

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH PARISH PROFILE 2018



INTRODUCTION

The Parish Profile is one of several methods used to inform candidates for the position of rector about Trinity Episcopal Church. It is a required step in the Episcopal Church to help steer interested and appropriate prospects in our direction. The Parish Profile characterizes the composition, history, ministries, practices and vision of our church. The material that comprises the Parish Profile is gleaned from the recent Parish Survey, from our annual report, from budget and parochial reports, and from the Chamber of Commerce. All quotes in red are lifted from parishioner's comments in the Parish Survey. The profile attempts to represent the truth about Trinity: who we are, where we have come from as a church, what we do, and where we are headed.

The Parish Profile is one step in the process of calling a new priest. It is also an informational document for parishioners to take stock of our current status. Because the profile is comprised of a distillation of attitudes, criticisms and hopes reflected in the survey, it does not reflect each individual submission. However, the profile does attempt to express both contentment and disenchantment with certain aspects of our parish life.

A description of Trinity Episcopal Church as having "prayer-soaked walls" brings to mind the generations that have worshiped and celebrated and struggled together here. As parishioners, we often refer to our "Trinity Family". Despite disagreements and differences, we do strive to act in accord, recalling the first and foremost commandment "to love our neighbors as ourselves". Many and disparate challenges face us now and in years to come. But, if history is any indication, and if parishioners are willing to adapt and be open to change, then Trinity will be up to the task; and God will continue to work through our church in future generations.

I. Who We Are

MISSION STATEMENT

The work of Trinity Episcopal Church is to connect with God and to become the hands and hearts of Jesus Christ in this world.

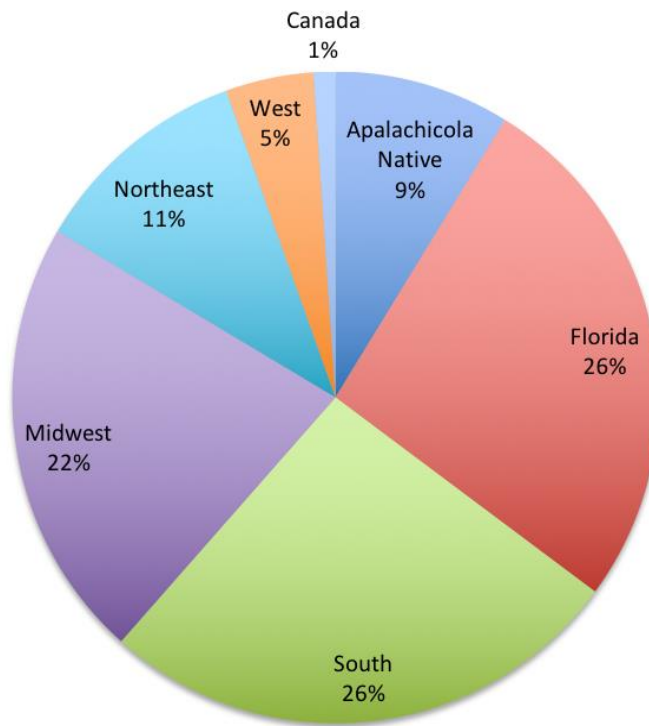
- *We provide a non-discriminatory and non-judgmental place of worship for all.*
 - *We uphold the canons and tenets of the Episcopal Church and actively participate in the Diocese of the Central Gulf Coast.*
 - *We seek to live into our baptismal vows to love and serve Christ.*
 - *We respect the dignity of God's living creatures and creation.*
 - *Through hospitality we welcome newcomers.*
 - *Through outreach we extend our care into the needs of the community.*
- *Through Christian education we expand our knowledge to better serve others.*
- *Through our liturgical practices we provide nourishment and comfort for the soul.*

“Trinity has made it comfortable and easy to become a regular attendee.”

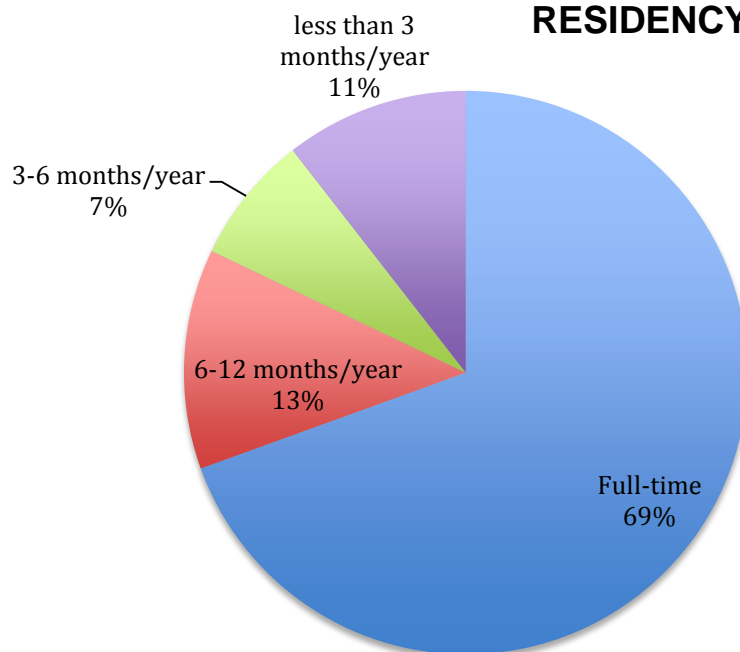
Although we are a seemingly homogeneous parish, we have come to reside in Apalachicola and attend Trinity from all over the U.S., as well as from outside of the country. The majority of our communicants claim the southeast/Florida or the Midwest as the area with which they identify most strongly.

“Trinity has become the most important reason we come to Florida each winter.”

