



Case Statement for a Comprehensive Campaign for Trinity Lutheran Church in Stillwater “New and Renewing – the Next 150 Years.”

Now to God who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to God be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen. (Eph. 3:20-21)

First loved by God and called into being by the power of the Holy Spirit, Trinity has a long and storied history of ministry in the St. Croix Valley. 150 years strong, we celebrate the leadership God has provided, the neighbors who have become friends, the love shared, and the century and a half of worship that bears witness to God’s abundant love in all circumstances.

As we look to the next 150 years, we build on the history of generosity and resilience that have brought us to this place. And prepare for a future that is agile and responsive to God’s new and renewing call to the church, confident that it is God who gives all good things and has shepherded and shaped us up to now and will into the future.

Over the past few years, Trinity has been on solid financial footing thanks to your faithful stewardship, hard work, and thoughtful leadership. We are now able to imagine a new and renewed financial future that will position us for a more vibrant expression of faith in the God who first loves us, living into our shared values of **Engaging Worship, Radical Hospitality, Authentic Community, Lifelong Faith Formation, and Compassionate Action.**

A three-part plan

Financial Accompaniment. (*Compassionate Action*)

Just as we are individually called to give our first fruits to God, so are we called as a Body of Christ. As part of a long-term goal to become a tithing congregation, we will commit a tithe of the first fruits of the campaign to mission – regardless of how much we raise. That tithe will serve two primary purposes.

First, we will give to the shared work of the St. Paul Area Synod through their Planting Hope Campaign. This is a multi-year campaign focused on 4 areas: inviting neighbors into life in Christ, renewing the congregations of the synod, raising up the next generations of leaders, and investing in a therapeutic preschool supporting at-risk families on the East Side of St. Paul in partnership with Lutheran Social Service.

Second, we will take an important step toward being a tithing congregation! The balance of the financial accompaniment will be used to fund the first 3-5 years of a transition to making Mission a part of our operating budget, rather than a separate pot of money for which we must raise separate funds.

What does this mean?



Trinity has a section of its operating budget entitled “Benevolence”. This means \$40,000 per year of regular contributions are committed to: ongoing Mission Support for the St. Paul Area Synod/ELCA, Valley Outreach, St. Croix Chaplaincy Association, Lutheran Social Service, the Iringa Diocese, and the Arusha Lutheran Medical Center.

Trinity also participates in and financially supports a variety of projects and ministries that are not part of our operating budget. For example: a new pump in Mwatasi, scholarships, housing projects like the Tiny House, etc. These projects are *not* funded by regular contributions. Instead, the Mission Ministry Team raises funds - over and above regular contributions - that pass through the church and on to the designated mission. This represents about \$60,000 annually.

As a congregation with an historical and passionate commitment to mission, we recommend changing this practice and making Mission a central part of our annual operating budget. Since budgets are moral documents, such a move prioritizes our shared commitment to mission and love of neighbor. Just as a portion of every contribution pays salaries, cares for our building, and supports our ministries, now a portion of every contribution will serve our neighbors locally and globally.

Because this represents about \$60,000 annually, it’s not a change that can be made from one budget year to the next. Therefore, the second portion of the Financial Accompaniment will fund the first 3-5 years of this new Mission portion of the operating budget, allowing us to gradually make the transition to funding it fully out of contributions. This funding would be part of the reallocation of mortgage payment dollars eliminated by the debt reduction portion of the campaign.

This exciting change is right at the heart of who Trinity is as a congregation. Yes, there will still be opportunities to give to special projects that arise beyond the scope of what is budgeted. And the Mission Ministry Team will continue to oversee shepherding our commitments and stewarding this money. Now they would be able to focus on Mission rather than fundraising for mission.

Debt Reduction. (*Authentic Community, Lifelong Faith Formation, Radical Hospitality*)

Our debt has served us well in providing a building and the drive-in. And we *can* service our debt, but we have been servants to that debt for decades. It demands our attention and energy and takes a big bite out of your financial generosity. Eliminating our debt will unburden the future Trinity community and free up resources in the short term, allowing us to better serve each other and the world. Our younger families come to us with hefty student loan debt, childcare expenses, and an increasing cost of living. Together we can gift them a congregation set free for a new and renewing vision of God’s mission in the world.



Current Mortgage and Repayment Structure

Balance of Mortgage Debt as of 12/1/2022	\$3,097,495
Annual Debt Service	\$214,056

Terms Thrivent Loan
Interest Rate: 3.5% (3-year adjustable – next adjustment 5/1/2024)
Maturity Date: 5/1/2043

Deferred Maintenance. (Radical Hospitality, Engaging Worship, Authentic Community, Life-long Faith Formation)

Part of renewal for the future is to tend to the present, and that includes stewardship of our building. We place a high value on hospitality and welcoming the community to share this tremendous resource. We will use a segment of the campaign to fund some long-awaited facilities improvements. Please see the addendum for existing needs and ideas.

Celebrating the past is best done by preparing for a future as long and as storied. We invite everyone to participate in this celebration of God’s New and Renewing work in and through Trinity Lutheran Church in Stillwater.

Existing Facilities Upgrade Needs (Priority order established by Facilities Team)

Drive in Renovation (screen, concession building, stage)	\$50,000 - \$150,000
3 rd Street Heritage Chapel Exterior	\$100,000 - \$250,000
Lower Level Bathroom Renovation (East and West Bathrooms)	\$150,000
Office Update – Paint, carpet, etc.	\$40,000
Worship Center Floor Upgrade to Polished Concrete	\$60,000



Campaign Proceeds Allocation:

	Foundational:		Mid-tier:		Aspirational:	
Proposed 3-tiered goal:	<u>\$ 1,500,000</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>\$2,000,000</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>\$ 4,045,000</u>	<u>%</u>
Mortgage reduction:	\$ 1,050,000	70%	\$1,400,000	70%	\$ 2,990,500	74%
Deferred Maintenance: (Capped at \$650,000)	\$ 300,000	20%	\$ 400,000	20%	\$ 650,000	16%
Financial accompaniment: (7.5% - Missions. 2.5% - Synod)	\$ 150,000	10%	\$ 200,000	10%	\$ 404,500	10%
Estimated Annual Debt Service Savings:		\$56,000		\$91,000		\$214,000

(Expected Loan Interest Rate of 6% @5/2024)