenses	\$136,988.99	\$158,276.09	\$177,582.42	\$180,648.29	\$158,422.32

*Average Weekly Attendance: represents all services (including children's chapel). The average weekly attendance for years 1999 through 2002 may have been overestimated.

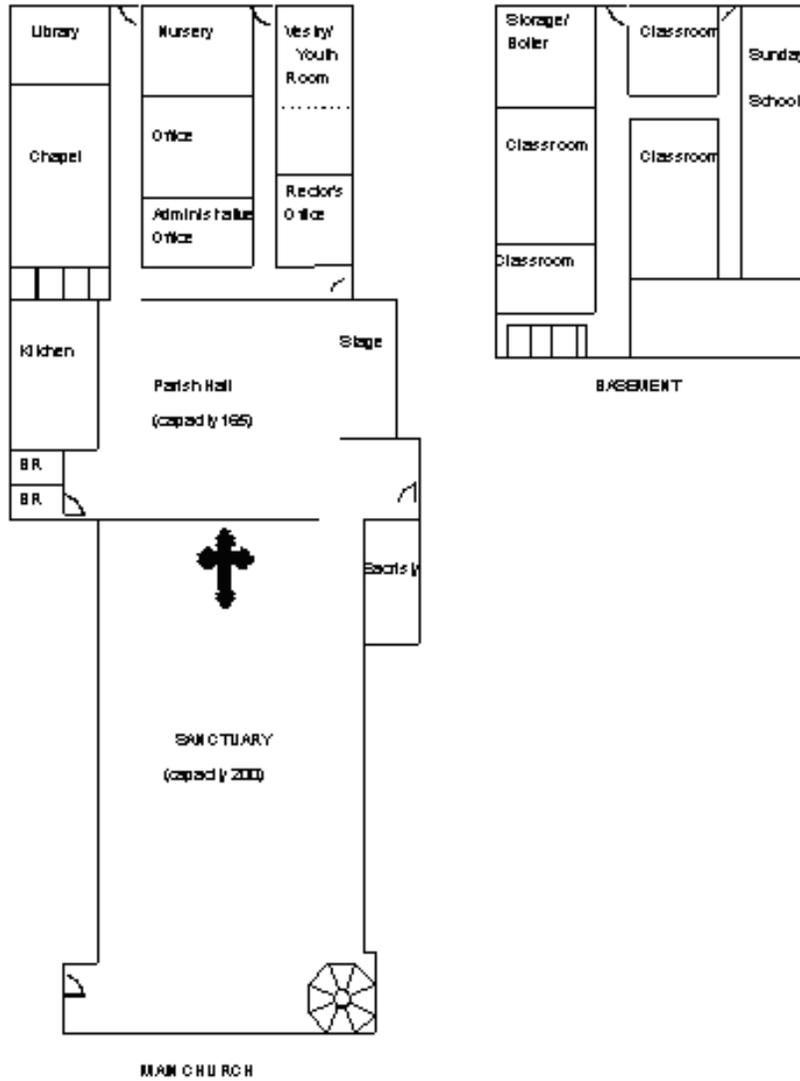
**Sunday School Enrollment: These numbers vary by season and regular school activities and commitments. There are also additional "drop-ins" — students that are not formally enrolled but occasionally attend class.

³ NOTE: for 2004, our amount pledged has increased by 10% to \$150,000.

Appendix B

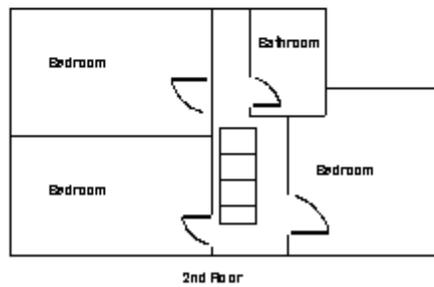
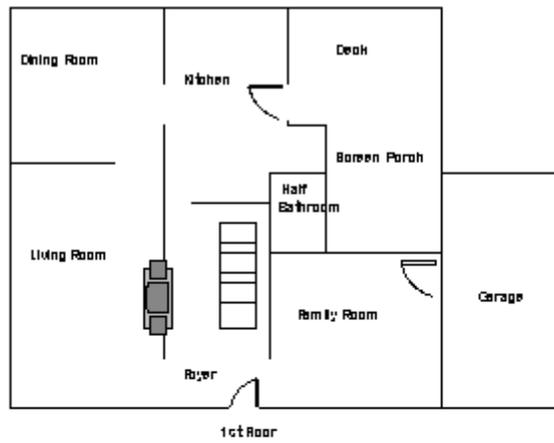
Church Property Layout