REGIONAL IDENTIFICATION

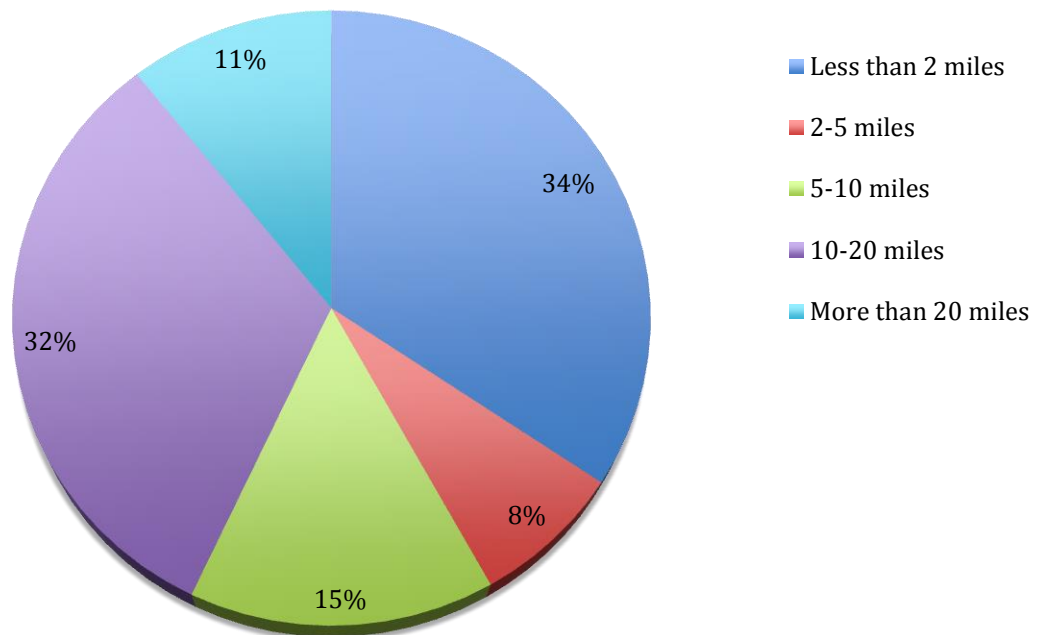


RESIDENCY IN AREA



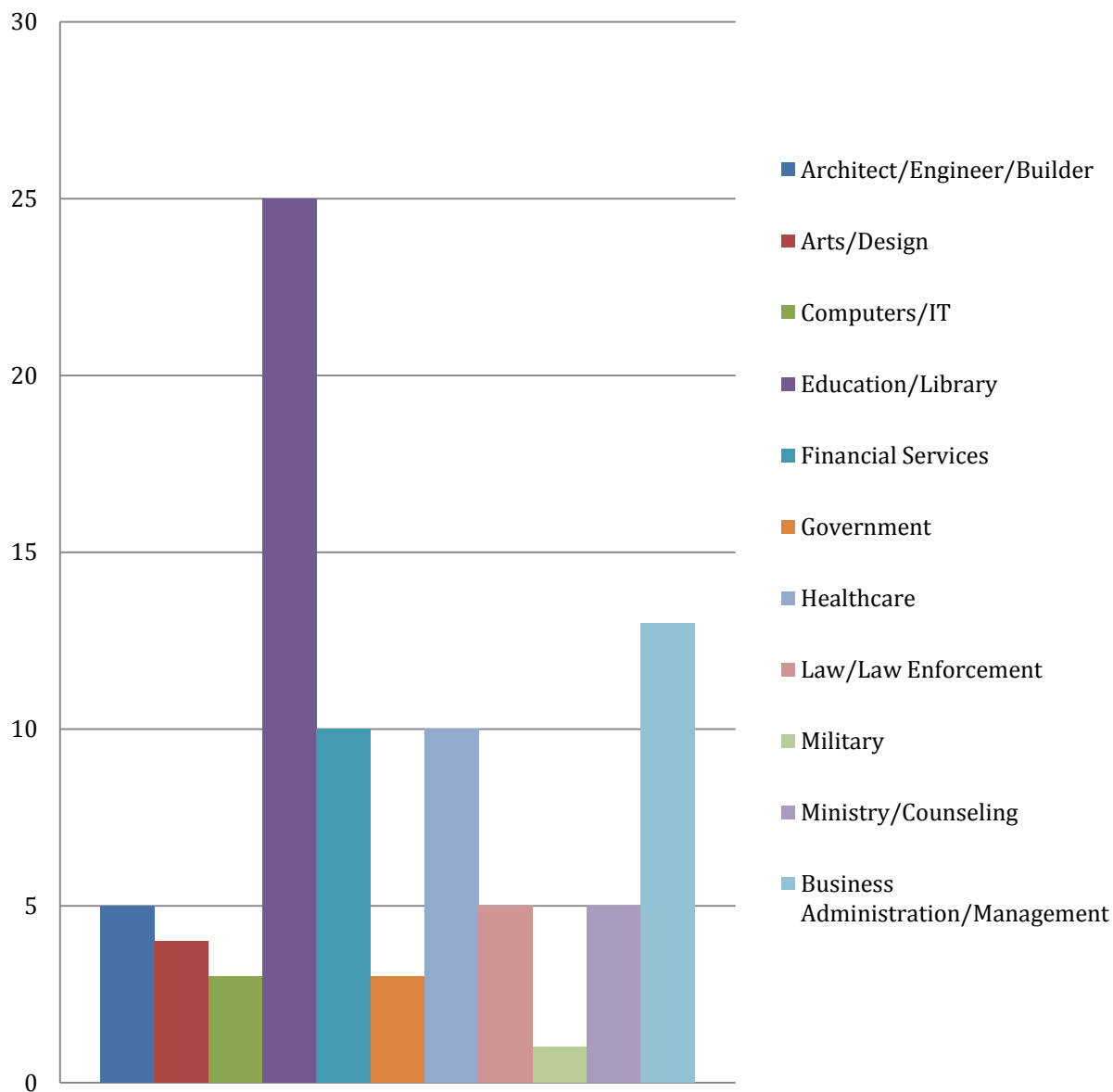
Our congregation is made up of mostly married couples. Percentage-wise, there are more female than male members, but we are also represented by singles, the divorced, the widowed, and people in partnerships. Communicants at Trinity hail from Gulf as well as Franklin County. Our church geography covers an approximately 60 miles radius. Apalachicola, Eastpoint, St. George Island, Cape San Blas, Port St. Joe, and Indian Pass are the primary locales that Trinity parishioners call home, but others travel even further distances to worship with us.

TRAVEL DISTANCE TO CHURCH



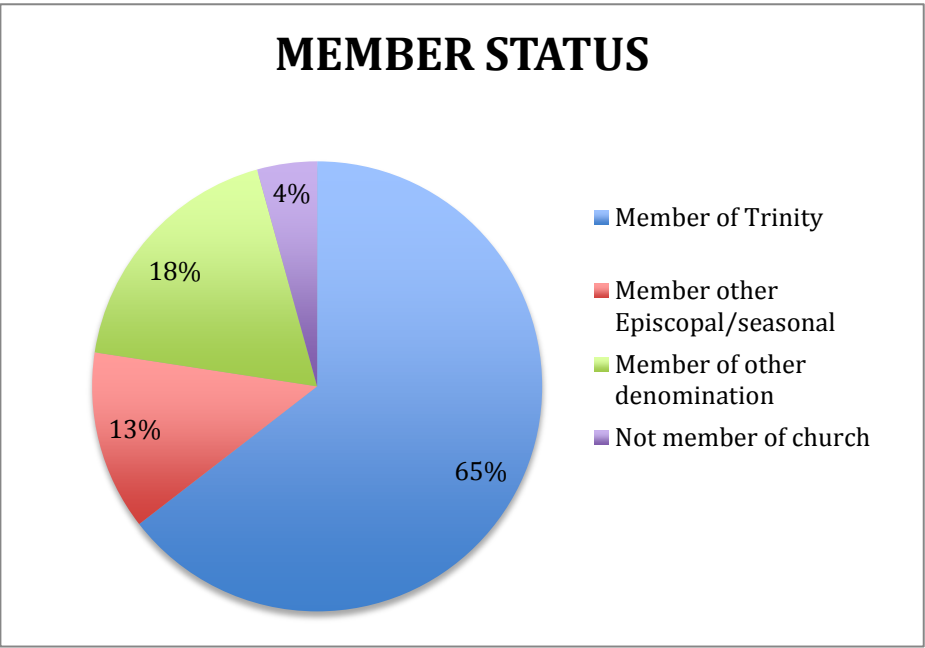
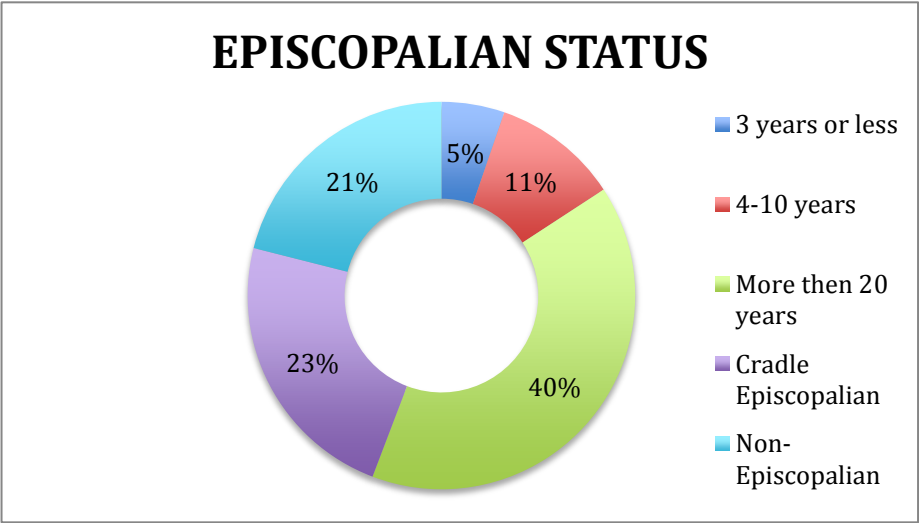
Although our professional backgrounds are diverse, most of us can find someone in the parish to relate to in terms of our current or past work experiences. As reported in the survey, many of us enjoyed careers as teachers or librarians. Financial services, business/management, and health care professions were revealed as strong in the rankings, too.

