

# **HOLY TRINITY ANGLICAN CHURCH**

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**Parish Profile  
March 2023**



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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Foreword

A parish profile is a description of where a parish has been in its life, where it is now, and where it hopes to be in the future. This profile endeavors to do all that as concisely as possible, while still focusing on our essential beliefs and concerns. It emphasizes the desire of the members of Holy Trinity Anglican Church to follow the orthodox Anglican tradition.

## 1.2 Purpose and Petition

We are drafting this profile as part of the search process for a new rector for our parish. Accordingly, we begin this document with the prayer we have composed for our search:

*Heavenly Father, giver of every good gift: Look graciously on your church, and especially on the canonical committee as we seek to discern your good and perfect will in the choice of rector for our parish. Fill us with your Holy Spirit to guide and direct our hearts and minds in each step of this process. We trust you will bless us once again with a godly, faithful pastor who will equip us to grow in our life of faith and in our witness to this community. In Jesus' Holy name we pray. Amen.*

# 2 Statement of Faith

We are a faith community seeking to follow our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and to worship Him in Spirit and in Truth. Because God has poured out His love for us by His death on the cross, we desire to reach out and be bearers of His love to all those He places around us. We desire to be witnesses in the community of French Hill to God's truth, loving-kindness and mercy through the ministries we share with our neighbors.

We believe in and worship the one true, living and triune God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, who pours divine life and love into our hearts. We believe and confess that Jesus Christ is the Way, the Truth and the Life, and that no one comes to the Father except by Him. As Anglican Christians we are Biblical, spirit-filled, orthodox and catholic. We believe that Jesus Christ is truly present in the gathering and prayers of his people, the reading of the Word and proclamation of the Gospel, and in the sacrament of His body and blood. We believe in the Bible as the Word of God, divinely inspired,

and containing all things necessary for salvation, and therefore the primary source for doctrine, faith, and worship. We confess the historic faith of the undivided Church as declared in the three catholic creeds (Apostolic, Nicene and Athanasian) and affirm the teachings of the first four councils of the undivided Church. We receive the Book of Common Prayer as set forth by the Church of England in 1662. We confess Baptism and the Supper of the Lord to be sacraments ordained by Christ himself.

### 3 About the Parish



*Interior of Holy Trinity*

Holy Trinity Anglican Church is the only U.S. parish within the Anglican Network in Canada (ANiC), a diocese of the Anglican Church in North America (ACNA). As such, we are a parish that “remains faithful to established Christian doctrine and Anglican practice.”<sup>1</sup>

We are a worshipping community of roughly 117 parishioners. Our Sunday attendance has averaged approximately 60–65 during the past year. Attendance at our early service ranges from four to twelve, with the balance attending at 10:00 A.M. Shortly after the COVID pandemic began, we began livestreaming our 10:00 A.M. service, allowing those unable to attend in person to participate remotely.

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<sup>1</sup>Taken from the ANiC website, <http://anglicannetwork.ca>.

Holy Trinity is located in the French Hill neighborhood of Marlborough. This neighborhood has a high proportion of immigrants and working class households. There are also a number of halfway homes and recovery houses. We chose to locate in the French Hill neighborhood knowing the great need for ministry, love and healing in our midst.

Marlborough as a whole is a solidly “middle class” community, with a mix of older neighborhoods with modest but well-kept homes and newer neighborhoods with larger homes. Marlborough sits in the midst of a relatively affluent area between Boston and Worcester. Marlborough’s neighbors include Northborough, Southborough, Sudbury, Hudson, Berlin, and the northern part of Framingham.

Holy Trinity draws parishioners from several towns, many some distance from Marlborough. This fact is not surprising, given the small number of ACNA churches in the area.

Like many congregations, the average age of Holy Trinity’s parishioners is greater than the average age of the community at large. While we have a moderate proportion of retirees, we have been blessed within the last few years with the addition of several families with young children. Teenagers and young adults are still not adequately represented, but there is reason for hope.

This document is not the place to provide an extensive history of the parish, but some discussion of the time subsequent to the split from the Episcopal Church USA is appropriate. The split became formal in 2007 when our group vacated our former property on Union Street and began worshipping, as Holy Trinity Anglican Church, at First United Methodist Church on Church Street. We continue to be grateful to our brothers and sisters in Christ for providing us with this harbor in a storm.

