Dear Friend in Christ,

Welcome and alleluia!

Trinity Episcopal Church has deep roots in Ashland, Oregon. Established in 1884, we have worshipped in the same space since 1895. From mill town to tourist destination, our community has survived and thrived.

Trinity now finds itself at a crossroads. We look to revivify our congregation in the aftermath of significant losses wrought by the pandemic, wildfires, and the departures of our rector and parish administrator, not to mention the resulting financial challenges brought about by these losses.

As we gather together, our excitement grows. Internal and external ministries again take shape. Parishioners are interested and involved in the recruitment of a new rector, as evidenced by 150 responses to our profile survey. Our pledges have measurably increased, while we strive to balance our budget.

We are envisioning a pastoral, loving rector who has the energy and joy to accompany us into a shared future. Could that be you?

Yours in Christ,

Trinity Parishioners

Quotations throughout the document are derived from our Parish Profile Survey.
Who We Are

“It is important to have ministries that fulfill the spiritual needs of our congregants and reach beyond our walls to the needs of the larger community.”

We are so glad you are considering our beloved Trinity Episcopal Church in Ashland, Oregon. We hope these words and images convey to you how special our church and city are --- to its residents as well as its visitors. From culture to outdoor adventure, our community is blessed.

Our Vision

To grow together in a shared life where we feel and express God’s ever-present love, recognize grace in all creation, and hear and heed God’s call.

Our Mission

To proclaim by word, sacrament, and example the good news of God in Jesus Christ; to seek and serve Christ in all persons; to strive for justice, peace, reconciliation and the healing of the world; to care for one another and stranger alike.

Our Core Values

Openness ◊ Compassion
Generosity ◊ Hospitality
Reverence

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Our Worship

The Eucharist is central to our worship; communion is served in both kinds. While we draw from a variety of sources, our predominant form has been Rite II from the Book of Common Prayer. Supplemental resources are available including Enriching Our Worship v. 1-5 and the New Zealand Book of Common Prayer. We use the 1982 Hymnal. Our community strives to use inclusive language. We are not high church; incense has been a source of contention in previous years, so is now used rarely if ever. Two morning services are offered each Sunday at 8 and 10 o’clock; the 8 o’clock is spoken and the 10 o’clock has music and cantors. Our Sunday attendance averages around 100 people across both services. Eucharistic Visitors bring communion to shut-ins many Sundays. Our long-time deacon, the Rev. Dcn. Meredith Pech, will retire soon. We do not know if the diocese will assign another deacon to Trinity after Meredith’s retirement.

Trinity celebrates the liturgical seasons; we have vestments available for our celebrants. Our altar guild is a superb group of twelve women and men. They expertly prepare the church for weekly worship, multiple days in Holy Week and special occasions.

Our Demographics

We are an older, mostly white congregation with 80% over 65, but that doesn’t mean our church is fading. We are a vibrant, progressive community, welcoming all. Ashland is a popular retirement destination, bringing a steady influx of newcomers to Trinity. This chart shows the length of time our survey respondents have attended Trinity.
Music is Essential to How We Worship

“Music helps me get out of my head and into my heart where I can better hear God’s call. I like our traditional hymns, the music of our liturgy and anthems.”

Trinity has a large, 30-person, four-section choir led by a world-class director, Dr. Paul French, and a gifted organist, Jodi French, who composes wonderful pieces for our worship. Section leaders are paid professionals, who also serve as soloists and cantors. No audition is required to join the choir.

“Trinity has the finest director of music, organist, and choir that one could ever hope to experience. The music is both inspired and delivered with care.”

Jodi French at the piano

Dr. Paul French listening to a soloist

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Our lay-led *Celtic Evensong and Communion service* is held on the third Sunday of each month, except July and August. Doors open at 6:15 p.m. for quiet contemplation, followed by harp music at 6:30 p.m. and service at 7 p.m.

These candlelight services feature special readings, poems, and cantors leading songs, oftentimes composed by Jodi French, our organist and pianist.

A lay-person presents a five-minute reflection, frequently about their experience of a “thin place” where the unseen world is close to ours. The service, often presided over by assisting or retired clergy, is popular in the greater Rogue Valley community with attendance averaging around 75 people.
Our Faith in Action

Pastoral Care  After the fallow Covid time, many of our programs and ministries are making a solid comeback. The Pastoral Care Team meets monthly with Interim Rector Janell, our two Parish Nurses, and other volunteers to see how best to serve the pastoral needs of the congregation.

Parishioners provide meals, rides, and their presence to serve as a second set of ears at doctors’ appointments. A lay-led Grief Group provides support for those suffering pain and loss.