OCCUPATION



The survey revealed that 96% of respondents had completed a college/university or post-graduate degree. 75% reported that they are fully retired which corresponds with the age of our congregation. 99% of those answering the survey indicated that they are more than 56 years old. Perhaps a bit of a surprise in the survey was the fact that almost a quarter of respondents identify as cradle Episcopalians. Along with this number, 60% of those answering the survey describe themselves as either life-long Episcopalians or members of the church for more than twenty years. The member status chart delineates the breakdown of members vs. nonmembers at Trinity.

“Trinity is a community of caring new friends that has enabled me to quickly feel like I am a valued member of the congregation.”



“Trinity keeps me grounded. It is easy to make friends. There is acceptance of new people.”

II. Where We Live

Located in the Panhandle of North Florida in Franklin County, Apalachicola has a long and rich history. Established in 1831, the city was initially important as a port for cotton being transported down the Apalachicola River. Cotton was stored in brick warehouses here before being transferred for export to waiting ships in the Gulf. At one time, Apalachicola ranked as the third largest port on the Gulf Coast. In the late 1800s the lumber industry thrived in this area. Particularly prized indigenous timbers were heart pine and cypress which provided the raw materials for many homes and buildings in the town. Sponging had its time of prominence in the 19th century, too. For much of its tenure, Apalachicola has been identified with the fishing and seafood industry, especially oysters. But natural and man-made catastrophes in the past few decades have caused the decline of fishing and harvesting of shellfish in the bay and have spawned an economic crisis in the community. In the meantime, tourism has become a burgeoning source of income. Today, restaurants, boutique and specialty shops are attracting visitors from near and distant places. Fishing and boating are among the many recreational activities the county affords.

Because of limited access, this area of Florida has come to be known as “The Forgotten Coast”. More than 70% of the county is covered by state or federal forests. Highway 98 is the main east to west route thorough Apalachicola and State Road 65 approaches it from the north. There is a flavor of “Old Florida” here that has vanished almost everywhere else in the state. Many newcomers cherish the remoteness of the area. Native Apalachicolans, proud of their ancestry, are eager to share history and family stories that link to a bygone era. Many trace their heritage to Greek, Italian and African-American roots that have been established here for generations. Latinos, though fairly new to the area, have a presence in Apalachicola, too. The city of Apalachicola claims approximately 2500 residents. Franklin County has a population of around 11,000. Eastpoint, Florida (across the bridge from Apalachicola) and St. George Island round out the inhabited parts of this western end of the county.



Downtown Apalachicola



Our Seafood Industry

A consolidated school services all of Franklin County from K-12. The ABC Charter School is an option for students in K-8 through a lottery system. For more information on schools in this district, see (<http://www.franklincountyschools.org>).

In Apalachicola more than 900 homes, historic buildings and sites are included in its National Register District. Apalachicola was honored in 2008 as one of “America’s Dozen Distinctive Destinations” by the National Trust for Historic Preservation. From bungalows with inviting gardens to grand homes graced by old-growth trees, Apalachicola exudes the atmosphere of a southern town of yesteryear. Fortunately, modern amenities and progressive attitudes have taken root here, too. Link for maps and more information on the city and county: (<http://www.apalachicolabay.org>).



Lafayette Park Gazebo

III. How We Manifest Our Faith

WORSHIP

Although our church ministries, parish life events and parishioner interactions connect us in many and varied ways, we are never more connected than in our shared experience of worship. Through the liturgy, prayers and creeds, listening and harmonizing together, and in the Eucharist, we tap into the shared core of our faith and parish life.

Trinity is a traditional church, striking a mean between high and low church liturgical practices. The 1979 Book of Common Prayer and the 1982 Hymnal are our standards, and we invite all to share in the Eucharist. For the Sunday readings we use the Scripture Text Bulletin insert from the New Revised Standard Edition of the Bible. Personal piety runs the gamut from those who genuflect, make the sign of the cross, and kneel for prayers, to those who engage in none of these practices. In our parish survey 33% of respondents replied that they hold moderate/centrist theological views. On the other hand, 25% stated that their theological views are conservative, while another 25% responded that their theological views are liberal.

We hold two services on Sunday mornings. Our 8:00 a.m. Sunday service follows Rite I and is devoid of music. It is a shorter service and attendance is slight (15-20), but regular. The 10:30 a.m. service, attended by 78% of the survey respondents (50-70), observes Rite II and is augmented by choir, organ and piano. Under our previous rector, we rotated the Eucharistic Prayer from A-D throughout the month, and we alternated forms for Prayers of the People weekly. During Lent, and at times in Advent, Rite I is used for both services. For examples of our Sunday bulletin connect to our website (www.trinityapalachicola.org).



Sunday Morning Worship

Occasionally, other services are celebrated. Since we are lacking an assistant or associate rector at Trinity, in the absence of our priest or when we do not have a supply priest scheduled, we worship with

Morning Prayer. At the other end of the spectrum, an Evensong service, incorporating traditional canticles and sung responses, is used to kick-off our annual Tour of Homes in May. In the mid 2000's we held a Wednesday morning healing service in the memorial garden (weather permitting); but after several years, interest waned, and it was eventually discontinued. On Labor Day Weekend 2018 Trinity tested a Bluegrass Eucharist that garnered a great deal of enthusiasm from the congregation and community visitors, alike, and was successfully paired with a church picnic on the grounds. Results from the Parish Survey regarding additional or alternative types of services indicated that more Evensong is desired by several. There were single requests for Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve, a Taize service, a contemporary service, and Morning Prayer during the week.

