

Frequently Asked Questions

What was the outcome of the Discovery Team (DT) Report?

The DT Report outlines the recommendation of a Revitalization Pathway for the Trinity Community. After time spent assessing the current reality and objectively reviewing the options, we have come to the conclusion that a plan for revitalization of our Community is the best option at this point in time.

Did COVID19 impact the process of the DT?

Yes. The impact was felt internally and externally. Internally, the DT was forced to move their work online which had its limitations. We were not able to do as much as we wanted to do. We had to cancel various events for the congregation including a March 31st Sunday presentation by Rev. Alex Shanks, Assistant to Bishop Ken Carter, where he was to speak to our church about the upcoming General Conference. Externally, COVID19 has created an element of uncertainty and fear that has fueled the anxieties of many due to the delay in some events that impact our work. For example, it delayed the UMC General Conference until August 2021. Many people within the congregation would like clarification on what will happen with our church after the decision on human sexuality is made.

Did the DT include the opinions of the congregation?

Yes. As the report indicates, the DT heard from various members of the Trinity Community through presentations, interviews/surveys and the letters/emails submitted. The nominations committee identified 13 leaders who represented a diverse group within our Trinity Community. It was important to include different voices in the conversation. As one member has stated, “The members of the congregation have had access to the Discovery Team throughout this process, opening up for ideas, etc.”

Did the DT hear from members of the “Kingdom Partner (KP) group”?

(The KP is a group that has expressed a desire for Trinity to disaffiliate from the Methodist Church and join Christ Fellowship Church.)

Yes. The DT included 2 representatives from the Kingdom Partner group, Suzy Bryant and David Huntoon. As the report indicates, there was a separate Christ Fellowship KP Subgroup of 3 DT members; Ryland Dodge, Tanya-Marie Greaves and Pastor Tim Smiley. This Subgroup also included Mike Eissey, the person who felt led to initiate the KP group, and Suzy Bryant, one of the spokespersons for the KP group. This Subgroup was tasked to objectively review the Christ Fellowship option. This Subgroup attended a

meeting at Christ Fellowship where the KP group spoke about their concerns, met with CF Senior Pastor Tom Mullins, and presented (Mike Eissey spoke to the DT directly) to the DT.

What does the Revitalization Plan entail?

We want to begin by engaging the help of the Unstuck Group. (theunstuckgroup.com) As per their program, we will pick 8-10 leaders to go through the process who will lead our community in a new direction. Part of this process will be Equipping and Empowering our Trinity Community to move us forward. We will work with the Conference and our District Superintendent.

What is the Unstuck Group?

The DT report describes the group in more detail, but they are an experienced church and business consulting group that helps church communities get unstuck from old ways of thinking and doing. They assist leaders within a community to set values, re-discover God-given mission and vision, and develop core ministries (called “growth engine ministries”), so that church communities can move forward in new ways.

The DT believes that after interviewing the Unstuck Group as well as other pastors who have utilized their services, the Unstuck Group can guide Trinity through precisely what it most needs to do – start from the foundation (core values, mission, discipleship) and build up from there. Because it’s almost 100% virtual (online meetings instead of traveling and meeting in person), the price is reasonable: \$6,500.00. The Unstuck Group will help us answer these questions: “What does success look like”, “What is our vision as a Trinity Community” and “How must our strategies change in this COVID time?”

Will the UMC Florida Conference help us?

We have received confirmation that they are willing to help us financially and with their expertise. There are people at the Conference level who will be able to walk us through such concepts as “right-sizing” our campus, developing the right staff for our growth engine ministries, and launching a capital campaign. Conference aid comes to us without cost. Their cost is covered by the apportionments all local churches give to the conference.

Who will decide if the church adopts the DT report?

It is recommended that the CLC vote *after* a 60-day discernment time to either adopt the recommendation of the report or decline to adopt the recommendation of the report. The CLC will determine if an all church vote is needed on this issue (as was recommended by the DT) and this request for an all church conference vote must first be authorized by our District Superintendent.

What are we supposed to do to help us make a decision?

The Trinity community is being asked to participate in a 60 day time of discernment and prayer. There will be many ways that the Trinity Community can engage in the conversation. Pastor Tim Smiley will preach a five-week series on spiritual discernment, entitled, "As You Wish." Spiritual formation practices will be encouraged and a pathway for such practice provided several times per week. Additionally, small group discussions will be offered to educate CLC members and the Trinity congregation about the information in the Discovery Team report and its recommendation. We hope all Trinity members will take advantage of these opportunities to get informed.

Why did the DT decide that the Christ Fellowship partnership was not an option?

In the DT report, we outline the reasons why we felt that the best option for the Trinity Community is revitalization. In summary, the reasons are:

1. The current financial reality is positive; we are not in a financial crisis.
2. It has been expressed by our District Superintendent, Rev. Dionne Hammond and Rev. Alex Shanks, Assistant to Bishop Ken Carter, that our Trinity Community is unique, with a thriving school that includes a history rooted and supported by the Methodist movement. Both Dionne Hammond and Alex Shanks made it clear that they desire to have a Methodist presence in this area of Palm Beach Gardens.
3. Disaffiliation from the UMC is not an option at this time.

What will happen if people are not happy with the DT report and want to leave Trinity?

We will continue to walk together in Christ. As Pastor Tim Smiley says: "*Let's walk together -- for as long as we can, with as much unity as we can, and if the time comes when we need part, then let's bless each other in the parting.*"

What will happen if the DT Report is not adopted?

We will continue to do the work we are called to do. We will continue to be a Community together and serve Christ. We will move forward and keep our eyes on Jesus.

