

A New Vision for the Campus of Trinity Lutheran Church

Some fifteen years ago, our congregation had a vision for extending the Lord's ministry here at Trinity Lutheran Church in Darmstadt. Through a mission and ministry planning process, we formed a mission statement for our church and identified seven critical target areas for ministry. Part of this process also included plans for modernizing our current campus. Through the Sustained Giving Stewardship Emphasis (SGSE), our congregation members donated approximately one million dollars towards updating our facilities. These monies were given for the new construction of a sanctuary, offices, school, meeting rooms, fellowship areas, and gymnasium – a campus under one roof – which would eventually replace all of our current structures in planned phases. However, due to budget constraints and the subsequent closing of our school, these plans were never realized.

But this alteration in plans does not prevent our moving forward with a new vision for extending the Lord's ministry at Trinity. Several years ago our congregation formed a Campus Feasibility Committee and authorized \$5,000 to investigate new possibilities and formulate preliminary plans. Our Campus Feasibility Committee has worked diligently over the last few years to establish a new vision for our campus. This committee has surveyed the congregation and listened to suggestions from our members. Many of the problems which we discussed fifteen years ago are still nagging us today.

- A campus divided by a main driveway which fractures our ministries
- A gymnasium and cafeteria which have limited accessibility for fellowship events
- A Christian fellowship hall in a remote basement for meetings and Bible classes
- Sunday school classes which are scattered throughout the old school building
- Staff offices in different buildings which hinder administration and communication
- A small church narthex which limits fellowship before and after services and is unsuitable for funeral viewings
- A music loft and narthex bathrooms which are not handicap accessible
- A main entrance which is not protected from inclement weather
- Fragmented and remote storage for altar guild, music, and archive materials

After reviewing several alternatives, the Campus Feasibility Committee has concluded that many of the above issues may be resolved through the construction of a building addition on the north side of the church and a renovation of the existing church. Features of the new addition would include:

- A fellowship hall for dinners, meetings, and presentations, Bible class and weekday studies, refreshments before and after services, receptions, and other fellowship events for the congregation and community
- Several smaller meeting rooms for Bible study, Sunday school, and church meetings
- Staff offices located in close proximity to a main entrance
- Handicap accessible restrooms which serve both the church and fellowship hall
- A main entrance with a covered canopy
- A kitchen for preparing and serving meals
- Storage for tables and chairs and Sunday school and Bible class materials

The renovations to the church would provide a larger narthex by removing pews in the back of the sanctuary and would provide storage for altar guild, music, and archive materials by remodeling the existing choir room and pastor's office. These plans would provide a campus for the majority of our ministries under one roof and on one level.

Several years ago the outside of our church building was continuing to deteriorate, resulting in leaks and damage to the interior. A portion of the SGSE money was used to renovate the outside of the church, eliminate the leaks, brighten the windows, and gain many years of useful life for our beautiful sanctuary. The Campus Feasibility Committee estimates that the plans for a new building addition and renovation of the interior of the church could be accomplished using the remainder of our SGSE monies. We might think of the completed renovation of the church's exterior as phase 1A and the plans for the renovation of the church's interior as phase 1B. The new addition would be phase 2. Phases for future ministries could be added by constructing more additions to the north, again all under one roof and on one level.

Though the details may not be the same, this new vision would still be in keeping with the spirit of our original vision when donations were first given, that is, the beginning of replacement of our older facilities with new construction for one campus under one roof accessible for all our ministries.

With the formulation of this new vision, the Campus Feasibility Committee has completed its assignment to the congregation. To move forward, the congregation needs to approve the vision and turn the Campus Feasibility Committee into a Building Committee. The Building Committee will also need authorization from the congregation to spend up to \$20,000 from the SGSE monies in order to select an architect, complete necessary municipal surveys, and develop a master plan and layout of phases 1B and 2. After the congregation approves the master plan, the Building Committee may then continue turning the new vision into reality.

Before the congregation votes on this vision statement in our voters meeting, several informational meetings will be held in the upcoming months to answer questions and receive additional input from our members. As always, we pray the Lord's blessings as we seek to further His mission and ministry at Trinity.

Pastor Temme
6/16/15