On several occasions, a Christian Seder has been performed in conjunction with Maundy Thursday. Most recently, however, we have opted for a simple Agape Meal in connection with this solemn service. Although foot washing on Maundy Thursday was tried a few times, it was not favorably embraced by the majority.

The ancient practice of contemplative meditation known as Centering Prayer was introduced at Trinity in the mid 2000's. Although a small group, it attracts both church members and members of the community. The Trinity group meets weekly and devotes 15 minutes to an introductory reading pertaining to prayer. Subsequently, 20 minutes is dedicated to the practice of Centering Prayer. The group leader, Randy Mims, represents Trinity's group at the quarterly meeting of the Tallahassee Centering Prayer Facilitators Group.

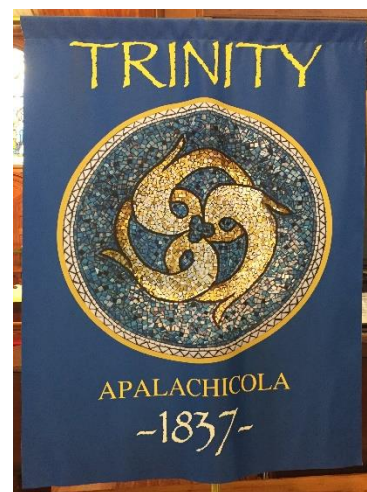
The Worship Committee oversees the many lay ministries that support and participate in our worship services. It coordinates activities that involve our collective worship practices. The committee is composed of representatives of lay ministries: Altar Guild, Flower Guild, Acolytes, LEMs, Verger, Greeters, Lectors and Prayers of the People. The Choir Director/ Organist represents Trinity's music program on this standing committee.



Bell Ringers



Palm Sunday



Our Banner

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Christian Education encompasses a variety of offerings at Trinity. In the Parish Survey participants registered their satisfaction level with the current programs as 46% in the satisfied/ very satisfied range. Few expressed dissatisfaction, but 41% indicated that they “didn’t know”, revealing that we need to do a better job at disseminating information on Christian Education at Trinity. Sadly lacking are children/youth programs, since we have virtually no children in our parish. Some point out that if we created the programs, we could attract the youth. Others disagree and feel that we should recruit children/youth to the church and then build the programs. At present, we continue to lament the scarcity of children/youth, but we have no plan for how to counter the problem.

The Adult Study Class, led by Jim Anderson, meets on Sunday morning between services and discussion revolves around the day’s gospel. *Synthesis CE* is used as the guideline for dialogue.

Monday School, which meets on Monday mornings, evolved as an outgrowth of a confirmation class. Once confirmed, the new confirmands elected to continue their education about the Episcopal Church. Over time, the class morphed into a broader range of topical discussions based on selected books and readings. The group ranges in size from 10-25 participants.

In Gulf County (some 25 miles distant from Apalachicola), The Outback Bible Study, under the leadership of Jim Anderson, is a popular draw. Outback Bible Study pairs bible study with a communal dinner. The group meets weekly on Thursday evening and attracts anywhere from 10-20 participants per week. Readings range from books of the bible to other writings with a religious focus. Group participants are a mixture of Trinity parishioners and locals who are not members. Seasonal visitors enjoy being involved, too. Because of the success of this group, the Parish Survey reflects calls for replicating this program in other areas. Bible study, plus food, and fellowship have proven a favorite combination.

“Because we are 20 miles away, we often feel left out. We have formed some good friends [in Outback].”

Education for Ministry (EfM), sponsored by the University of the South School of Theology, was reinstated at Trinity in 2012 after a several decade’s hiatus. The first group of new graduates completed the course in 2016 and it continues to be a vibrant and expanding program. The four-year distance learning program of study is based on the examination of biblical texts, the study of church history and tradition, and analysis of theological thought. The curriculum requires commitment, stimulates questioning and prompts exploration of faith.

A Confirmation/Reception class has normally been held on an annual basis in advance of the Bishop’s visit, but in recent years, the numbers of those seeking confirmation has dwindled. Ironically, we have had a number of new people attending church, but not pursuing confirmation. Being more intentional regarding the education of newcomers, and presenting options for official affiliation with the church, could serve to our advantage.

Trinity was introduced to Natural Spirituality (“Dream Work”) in 2006 through a series of workshops based on both The Haden Institute guidelines and materials (<https://www.hadeninstitute.com/>) and Jungian psychology. Three groups were formed at that time, and two are functioning still. Natural Spirituality appeals to both members and non-members of Trinity, alike, who wish to delve into inner work through sharing of dreams within a circle of trust. Although, dream work is not to everyone’s taste, it has filled a need for many who seek a deeper understanding of themselves and an alternative connection with God.

“Natural Spirituality created lasting friendships and opened new vistas of God and meaning through exploration of inner life.

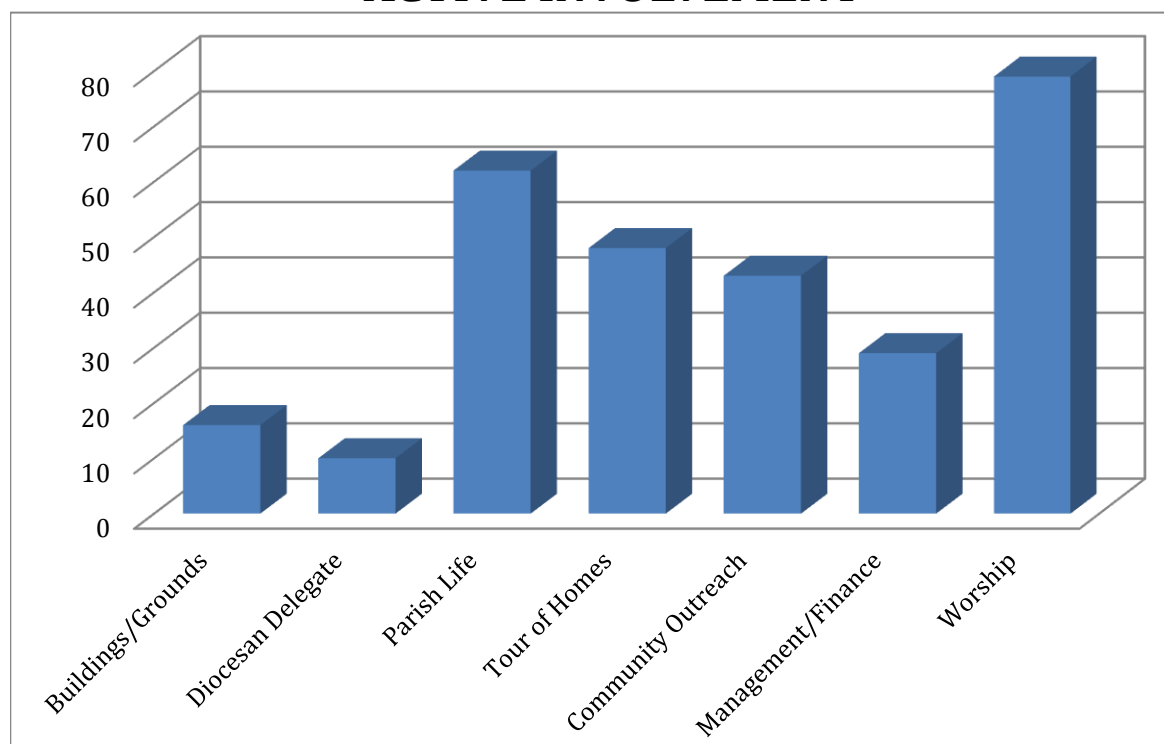
A Faith Sharing group meets monthly for a presentation and discussion on topics related to how faith reveals itself in our lives. It is a small group that is devoted to the principles of listening, maintaining confidence, and speaking one's own truth. Faith Sharing is open to all interested persons.