While the Methodists were fine landlords, Holy Trinity felt the need to acquire its own home at the earliest reasonable opportunity. We became committed to establishing a presence in the French Hill neighborhood for reasons described above, and in 2012 we opened a chapel across from our present location. In 2014, we completed the purchase of the former Saint Ann’s Roman Catholic Church, our current home on Lincoln Street. The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston closed the church in 2004 and it had been vacant for ten years.

In addition to the 7,750 sq. ft. church building, the purchase included the 4,300 sq. ft. “Outreach Center” next door on Lincoln Street and the 1,250 sq. ft. house on Gibbon Street that serves as our administration center. The property also includes a large parking lot that can accommodate 150 cars.

The buildings are old but serviceable. The furnace struggles to keep the Outreach Center at a reasonable temperature during extreme cold, the siding on this building is unsightly, and the roof on the church needs attention. A major project finally getting underway is the replacement of the church's vertical lift, improving access for our mobility-impaired parishioners and guests.

But much more important than the physical condition of the buildings is the austere beauty and sense of peace that one feels upon entering the narthex, enhanced by the large stained glass windows on each side of the nave. While the small stained glass window over the altar with the Franciscan symbol is somewhat incongruous with our Anglican tradition, and the angels on the ceiling get mixed reviews, it is a wonderful place in which to worship. Credit in no small part must be given to our devoted and talented Altar Guild.

Our parish continues on its journey, having experienced its share of ups and downs. The purchase of the building was truly a leap of faith, and God has provided. Our financial position had been in decline but has recovered, and our size has stabilized and even grown slightly. As discussed elsewhere in this document, we are a very active parish in regard to worship, education, outreach and ministry, and with the arrival of young families we believe we are headed in the right direction.

## **4 Parish Life**

### **4.1 Worship**

#### **Liturgy**

Holy Trinity celebrates on Sundays at a short 8:00 A.M. Said Mass, an abbreviated Morning Prayer at 9:00 A.M. and a 10:00 A.M. Solemn High or Sung Mass. Recent practice has been to offer the Solemn High Mass on the first Sunday of the month and to celebrate special Feasts on the Sunday of the octave. A Said Mass is offered each Wednesday at 11:30 A.M. following Bible Study. Additionally, we celebrate Christmas, the Holy Triduum, Ash Wednesday, and Stations of the Cross each Friday of Lent.

We have printed our own Worship Booklet that follows the liturgy as set out in the Anglican Service Book, a traditional language version of the 1979 Book of Common Prayer that, sadly, is now out of print. Our hope is to transition to the traditional language version of the new ACNA Book of Common Prayer.





*Entrance procession at 10:00 a.m. Mass*

The traditional high-church liturgy is very important at Holy Trinity. We value a serious and reverent approach to worship and the Eucharist in the Anglican tradition. Our worship is Biblically-based (evangelical), Spirit-filled (charismatic) and fully Sacramental (catholic). Believing that Jesus Christ is truly present in the gathering and prayers of His people, in the reading of His holy Word, in the proclamation of the Gospel and, in a very special way, in the Sacrament of His Body and Blood, we are a church with a vital worship experience; we are people who believe the words spoken and sung, and we let it show by our enthusiasm. Parishioners serve during the Mass as members of the choir, lectors, chalice bearers, thurifers and acolytes. Several children eagerly volunteer to train as acolytes.

### **Preaching**

The quality of the preaching is important to Holy Trinity members. We are accustomed to a sermon of approximately twenty minutes at the principal Mass, but the content is more important than the length. We value a sermon that opens up the Word of God without any political overtones because we are here to worship the Lord with reverence. The sermon is a time for us to learn and better understand the Lessons for that day. On occasion, other members of our clergy and aspirants are invited to preach the sermon.

## Music

Music at Holy Trinity is traditional, reverential and solemn. We use *The Anglican Use Gradual*, an adaptation of the *Graduale Romanum* and the *American Gradual*, prepared by David Burt. The preface indicates that “[W]hile the work is intended for Anglican Use in the [Roman] Catholic Church, it is hoped that it will prove useful to Anglicans and to [other] Catholics as well.” We have found this adaptation to be very suitable.

