Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church
Raleigh, North Carolina
June 2021

Short Message from President of Council & Priest

At the end of 2019, the Parish Council, with Fr. Paul’s blessing, decided it was time to develop a strategic plan that would include community-wide discussions. The strategic plan was to be completed by June 2020. Then the COVID-19 pandemic hit, forcing Holy Trinity to reset the deadline to 2021. With the use of listening sessions and a feedback process, a final focused vision has emerged. A vision for a diverse, strong and loving Holy Trinity community. Fr. Paul and I would like to encourage all of you to join us in making this strategic plan a success. It is a plan that will help us grow programs that include outreach, youth programs and improved facilities.

Holy Trinity Greek Orthodox Church

Holy Trinity was founded on the faith and dedication of a few Greek immigrant families who worshipped in several locations in downtown Raleigh in the 1920s. Through perseverance and love, the dreams of these families were realized with the building of the sanctuary on Person Street and its consecration in 1937. Over the ensuing years, the community came to include many cultures and nationalities and outgrew that location. Thanks to a generous donation of property in North Raleigh and the dedicated efforts of many, construction began on our current complex in 1972. The fellowship hall was built first and services were held there until construction of the current sanctuary was completed in 1982.

Holy Trinity is a diverse patchwork of founding families, newcomers who have discovered the beauty of Orthodoxy, and Orthodox faithful who have moved to the robust Triangle area for work or to be near family. Our parish family includes many cultures and interfaith marriages. Holy Trinity has over 350 stewards and many vibrant ministries serving the needs of our parishioners and the community at large. Holy Trinity is a strong, active, and dedicated Orthodox community and the faithful look forward to continued growth in size and faith.

Process used to develop this Plan

A group of interested individuals were assembled to be members of the Strategic Planning Committee. The Committee first met to review and determine the stakeholders of the church. Approximately 15 stakeholder groups were identified ranging from the youth of the church to shut-ins to the poor. The stakeholders were divided into four groupings and each committee member volunteered to participate in one of four sub-groups that would receive input from each of the stakeholders identified. The subgroups interviewed individuals identified in the stakeholder groups as well as other Orthodox churches and other denominational churches in the Raleigh area. The same questions were asked of each individual. The questions touched on emerging trends that would impact our community/parish in the coming years, what is the current state of our parish, what our parish is known for and characteristics of a truly exceptional parish. After the interviews were complete, the committee also held a town hall meeting with the church community for additional input from those who may not have been interviewed as part of a stakeholder group. The process produced hundreds of comments and ideas from our community. The committee came together and analyzed the information received. The committee then developed initiatives including several SMART goals for each initiative. Moving forward, teams will be formed from community members for each initiative to develop strategies to meet the goals set forth by the committee and oversee the implementation of those strategies either through actions of the team itself or harnessing other ministries and programs within the church.
HTGOC will be known for

Our faith, the unique beliefs and traditions of the Orthodox Faith and our Holy Trinity Community consists of welcoming and inclusive parishioners. The values of the community includes love of neighbor, a rich family tradition that expresses their commitment to family and the “greater” Holy Trinity community. Holy Trinity in Raleigh is regarded as a Pan-Orthodox community consisting of many of the cultures and regions of the world with their Orthodox heritage. This has contributed to a diverse membership that provides outreach in Central North Carolina through many of the Holy Trinity ministries. The outreach ministries as well as welcoming nature of the community has contributed to many new members from different backgrounds.