MINISTRIES

The lay ministries of altar guild, flower guild, greeters, acolytes, lectors, LEMs, verger, and prayer leaders are included in the preparation or celebration of worship services. In most of these ministries, individuals take part on a rotating schedule. Usually one person has responsibility for scheduling and oversight of the ministry. In 2017 we added a verger to our lay ministries. At present, the use of the verger is confined to High Holy Days or special services designated by the priest. Prior to the 10:30 a.m. service, a healing ministry is offered at the chancel rail.

Standing committees support our church in specialized areas. Among these are the Parish Life Committee, the Worship Committee, The Stewardship Committee, the Finance Committee, the Memorial Garden Committee, Penny's Worth, Tour of Homes Committee, and the Outreach Committee. Volunteers are solicited from time to time to help with building and ground maintenance and communications needs. A Prayer Shawl ministry moves between active and inactive status. [The 2017 Annual Meeting Report may be obtained by contacting our Parish Administrator at \[info@trinityapalachicola.org\]\(mailto:info@trinityapalachicola.org\).](#)

ACTIVE INVOLVEMENT



Communications

Since 2016, our bimonthly newsletter has been distributed online and can be found on our website. Our website (www.trinityapalachicola.org) is in an evolutionary phase; still, it is especially effective in generating interest for our annual Tour of Homes. The website needs more frequent updating, as well as revision, to enhance efficiency. We also have a presence on Facebook ([search: Trinity Episcopal Church Apalachicola](#)) which is helpful for visitors. Although we don't currently record sermons, we may be able to make this a reality before long.

One of the deficits that is frequently cited in the area of communications is the lack of information flow from the vestry. The vestry is committed to corrective measures in communication. In addition, approximately 20% of the parish indicated that they felt uninformed on the financial condition and needs of the church. About the same percentage felt uninformed when it came to announcements regarding scheduled meetings and volunteer opportunities. Only a third of the congregation was familiar with the annual report. Obviously, these statistics point to work that needs to be done in this area.

Music

Trinity's music program is led by Ina Margaret Meyer who serves as Trinity's Choir Director and Organist/Pianist. She accompanies the choir and performs preludes on the antique Henry Erben tracker organ and a piano which was recently donated to the church. Choir member, Nancy Totman, also acts in the role of pianist, and she makes the anthem selections for the choir. Randy Mims typically directs the anthem. This group of three principles and a recorder group perform the musical prelude preceding the late service on a rotating basis.

Currently, there are nearly 20 people that routinely sing with the choir. Participation is purely voluntary; no auditions are required, and we have no paid singers. It is a dedicated group with the involvement of some choir members ranking in decades. Choir practice is held on Wednesdays from 4-5 p.m. and on Sunday from 9:45 a.m. until 10:10 a.m. Sopranos with range remain high on our wish list.

Hymn selections are made by the choir director based on the weekly lectionary throughout the church year and the lectionary for special services. Choices are then subject to the priest's approval. The service music is changed with the church season. Several years ago, we purchased copies of "Wonder, Love and Praise" as a supplemental hymnal.

For the Evensong service in May, Trinity combines its talents with those of the Port St. Joe First United Methodist Church to enhance its tone and to nurture an ecumenical atmosphere for this special service. An innovation in the music program, the fall 2018 Bluegrass Eucharist was enthusiastically received by the congregation and the community. A "Lessons and Carols" service is slated for Advent.

Although some survey respondents were highly critical of the music program, 63% of those replying to the Parish Survey expressed satisfaction with the current state of affairs.



Our Choir



Bluegrass Eucharist

Outreach

Through our outreach efforts we have the opportunity to act as Good Samaritans for our community. The population base of Franklin county is not an affluent one, and there is much work to be done. In the choice of projects, we choose to support, and in our active embrace of them, we embody the work of Christ among us. Trinity's long arm of outreach is reflected in the many and varied programs it helps to sustain.

"Love my church community; volunteerism at its best..."



"Bring Me a Book" reading volunteers



Weekly Yoga and Tai Chi Classes

Penny's Worth, a thrift store operated by the church, is recognized as Trinity's "face on the community". Located in an old house a half mile west of the church on Highway 98, Penny's Worth, provides donated clothing and household goods to the community at bargain prices. And when need dictates, goods are distributed free of charge. Revenue from sales is used to support the church and to provide funding for other outreach projects. Penny's Worth is operated solely by volunteers and it is a place where our parishioners intersect with the local population.



Penny's Worth

In 2017 we began a "Loose Change Collection" which solicited monies for Franklin's Promise Food Bank, the Matchbox youth program, Franklin County Schools uniform t-shirts, Welcome Home Baby,

St. George Island Cat Allies, Franklin County School Art Fund, Holy Family Senior Center, Bring Me a Book Franklin County, and Back Pack Buddies. This program will continue to identify new projects which require assistance. Through Franklin County's Early Start Program, the Welcome Home Baby project organizes layette supplies for newborns. These baskets often contain handmade items by parishioners. In addition to regular monetary contributions to Franklin's Promise, the community food bank, Trinity also supplies them with volunteers and monthly food donations.

Other Outreach efforts have involved raising funds for a Boy Scout Troop to attend the National Jamboree with which members of our congregation are affiliated, helping support county 4H scholarships, and assisting with graduation expenses for several homeless students.

Trinity provides a home for some continuing health and wellness programs including beginner and advanced Tai Chi classes, and a Chair Yoga class. There is no set fee for these classes, but donations are encouraged and supplement our Outreach endeavors. Space is also provided at Trinity for AA, Al Anon, Overeaters Anonymous, Alzheimer's Support Group and a Bridge group.

St. Benedict's Montessori School for preschoolers began operation in 2015 on the premises of Trinity. Starting the school was an initiative on the part of the parish to minister to children and their families. Our parishioners were actively involved as volunteers during the school's tenure in our location. While the school recently relocated to Gulf County, it remains a successful example of Trinity's willingness to try something new.

In addition, Trinity sends monthly checks to Camp Beckwith and Wilmer Hall in Alabama. Wilmer Hall in Mobile, AL is a Diocesan-sponsored home for children/teens who have been removed from their homes for many reasons.

Through our Outreach efforts we have provided aid to areas for disaster relief, including Houston after Hurricane Harvey, and Eastpoint, in our own county, after a devastating fire destroyed nearly 40 homes. With Trinity's lead more than \$7000 was raised to aid the fire victims. Among our parishioners, we are fortunate to have an avid advocate for the Episcopal Relief Fund and she organizes fundraisers for ER throughout the year.