The *Kyrie* is sung in Greek and the *Agnus Dei* is sung in Latin, using a variety of settings (e.g., Bruckner, Terry, Hamma). On the third Sunday of the month, however, these parts of the Mass are sung in English (Willan setting), with the congregation participating.

Psalms are sung by the choir, with the congregation joining in the refrain. Many of the settings are written by James McGregor.

Most hymns are drawn from the 1940 Hymnal of the Protestant Episcopal Church. On occasion, we will use hymns that appear in the 1982 updated version of this hymnal. We tend to stick with traditional tunes with traditional language, but on occasion we will sing more recent compositions, so long as their character does not deviate too far from our usual fare.

Communion anthems are drawn from many sources and eras, but with most written in the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Our choir consists of approximately ten amateur singers with varying amounts of musical experience, led by an experienced organist who serves as our Music Director. With suitable preparation, the choir can handle pieces of moderate difficulty and sophistication. But the music need not be complicated or difficult for it to enhance our worship. Overall, the congregation indicates that it favors our musical tradition and likes the choice of hymns and mass settings.

## 4.2 Christian Education

### Adult

For many years, Holy Trinity has made an effort to strengthen and emphasize discipleship, and although response to the COVID pandemic made it difficult to make much progress in the area for a while, discipleship is still important to the parish.

Currently, adult Christian education at Holy Trinity consists principally of the Bible study that takes place before the Wednesday midday service and the Adult Christian Ed that takes place after the principal service on Sundays. The Wednesday Bible study is led by the rector, but there is a

good deal of input and insight from all the attendees, and the sessions are as much about fellowship as about study. This is not to say it's a free-for-all—we want and expect expert explanations and analysis—but it's not a dry academic exercise, either.

Sunday Adult Christian Ed is less social and more pedagogical. Topics may include study of a specific book or section of the Bible, but often are explanations of liturgy, study of writings of early church fathers, or a specific topic of interest such as angelology.

Wednesday Bible study's typical attendees are retired or otherwise not in the labor force, as might be expected. Sunday Christian Ed has recently become well-attended by parents of young families as well as other interested adults, who are interested in being given "something to chew on." Until recently, there were two separate sessions, one for basic, "beginner-oriented" topics such as explanation of the liturgy, and the other for advanced topics, each led by separate clergy. Priests of the parish had also led studies based on particular books, and a number of parishioners asked that they be brought back.

Added to these are discussions in the monthly lay-led men's and women's groups, which, although topical, mainly involve open-ended discussion.

In our parish survey, thirteen of the 34 respondent households said they attended Christian Ed "regularly," "weekly," or "always," with four other households saying they participate once per month or so. Those who don't participate who gave a reason cited lack of time, work and/or other obligations, distance, and not using Zoom.

Survey reviews for Adult Christian Ed were positive. In addition to the return of book studies, there was support for some education opportunities on weeknights or perhaps Saturdays that parishioners who are in the labor force would be able to attend. Some who support weeknight education expressed interest in home Bible studies in small groups. Some others suggested silent times or possibly the addition of retreats, either lay- or clergy-organized and led.

## **Children**

We believe it important that the children attend Mass with their parents. Parents are, of course, welcome to use the nursery if needed for babies and toddlers. Following the Mass and Fellowship, the children attend their Christian Education program.

For several years we have offered Catechesis of the Good Shepherd, modeled on the Montessori method. This program enables children to encounter



*Children's Christian Ed in the Atrium (classrooms)*

God through developmentally appropriate presentations, centers, and prayer with a strong focus on Scripture, liturgy, and the whole of sacred history. Typical activities for the younger children include preparing the cruets and chalice, understanding the items on the Altar, hearing the Kingdom parables and using a model of the City of Jerusalem to experience the Passion, Crucifixion and Resurrection. Older children may revisit some of the same presentations with suitable extensions, work on a detailed explanation of the Liturgy, and explore the Timeline of the History of the Kingdom of God. The children are interested and eager to come to the Atrium (classroom) each week.

The lead catechists have undergone extensive training and assistants are encouraged to participate in online training sessions. The program is aimed at children aged three through twelve, separated into two or three groups.

### **Teen/Young Adult**

We need to expand our outreach and seek to draw in teens and young adults. The children in our education program are going to age out of elementary school and be entering middle and high school shortly. We need to design and implement education and fellowship for them, practically from scratch.