“It is important for our church to care for single people of all ages, whether widowed or not. Care for the hungry and destitute within our parish. Care for our LGBTQ+ community.”

An Intercessory Prayer Chain regularly prays for parishioners and others. A Centering Prayer Group meets online with participants from within and outside the parish.

Worship  There is a Worship Committee consisting of the rector, deacon, and representatives of the altar guild, choir, and ushers that meets monthly to plan services. The Altar Guild prepares our worship space with great care and meticulous attention to detail which enhances the beauty of our celebration.

“Altar guild ministry fills my heart.”

Outreach  On Shrove Tuesday, we hold our Party of Parties (POP). Our POP activities raise funds to be distributed to community service organizations. The evening begins with a supper and auction. There is the opportunity to sign up for 20+ “parties” hosted and funded by parishioners throughout the year, and subscribed to by other parishioners. Monies from the auction and parties go toward outreach. Our Outreach Funding and Distribution Committee decides on which organizations to support and the amount of money to give. The St. Nicholas Gifts ministry provides presents and gift cards for Ashland-area kids. Sewing Women at Trinity (SWAT) meets weekly where quilts are made to sell at our Bazaar and/or to distribute to Habitat for Humanity and local service organizations. A group of Trinity volunteers help with home construction through Habitat for Humanity. Members of the parish donate regularly to the Ashland Emergency Food Bank. When Ashland’s Pride Parade resumed October 8, 2022, we again marched and carried our Trinity banner. AA uses our parish hall four nights each week for in-person meetings.

“I believe God is calling Trinity to minister more to the community, so if we didn’t exist, the town would miss us.”

Education  Online Bible Study continued during the pandemic and is now an ongoing weekly program. A Lenten Book Study was held this year, with participants sharing a meal and impressions from the reading.

During the pandemic, our deacon facilitated multiple Sacred Ground interactive dialogue circles. Sacred Ground is an 11-week program developed by The Episcopal Church, accessible online. It challenges participants to deeply examine issues of racial injustice, healing and reconciliation in our personal lives and places where we live, work, and worship. Small groups are invited to walk through chapters of America’s history of race and racism, while weaving in threads of family story, economic class, and political and regional identity.
**Education** We hope to re-start Christian education for all age groups. Godly Play has been offered in the past, and thus we have the program resources. Hopefully by fall we will be in a position to offer Sunday school once again.

**Fellowship** We have a Coffee Hour each Sunday. Trinity Trekkers enjoy a weekly hike to explore local trails, parks, and hills. There are Friendship Groups meeting for meals throughout the year. The Men’s Group meets monthly in the library; the Women’s Breakfast Group meets at a restaurant once a month. A Welcoming Team is forming to engage parishioners new and old, and will plan fifth-Sunday potlucks in our parish hall.

“**The parishioners are very welcoming and supportive.**”

“I love my Trinity church family”

*Choir*
Sacred Ground  Hospitality
Outreach Funding & Distribution Committee  Ashland Food Bank Group
Thursday Bible Study  Trinity Trekkers
Habitat for Humanity Volunteers  Intercessory Prayer Chain
Party of Parties Committee  Parish Nurses
Lectors  Columbarium/Sacred Garden Committee  Parish Library Committee
Meditation & Centering Prayer  Ushers  Search Committee
St. Nicholas Gifts  The Ministry to the Unhoused  Friendly Visitors
Endowment Board  Godly Play  Finance Committee
Pastoral Care Team  Men’s Group  Profile Committee
Acolytes  Welcoming Team  Sewing Women at Trinity
Friendship Dinners  Vestry  Altar Guild
Lay Eucharistic Ministers  Worship Committee

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Trinity Episcopal held its first service in 1884, and since those early days, the parish has been recognized for its ingenuity and resourcefulness in creating a beautiful and welcoming place of worship in the heart of Ashland. In its October 1957 issue, The Oregon Churchman recognized Trinity’s “Courageous ladies of the guild who, in the face of the great financial panic of 1893, set out upon a series of sociable community events to raise funds to build and sustain their new parish.” Among the events, the paper cited a burlesque serenade, a performing chorus with the ladies dressed as dolls, and the crowning of a Rose Queen that enlisted the town’s "railroad men, lumberjacks and farmers in voting, as many times as they wished for the lady of their choice, at five cents a vote."

Trinity initially welcomed “circuit riding” priests whenever possible. From the 1890’s to 1937 Trinity was served by twelve missionary priests. From 1937 to present we have called thirteen rectors, two of whom were later consecrated as bishops.

For a time in the 1930’s, Trinity parish housed the office of the nascent Oregon Shakespeare Festival, now a national cultural landmark in Ashland. In 1972, Trinity was the incubator for weekly feeding programs which led to the Ashland Emergency Food Bank. Our Parish Hall was a once-a-week winter night shelter for the unhoused.