The Parish Survey showed that 62% of respondents are pleased with our outreach program. However, 22% checked that they "didn't know". Again, we need to pay attention to those who do not feel knowledgeable about our parish. On the other hand, because of its high visibility among communicants, Penny's Worth ranked 87% in the satisfaction range.

On the horizon is a new community shelter with which Trinity will be involved. The congregation will be kept informed of its progress and possibilities for volunteers as they materialize. We intend to continue to "Go Forth for God..."

Vestry

In 2017 we reduced the number of vestry members from nine to seven. The new representation appeared to more accurately reflect the percentage of our parish that should be serving in a leadership capacity. In recent years there has been a decided lack of interest in standing for the vestry election. Candidates who chose to run were proclaimed by acclamation. We recognize that we have some work to do in this area both by encouraging new members to assume the mantle of leadership and by rallying old members to accept the responsibility yet one more time. It is vital to Trinity's future that we recruit vestry members with needed skill sets who will apply themselves purposefully and enthusiastically to the church's business. Despite parish differences with the vestry

from time to time, 57% of Parish Survey respondents expressed satisfaction with the work of the vestry, while 21% were unsure if the vestry was performing on task or not.

By-Laws

A copy of the By-Laws can be found on our website (www.trinityapalachicola.org)

Tour of Homes

Initiated in the early 1990s, *The Historic Apalachicola Home & Garden Tour* is an annual fundraising event for the preservation and maintenance of our three historic buildings: the church, the rectory, and the parish hall. It is a time-honored tradition in the community and a yearly destination for many repeat visitors. Held the first weekend in May, it is kicked off with Evensong on Friday evening followed by an informal reception open to all. The tour takes place on Saturday and usually features 8-9 homes and gardens. In addition, ECW hosts a luncheon at the parish hall on the day of the tour. The tour is dependent on the generosity of everyone in the community from those who open their homes, to those who serve as greeters in the homes, to the many volunteers it takes to organize and effect this event, and to those who financially support the event. In recent years, we have combined an open silent auction with the Tour. As the auction has grown in sophistication as well as size, it now nets as much or more income than the tour tickets themselves. Information on the Tour of Homes can be found on the Tour website (www.apalachicolahistorichometour.org) The Parish Survey mirrors the popularity of this event with 86% expressing satisfaction with it, and only 14% saying they “don’t know”.

“Need more commitment from members; same few people do all the work.”



Villa Rosa- Featured Home

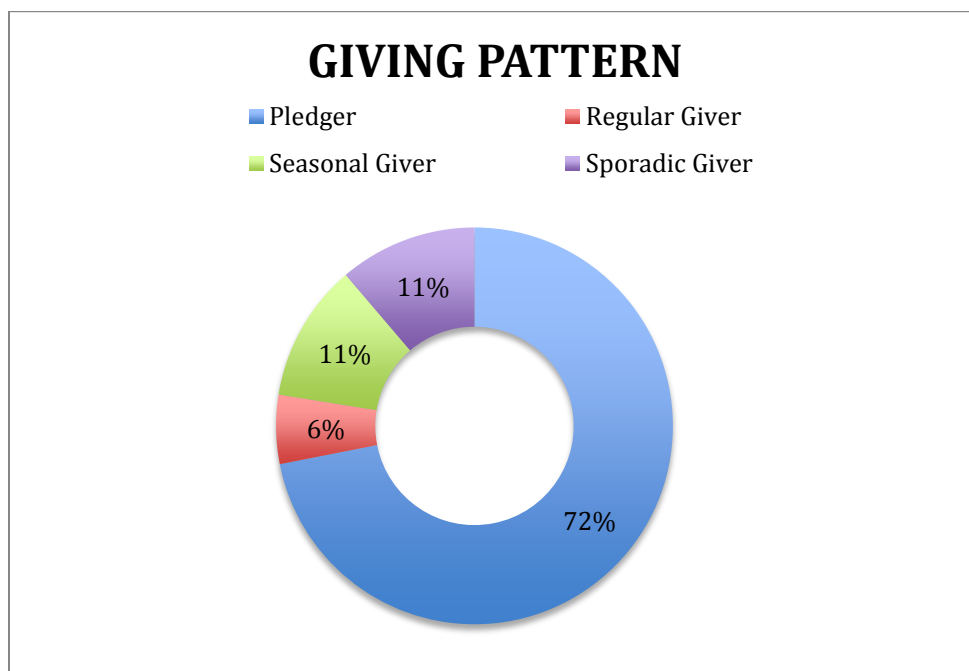


Silent Auction

Giving

For the past two years, Trinity's finances have remained in the black, and in line with the proposed budget. In part, this period of stability is due to some generous donations, not the least of which were remunerations received from BP for the oil spill of 2010. Poll results show that 53% of the respondents are satisfied with the management of church finances. Still, 36% stated that they "don't know". The 2017 Financial Report and two years preceding it may be obtained by contacting our Parish Administrator at Info@trinityapalchicola.org.

A stewardship campaign is part of the fall cycle of events at Trinity. However, we anticipate the development of a year-round program that addresses stewardship in its many facets. Currently, letters are sent to parishioners encouraging pledges and listing the ways pledges enable us to set budget priorities. Testimonials, visual aids enumerating the locations where parishioners volunteer outside our church community, and newsletter articles soliciting pledges are some of the many ways we strive to educate the congregation about stewardship.



A Diocesan Fund manages the assets of Trinity Church which include the Young Bequest Fund, The Restoration and Preservation Trust, the Trinity Endowment Fund, the Herbert and Pearl Marshall Trust and the Genevieve Marshall Altar Fund. In 2017, a Maintenance Reserve Fund derived from the BP oil spill settlement was added to this account, creating a quasi-endowment fund to be used in the future for unbudgeted maintenance. The Endowment/Gift Committee oversees the work and allocation of our investments.

Estate planning is being actively promoted by our Finance Committee. The parish already has access to materials on this topic. In the near future, we plan to organize workshops that raise awareness of this process, urging parishioners to make Trinity a part of their individual estate distribution.

The Pillar Program, an annual fundraising program in connection with our Tour of Homes, helps to raise thousands of dollars annually for the renovation and preservation of our three historic buildings. For this purpose, and in lieu of a capital campaign, we solicit donations from parishioners as well as local businesses. Increasing participation among our members in this valuable program is an ongoing goal.

Parish Life/ Hospitality

The Sixth Rule of St. Benedict decrees that “All guests who present themselves are to be welcomed as Christ, who said ‘I was a stranger and you welcomed me’”. The mission of Parish Life is to cultivate connections through hospitality with all who worship or socialize with us. Parish Life plans and executes a variety of social and fundraising events which focus on fellowship and hospitality. By sharing in educational activities, celebrating religious and secular holidays together, and including the community in special festivities, parishioners are empowered to be in communion with one another, to seek common ground for communication, and cultivate lasting friendships. Parish Life invites parishioners to serve the church with creativity, enthusiasm and industriousness by forging connections with other. Trinity seeks to extend hospitality to members and visitors alike. The most overt example of this is our sumptuous Sunday morning coffee hour following the late service. Church ministries and groups are assigned to provide food and drink for this time of informal fellowship on a rotating basis. For funerals held at the church, the ECW enlists help from the women of the church in furnishing food for the bereaved family and for the reception. Among visitors we are known as a welcoming church, and we desire to uphold this reputation as we move forward.