The Main Church



Church Property Layout

The Rectory



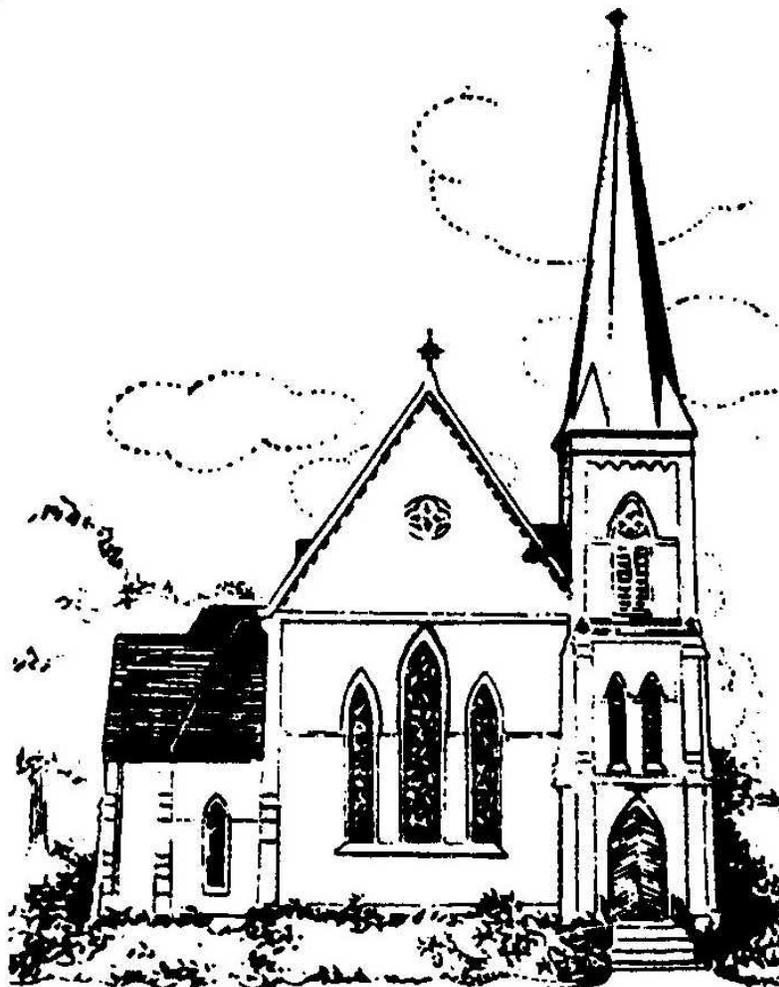
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Our Parishioners: who gave so generously of their time and insights for the surveys and attendance at the forums;
The Vestry, who called us together, and the wardens: for their support;
Jack Foster, the diocesan advisor: for his wisdom and experience;
The Rev. Bailey O. Whitbeck, interim priest: for her guidance;
Brad Davidson, Jessica Steward and Linda Steward: for their wonderful pictures;
Donna DeCarlo, parish administrator: for all her time and help;
Linda Steward and Jan Levangie: for the Sunday School and Education information; and
CopyMax: for our beautiful booklet.

Committee Members

Patricia Brewin, Chaplain
Richard Edmonds
Randi Heiselmeyer
Beth Herbst
Sara Marks
Bonnie Myers
Angela Podolsky, Secretary
Jane Robison
Joan Tansi, Co-chair
Mark Trumbore, Co-chair
Christopher Young





"TO ALL WHO ARE YOUNG AND NEED COUNSEL, TO ALL WHO ARE STRONG AND WANT A TASK; TO ALL WHO ARE WEARY AND NEED REST; TO ALL WHO ARE LONELY AND WANT COMPANIONSHIP; TO ALL WHO MOURN AND NEED COMFORT; TO ALL WHO ARE SINFUL AND NEED A SAVIOR - TO WHOSOEVER WILL, THIS CHURCH OPENS WIDE ITS DOORS AND IN THE NAME OF CHRIST THE LORD, SAYS - WELCOME"

Trinity Episcopal Church

47 East Street

P.O. Box 55

Wrentham, MA 02093

office@trinitywrentham.org

508-384-3958

www.trinitywrentham.org