

In joining in our common mission together, we envision Trinity Church becoming a peculiar place and a peculiar people. A hodgepodge of persons, this collective is digging deep roots into their places, reimagining what it looks like to share in life together. They see themselves as contemplative activists, embodying a posture of slow and steady care. As a people, they act more like house churches than anything. They are a group of people bound together by their enchantment with the world, captivation with Jesus of Nazareth, and care for their neighbors.

And yet, this collective of persons, these seemingly disparate house churches unite regularly, around a common table and a common hope. They come together, seeking to share once again in the story that is both ancient and ever-unfolding; they come together to listen, to learn, to doubt, to wonder, and to believe, but mostly to figure out how to embody the truth and tell of the story that they regularly encounter. They believe in and practice an invitation and a radical welcome of every person as a beloved member of the Kingdom of God, no matter what "conditions" have been communicated to them in the past with words or actions. These gatherings regularly nourish the work of these persons and house churches in their respective neighborhoods, while almost at the exact same time, the work of these persons and house churches seems to be pointing back to the importance of the gatherings - a dance of mutual dependence and trust that requires a lot of footwork!

They refer to their gathering space as a haven of belonging, a visceral and healing experience of membership among a collective of people who are earnestly yearning for the Kingdom of God. This is a haven for wanderers and wonderers alike - anyone who seeks to go deeper into life - and despite turning from dogmas, the theologies of their youth, or even faith altogether, something continues to pull them back in.

They continue to use the gathering space in creative ways to foster connection and depth: from hosting recovery groups and providing office space for local small business and nonprofits, to their co-op kitchen, art shows, and hosting local events. They are developing this haven to be a place of belonging for the whole local community, not just themselves.

When you get a moment to sit with these people, they talk about the work of their neighborhoods, of their house churches, but also of the gatherings - those stories and shared rhythms that animate neighborly work and play, ongoing sufferings, and joy. They learn to tell their stories with depth and vulnerability, especially as they gather in smaller groups and for community conversations; they seek to listen and learn from stories of their families and neighbors. In fact, they readily claim neighbors as loved ones; there is a slow and steady movement from stranger to family that keeps happening in their midst. Rather than a focus on a nuclear family, they keep expanding experiences and definitions of family.

For these people, relationships, like God, are experienced as a tangible mystery, not to be feared in its awe-filled unknowing, but as a mystery to explore, to discover, and to abide in. They are discovering that knowing and being known in relationship is the best way they know how to encounter the love of Jesus in and for the world.

Committed to being a faithful presence in their neighborhoods, these persons and house churches want to get to know their places well so that they might uncover what the Spirit is up to. They know what it is to wander, how important it is, yet their rootedness, their belonging to this peculiar place and people, is evident. They desire to live in harmony with one another: to foster what can be held in common, yet also to discover and celebrate what makes them different - finding unity in diversity.

Quite simply, these peculiar people seek to embrace their places and embody love, all by enlacing themselves into the fabric of the world, weaving faith, hope, and love as signs of the here-but-not-yet of the Kingdom of God.

TRINITY CHURCH : VISION