Foyer Groups were revived at Trinity several years ago and have been quite popular with communicants. Because of the breadth of the geography over which Trinity communicants are spread, it is a challenge to put groups together so that individuals do not have to travel so far. We continue to try different methods of coping with this situation.

“Foyer groups afford good opportunities to deepen relationships with parishioners.”

Holy Week events include an Agape Meal and a Children’s Easter Egg Hunt on Easter Sunday following the late service. In the spring we also celebrate the Bishop’s annual visit and we regularly host a covered dish dinner on our name day, Trinity Sunday. The Sunday before Thanksgiving, and on the Sunday of the annual meeting, we also routinely share a meal together as a parish.

Event favorites that appeal to the greater Apalachicola community are the Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper, and the Blessing of the Animals. In 2017 we discontinued a long tradition of hosting a luncheon during the city’s Seafood Festival. We found that the luncheon was no longer worth the amount of work it took to execute it. In its place we combined a bake sale with a bazaar featuring handmade items by members of the parish. The new Trinity Market has proven to be not only lucrative, but it has infused new enthusiasm into a jaded activity.



Thanksgiving Dinner



Our Serving Line

The Blessing of the Animals



IV. Where We've Been

For more than 180 years, services have been held at Trinity Episcopal Church. The church was organized in 1836 when Florida was still a U.S. Territory and Andrew Jackson was President. At the time, the area was a virtual wilderness comprised of swamps and forests and peopled by Indians and runaway slaves. Outlaws inhabited the barrier islands.

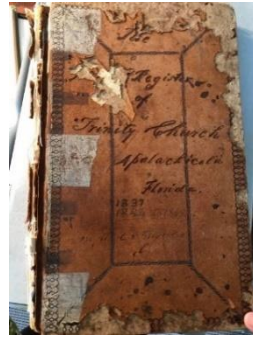
In 1838, the white pine Greek-Revival church building, cut to measure and assembled in sections in White Plains, New York traveled by schooner down the East Coast, around the tip of Florida and up the Gulf Coast to Apalachicola. It is considered to be one of the first pre-fabricated buildings in the state.

According to lore, Trinity Episcopal is the sixth oldest church in Florida and the second oldest with an active congregation. It is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. An Erben tracker organ (1840) has been a mainstay of the church's music during its entire history, although it now relies on electricity for the blower that supplies wind to the bellows. The hand-stenciling on the ceiling is original to the church and the circle of stars represent the number of states in the Union at the time.

The church was consecrated on February 15, 1841 by Bishop Henry Otey of Tennessee. The Rev. Mr. A. Bloomer Hart served as rector. Among the first vestry members were John Gorrie and Alvan Chapman. Gorrie, a nationally recognized figure, is credited with the invention of the ice machine, a forerunner to modern refrigeration and air-conditioning. Chapman is well-known for his work as a botanist and author of *Flora of the Southern United States*.



Trinity Church- 1892



Church Registry 1837

Initially, the pews were laid out in the manner of the Baptist Meeting House in Providence, RI with two side aisles and the absence of a central aisle. Following a tradition that dated back to 16th Century England, many of the pews were sold or rented. A diagram of the church interior hangs on the wall of the church, designating the pews by family name. Although seating had to be made available for everyone, the funds from this practice provided an initial revenue source. Needless to say, this funding method was not without controversy.

Prior to the Civil War, blacks heard the same sermons as whites, but were relegated to balcony seating which was only accessible by outside staircases. However, during

Reconstruction, Frank Cook, a former slave became the first African-American to serve on the vestry. This spirit of inclusiveness continues to be a part of Trinity's parish today.

Even now, the church's exterior is almost identical to its original appearance, although the addition of the sanctuary (1921-1922) significantly enlarged the building. The addition afforded space for the choir and an altar recessed from the nave. A middle aisle was created at this time. The once flat-roofed bell tower has been modified in the years since construction, too. The first bell was reputedly melted to make cannon during the Civil War. At the same time, the church's cushions and rugs were donated to "the cause" for blankets and clothing for Confederate soldiers.



The Marshall House- Our Rectory

In 1899, the Ladies Guild raised \$800 to begin construction on The Rectory. George Marshall, architect of many of Apalachicola's grand homes and a member of Trinity, erected the Queen Anne style house on a lot adjacent to the church. The Rectory is constructed of cypress and heart pine. The Eastlake-influence detail and the angled fireplaces are typical of Marshall's work. In 1997, Trinity members chose to name the Rectory in Marshall's honor. An extensive renovation was completed 2000 and additional improvements have been made since then.

Benedict Hall, next door to the church, functions as our parish hall. It was completed in 1932 and is named in honor of the Rev. George E. Benedict, priest at Trinity from 1916-1930. Benedict Hall is the principal meeting place of parish groups and community organizations. Plus, it furnishes a venue for regular health and wellness programs and parish life events.



Benedict Hall

Between the church and the parish hall, The Trinity Memorial Garden provides niches for the interment of ashes of deceased parishioners. A mosaic fountain furnishes a focal point in this peaceful setting. The rear walkway is lined with memorial bricks honoring departed loved ones and is an ongoing project. During the past year, the large pots have been adopted by parishioners with a passion for gardening. Patti McCartney, whose initial donation for the garden enabled its development, has just completed a book chronicling the memorial garden's inception and evolution. Her tireless work on behalf of this project is a testament to the dedication and energy of our parishioners.



Memorial Garden and Fountain

In 2011 Trinity purchased a house on an adjacent property to the church grounds and converted the residence into needed office and meeting space for the church. With substantial monetary help from one parishioner, the building was renovated in 2012. The refurbishment provided office space for the rector, a prayer room, a library, reception desk area, storage and a conference room. The conference room is utilized by outside organizations such as AA et al, and it supplies space for Sunday School, EfM and other church-related meetings.



Church Office

Throughout its history, Trinity has vacillated back and forth between a mission and parish church. Its status was often linked to its budget and to the prosperity of the community at the time. Trinity most recently transitioned from mission to parish in 2008. No doubt, Trinity will be conscientious about maintaining this status because it values the parish designation.

The first woman was elected to Trinity's vestry in 1969. By the 1980s women were no longer uncommon in this position. However, it was not until 2005 that Trinity called its first woman as priest. Martha Caldwell Harris served first as Vicar of Trinity and was instrumental in moving Trinity toward parish status. She served from 2005-2018.

The original altar in the church is attached to the rear wall of the sanctuary. In order to effect a more welcoming climate, and to be in accord with other Episcopal churches, our former priest explored moving the historical altar away from the wall. However, due to the age and materials involved, this modification was not advised. Moreover, there was a great deal of conflict surrounding the proposed change. Ultimately, a compromise was settled upon that included a portable communion table that didn't impede the view of the original altar. The new table is removable for Lent and for other services of special significance to the church when communion is served from the original altar. The inlaid wooden communion table has afforded an attractive and unobtrusive solution, agreeable to most.