We also have very few young adult members. They can be hard to draw in

because we're not very close to local universities, and students are reluctant to leave campus. Recent university graduates who have become unchurched can be difficult to reach and bring in as well.

At the moment we are actively brainstorming, but have few solid answers.

### 4.3 Fellowship



*Fellowship at Sunday lunch between Mass and Christian Ed.*

Some of our fellowship programs include:

- Several members of the Church family take turns providing lunch every Sunday, after the 10:00 A.M. Mass and before Christian Education for all ages
- We have a family fun night quarterly
- Once a month after Wednesday Bible Study and the 11:30 Mass, we get together for lunch at a local restaurant
- On the third Saturday of the month, the Women's Group meets either in person or via Zoom
- On the fourth Saturday of the month, the Men's Group meets in person for breakfast and topical discussion

- On Shrove Tuesday the Men's Group prepares and serves a pancake dinner
- We have a parish cookout during the summer
- Our Annual Meeting, which usually takes place in February

#### **4.4 Mission/Outreach**

##### **Financial Support**

HTAC currently provides financial support for the following:

- Saint Mary's Anglican Church, Kumasi, Ghana (our sister congregation)
- Missionary support (we support a missionary who serves in a very dangerous part of the world sharing the good news of JESUS)
- The Bishop Donald and Trudy Harvey Legacy Fund (helping children's ministries in our diocese)
- Christian Ministry in Israel (CMJ)
- Sweats for Vets (supporting the purchase of sweatshirts and other articles of clothing for veterans)
- Diocesan Church Planting Initiative
- Church Plants in Cuba Mission
- First Concern Pregnancy Center, helping women in crisis pregnancies. We have a baby bottle drive from Mother's Day through Father's Day. We also have a playpen set up in the fellowship hall in the Outreach Center for diapers and baby clothing
- Anglicans For Life, which promotes the sanctity of life from conception to natural death

We are considering supporting a local Christian school.

## Outreach Programs

Our outreach programs are as follows:

- The Children's Summer Lunch Program: We provide free lunches for neighborhood children for 9–10 weeks during the summer vacation.
- June's Table provides a free sit-down dinner which is open to all every Saturday at 5:00 P.M. in our Outreach Center. We partner with a few other churches and organizations from within our city.
- Bible on the Block. This is a new program as of summer 2022, reaching out to the children in our neighborhood for fun and a Bible lesson. It is held twice a month on Saturday in our parking lot, in good weather.
- The free Winter Coat Program runs from mid-November through mid-March. We collect new and slightly worn coats of all sizes, which are then given out during June's Table and Wednesday afternoons from 3:30 to 6:30.
- We have a non-perishable food pantry in our Outreach Center, which is made available during June's Table, the lunch program, the coat program, and on request.
- We host Vacation Bible School one week in the summer with another church in town. A week filled with faith, fun, and fellowship for children ages 4 through 14, from our neighborhood and beyond.
- On Thanksgiving we offer a sit-down family style dinner at 1:00 P.M. for anyone in need of a meal and/or fellowship. This past year we served and shared fellowship with approximately 30 people.

We sense a need for support for homeschool families and would like to offer that.

## 5 Finances

Holy Trinity currently operates on a budget of approximately \$220,000 per year. We have no endowment and thus no investment income. Operating income is derived almost exclusively from donations from parishioners and friends. Most donations (approximately 80 percent) are made pursuant to annual parishioner pledges, with the balance coming from:

- Parishioners giving in excess of amounts pledged;
- Gifts from non-pledging parishioners;
- Gifts from friends of Holy Trinity;
- Special offerings (e.g., Ash Wednesday, Easter, Christmas); and
- Gifts made in connection with baptisms and funerals.

Our operating expenses have roughly matched our income in the last two years and we have been able to preserve an accumulated reserve of approximately \$50,000. As with most parishes, personnel costs make up most of our expenses. The next largest item is our mortgage, with monthly payments slightly in excess of \$2,000. Then follows our tithe to the Diocese. Utilities, snow removal, maintenance and administration consume most of what remains. Our “discretionary” budget, if it can be called that, is quite small. Most of this money goes toward mission and outreach efforts, locally and internationally. We have budgeted \$2,000 this year for children’s Christian education curricula and teacher training.