Trends and External forces that are and will impact HTGOC

- Changing demographics of the Raleigh area and Holy Trinity which include more interfaith marriages, an increase in new members with new ideas, and an aging segment of the community.
- Decrease in church participation and activities resulting from time, youth and resources being devoted to involvement in secular activities
- Impact of technology and social media on how we worship and communicate
- Changes in attendance and participation resulting from the pandemic
- Changing social values and family dynamics that deemphasize the importance of church
- National and multi-denominational decline in religious affiliation and church membership

The Strengths of HTGOC and our Community

- Holy Trinity’s best asset is its Faith - Orthodox, Historic, Apostolic. It offers a full liturgical cycle of services, sacraments and adheres to Church Traditions.
- Holy Trinity operates from a position of financial strength. The annual budget is fully supported by Stewardship. The community is debt free with well-run finances, audited annually.
- Holy Trinity Laity leadership, is a 15-member Parish Council, which is representative of the diverse membership of the church.
- Holy Trinity community has active and diverse ministries, inclusive of the many members in the community. Parish Council, Clergy and the various ministries are aligned in their mission and purpose and communicate regularly with the parish.
- Holy Trinity hosts a successful annual Greek Festival, which presents our Faith and Greek culture to the Raleigh community at large.
- Holy Trinity has a dedicated, skilled, AV/IT team which shares our services and activities using Livestream to broadcast services to a far-reaching audience.
- Holy Trinity is a warm, welcoming Parish. Newcomers and guests are introduced and encouraged to join in ministries which are appropriate to their interests and provide opportunities to become more engaged in the community.
- Holy Trinity actively participates in Christ’s command to “love thy neighbor”. Several ministries are dedicated to Philanthropic work, including Philoptochos, SJTM, AHEPA, and the Greek Festival.

Initiatives

Increase youth participation in the church life and nurture a continuing lifelong education and relationship with Christ and the Church.

Goal A: Identify relevant age groups of youth (based on grade or stage of life) and then identify specific ministries for each of those groups by December 2021. Revisit/refine these groups by December 2022.

Goal B: By June 2022, have in place a full-time employee (FTE) dedicated to the youth (for example Additional Priest or Youth Minister/leader) to develop and support youth programs so as to foster individual growth in our faith and religion.

Goal C: Increase youth ministry members (aged 22 and younger) 15% by June 2023 and 30% by June 2024.
Goal D: By February 2022, designate a non-voting youth seat (age 22 and younger) on the Parish Council and various church committees and/or ministries, to include the festival, with the goal of building a sense of belonging with the youth of our church and supporting the mindset that their opinions are valued and respected.

Cultivate an inclusive parish community where existing members and newcomers to Orthodoxy feel welcomed and a part of something special.

Goal A: 300 non-orthodox including neighbors and the community will participate in an educational or introduction to orthodoxy event every year.

Goal B: The Holy Trinity family will feed/clothe or otherwise support 250 people in need who are not part of the Holy Trinity family each year.

Goal C: Host two events a year welcoming new members and introducing them to the church family.

Goal D: Develop an ongoing outreach plan to reengage members who are currently inactive by June 30, 2022.

To create a spirit of community and engagement by educating and encouraging parishioners to share their blessings through time, talents, and treasure that best support the mission and goals of the church.

Goal A: The Parish Council will communicate the financial status of the parish quarterly, highlighting specific areas of need.

Goal B: By 2025, increase the total number of stewards submitting a yearly pledge card to the church by 20% compared to 2020.

Goal C: 50% of members commit to giving their time to at least one ministry by the end of 2022 with that goal rising to 90% by the end of 2024 (excluding the Greek Festival).

Goal D: Educate the community through a quarterly speaker series using members of the church, parish priest, or an outside speaker to share a personal story or experience about how their spiritual life benefited from sacrificial giving or ministry involvement.

Parishioners are participating in programs that foster personal spiritual growth and involve the Holy Trinity community.

Goal A: Increase accessibility to educational/spiritual ministries and programs through the use of technology for individuals who cannot otherwise attend sessions in person

Goal B: Communicate information about programs offered through the Metropolis and Archdiocese using the parish’s established methods of communicating with the community.

Goal C: By 2022, offer an adult educational series at least three out of four quarters of the year with childcare or a child based educational component offered to facilitate participation of parents with young children.

Goal D: Conduct an annual survey of educational programs the stewards of the church would like to see and participate in with the first survey completed by December 31, 2021.

Committee Members
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