In its long and colorful history, Trinity Episcopal Church has invited change while revering its heritage. Yet, efforts at keeping abreast of the restoration of our historic buildings and grounds are a constant challenge. Financially, we have been greatly assisted by the revenue from our annual Tour of Homes. Aided by the skills of vestry members, we have mapped out a fiscally sound plan and sensible schedule for regular maintenance and renovations. Members, visitors, and the Apalachicola community, alike, are proud of the tradition that Trinity Episcopal Church represents and remain responsive to its present needs, just as they have been for almost two centuries.

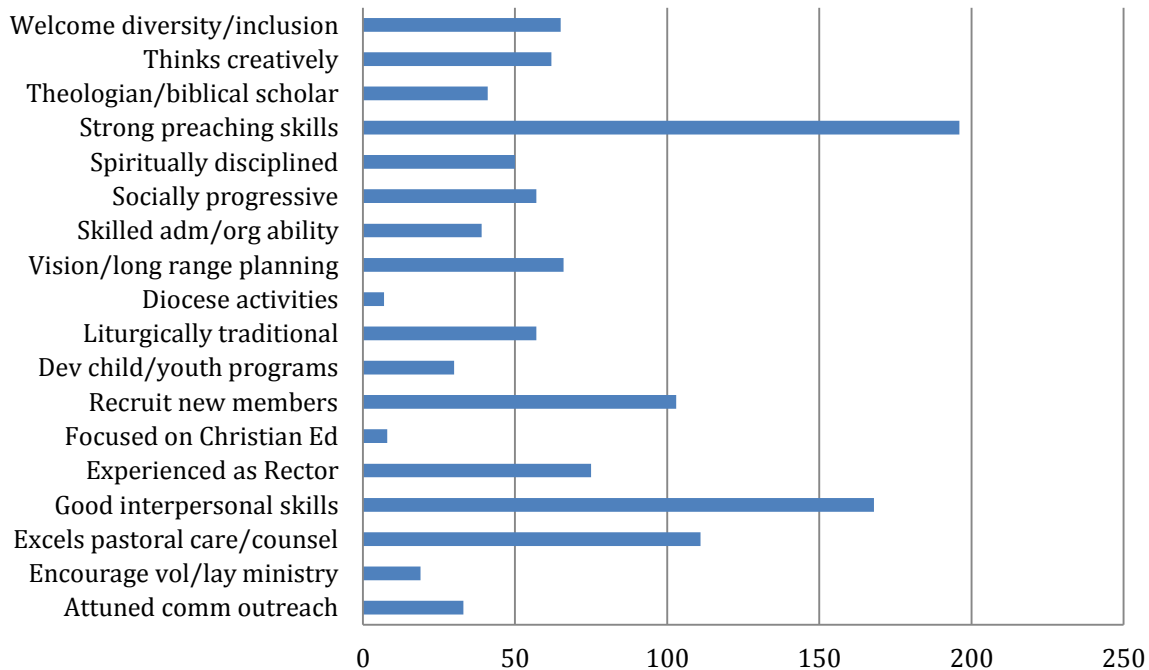
V. Where We Are Headed

VISION STATEMENT

Trinity Episcopal Church strives to welcome all people who wish to worship God, seek spiritual growth, participate in a loving Christian community, and to share Christ's message of justice, peace and love through outreach and service with joy and humility.

In calling a new rector to Trinity Episcopal Church we are primarily seeking a priest who demonstrates spirituality, pastoral care, and inclusiveness. Being skilled as an administrator with proven organizational abilities is a top priority for our parishioners, too. Finally, we are looking for a visionary. An aptitude for strategic planning and an interest in helping Trinity adapt to inevitable change are valued as prized qualities in a candidate.

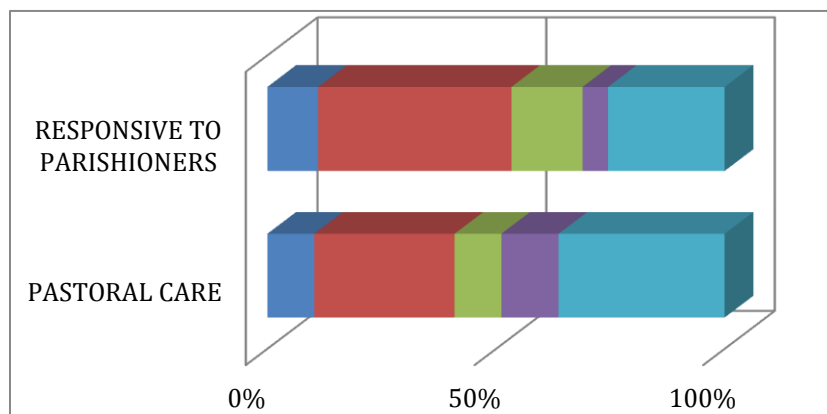
NEW RECTOR QUALITIES



Having already broken the glass ceiling with our first woman priest, it is not of utmost concern to most of our communicants whether the priest we call is male or female. The majority of us prefer someone from mid 30s to mid 50s in age, preferably married; but a priest who is divorced, or even single is not out of the questions according to the results of the Parish Survey.

“Trinity made living here a happier place with all the interesting, caring people in the church. Very positive experience belonging to Trinity.”

Pastoral Responsiveness



Because of our largely senior population, we have come to rely on technology later than some churches with younger members. However, we have made strides in certain domains, and we intend to continue honing our skills in this area. A priest with personal expertise in technology would be of assistance to us in technical matters and could help to allay fears of novices in this brave, new world.

Many comments in the Parish Survey registered a desire for more diversity in our church. Our church is woefully lacking in children and younger members as well as people of color and the economically disadvantaged. In the Parish Survey, 46% of respondents expressed dis-satisfaction with the current amount of diversity (or lack of), 11% said that they “didn’t know”. And, even though Trinity has been accepting of church guidelines regarding same-sex unions, we remain primarily heterosexual in composition. Serious attempts to increase our membership and diversity would be lofty, but worthwhile pursuits.

Doing our part to become better stewards of the environment will be a process that we continue under new leadership. Becoming a “Green Church” was a goal of our former priest. We have made advances in that direction by eliminating or reducing our use of Styrofoam and certain plastic and paper products. Living in an area that is inextricably bound to the water, we are sensitive to environmental issues. We understand that one failed link in the chain of being can adversely affect the strength of the whole.

We seek a leader knowledgeable in the area of strategic planning. Long-range planning will help prepare us to successfully confront emerging issues. By keeping the budget in line, remaining attentive to the maintenance needs of an historical church, and being vigilant about the rising costs of everything from insurance and utilities to salaries and supplies, we expect to be better equipped for the future.

Leadership is key to strategic planning for Trinity’s future. We embrace the Episcopal Church’s goals for the future: the addition of youth, expansion of evangelism, and fortification of congregational life (www.episcopalchurch.org/ens). We welcome a new priest who will inspire us to open our minds to change and faithfully guide us in matters of the heart and soul.



*Almighty and everliving God, ruler of all things in heaven and earth,
hear our prayers for this parish family. Strengthen the faithful, arouse the careless, and
restore the penitent. Grant us all things necessary for our common life and bring us all to be
of one heart and mind within your holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.*

BCP

STAFF

Donna Gerold, Priest in Charge

Shannon Segree, Parish Administrator

Ina Margaret Meyer, Choir Director and Organist

SEARCH COMMITTEE MEMBERS

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