The parish’s only debt is the above-mentioned mortgage. It is a variable-rate note with interest currently at 4.5 percent. The remaining term is approximately fourteen years. The outstanding balance is less than \$250,000. The note may be called with one year’s notice. Our income and overall financial position is such that we would have no problem refinancing with a commercial lender if the note is called.

The foregoing discussion relates to our general operating budget with unrestricted funds. Holy Trinity also has approximately \$60,000 in various restricted accounts. Donations made to these accounts may be used only for specified purposes.

The “busiest” restricted account has been the Building Fund. This fund has received numerous gifts that are to be used for large scale improvements to the three buildings. Recent donations have been earmarked for the vertical lift. Other donations were used to pay for the recent roof repairs on the Outreach Center. Money which will go toward the purchase and installation of new siding for the Outreach Center has also been received.

Other restricted funds include:

- The “Parking Lot Fund,” consisting of money given to Holy Trinity by a paving contractor that used our parking lot for over two years. Repaving the parking lot will become necessary in five to seven years.



- Vacation Bible School. VBS has been more or less self-supporting from amounts charged to families and from restricted gifts.
- June's Table, which operates out of the Outreach Center and provides a weekly hot meal to our neighborhood. Holy Trinity recently received a grant from the Brigham Family Trust, and this grant is being used to support June's Table and two other HTAC ministries (Summer Lunch and Winter Coat Drive).
- Non-Stipendiary Clergy Fund. This fund receives gifts that are to be used by non-stipendiary clergy to help defray travel costs to/from Synod and our annual clergy retreat.
- Saint Mary's Ghana and Mission Israel are two restricted funds through which gifts are forwarded to support mission work in these two countries.

Our financial position is stable, but should not be described as secure. We have recovered from where we stood five years ago, but there is a lot of deferred maintenance with respect to the buildings. And while we have accumulated some money for repaving the parking lot, that expense may run into six figures. A number of generous parishioners retired and/or relocated this last year, but new families have joined, and existing parishioners have increased their gifts, covering the financial loss associated with parishioners leaving. We are fortunate to have a solid base of generous parishioners, so perhaps our position is not so insecure as it sometimes seems.

## 6 Vision

We believe that we were created to know, love, and enjoy God forever, and that the purpose of Christ's church is to enable and foster the loving relationship between God and His people, both one-on-one and as a parish community. Accordingly, we don't view ourselves as a mere social club. We see our mission as fulfilled whenever a searching soul comes in contact with the living God. If He draws someone to our church for catechism, baptism, and first Holy Communion, and then draws him or her elsewhere, we are happy to have helped bring God and one of his beloved children together. For those who are called to make our parish their new church home, we want to be able to provide the fellowship, instruction, and resources that person needs to grow closer to God in knowledge, service, and worship.

We want to be there to help God with what He wants to accomplish in the world. Admittedly, we will only be able to do this in our own small way. Not everyone will be drawn to our church, but our mission is to be there for those whom God draws to us.

Churches such as ours are rare—many members are willing to travel from pretty far away—and, as a result, the parish’s commitment to being the sort of church we envision is as deep as it is widespread among our members.

## 7 Our New Rector



Our parish family is praying for and seeking a priest committed to reverent and beautiful worship in the historic Anglo-Catholic tradition. We deeply value Biblical, orthodox preaching and teaching. We seek a priest who is humble and compassionate, modeling a life of love, faith and service to our Lord—someone who is committed to pastoral care and outreach while balancing personal family life and recreation.

We have identified these additional characteristics as being desirable in our Rector:

- Approachable
- A good listener
- Inspiring and energetic

- Encouraging young families
- Overseeing but not micromanaging all church matters
- Ability to provide guidance and set appropriate limits
- Committed to evangelism and church growth

## 8 Conclusion

We on the Parish Canonical Committee wish to thank those who responded to the Parish survey, those who participated in in-person meetings, those who provided financial data, and those who provided the photographs used in this profile. We would especially like to thank our Diocesan Bishop Rt. Rev. Dan Gifford, our Bishop Emeritus Rt. Rev. Donald Harvey, Archdeacon Ven. Darrell Critch, and all others who advised us on the rector search process and especially on the drafting of this parish profile. Finally, we thank God through our Lord Jesus Christ for the grace needed to complete this document and for His continued care and guidance of our parish.