Trinity wrestles with how to best meet its responsibility to address scars on the body politic left by Oregon’s historical involvement in the eradication of indigenous tribes, and the state and local history of racial intolerance.

In 2023, we’re mending still fresh wounds from the double-whammy that struck in 2020 with the global pandemic and the devastating Almeda Wildfire (September, 2020), which consumed a large swath of the communities of Talent and Phoenix, home to several Trinity families. We’re also mending from the discord that preceded and followed the departure of our previous rector and parish administrator.

This spring, the parish hosted three Sacred Dialogues, facilitated gatherings where parishioners were able to express their feelings and concerns around a number of issues. The three gatherings drew a total of 37 parishioners, many of whom attended more than once. The parish has been invited to continue with additional Sacred Dialogues around topics to be proposed.

Trinity prizes its history in the Rogue Valley as one of six parishes in the Southern Oregon convocation representing Episcopal liturgical traditions, and its commitment to community service.
Our House of Worship

The American Gothic structure that is Trinity Episcopal Church has landmark status in the National Register of Historic Places; it’s recognized as an example of church architecture that both retains its original appearance and has been occupied by the same congregation. Also beloved for its melodic tolling is the church’s 350-pound bell, which sits inside a flared belfry rising from the chapel’s steeply pitched roof.

The Trinity Garden, adjacent to the church and completed in 2004, is modeled after the Chartres Cathedral. Comprised of a labyrinth, bench seating, a columbarium and sacred ground, this contemplative space is open daily to the public and is used for worship on holy days and for parish gatherings. The parish has commissioned the renovation of the labyrinth beginning in the fall of 2023.

The main church building, beautiful in its simplicity, has a nave with vaulted ceiling, stained-glass windows, and wooden pews with a capacity of about 100 people. The raised altar and chancel have both a 13-rank pipe organ and a piano, as well as seating for a thirty-member choir. Our entrance, with double doors made of myrtle wood, leads to the narthex where there is room to greet, hand out bulletins, and seat 11 people. Off the side of the nave is the sacristy with its built-in cupboards for candles, linens, and other supplies, a closet for vestsments, and a small bathroom. Adjoining the sacristy is the choir room with storage for sheet music and hangers for choir robes.

Across a courtyard is a separate building housing the parish hall and kitchen, library, four bathrooms, two Sunday school rooms, and the church offices. We also own a small building behind the church which is leased to a retail store.
Our Community

Our community of Ashland (pop. 21,360), nestled between the Cascade and Siskiyou Mountains, is located at the south end of the Rogue River Valley, 16 miles north of the California border on Interstate 5. To the north of Ashland are the communities of Talent (pop. 6,282), Phoenix (pop. 4,538), and Medford (pop. 85,824), the latter home to big-box stores, two major hospitals --- Providence and Asante, and the Rogue Valley International-Medford Airport.

Our valley experiences relatively mild winters with some snow and hot, dry summers that support active gardening and agriculture. Notable in the region are the 250+ vineyards growing grapes and producing excellent wines.

If your focus is on the outdoors and quality of life, you won’t find a better region in which to make your home. For both residents and visitors, the natural beauty provides the perfect backdrop for family-friendly adventures. Southern Oregon features pristine lakes and rivers for rafting, fishing and kayaking. Walking, biking and hiking trails crisscross our forests and meadows which are rich in wildflowers, bird and animal life. In the winter, the slopes of Mt. Ashland beckon skiers and snowshoers. Oregon is a magnet for campers and RVers, earning top ratings from active retirees traveling and relocating here.

Ashland, a jewel of the Rogue Valley, is home to a number of fine institutions including the Tony-award winning Oregon Shakespeare Festival with its three theaters. Educational opportunities abound here. Southern Oregon University (SOU) offers bachelors and masters degrees in 37 areas of study and has an enrollment of nearly 5,200 students. SOU also hosts the amazing 1,700 member Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) currently offering 100 classes a term. Rogue Community College, with an additional 6,800 enrolled students, is located in Grants Pass with an additional campus in nearby Medford. Ashland Public Schools continue to exceed state and national academic averages. Our Ashland Library’s modern building, plus an historic Carnegie children's library, sits at the edge of downtown and is accessible using public transportation. The 7,000-member Ashland Family YMCA provides a variety of classes and activities for all ages. Vibrant shopping districts feature award-winning restaurants, galleries, locally owned shops, and growers’ markets. We even boast our own hospital — Asante Ashland Community Hospital.

The community also has its challenges. High on the agenda of the Ashland City Council are affordable housing and homelessness. Post-Covid, our beloved Oregon Shakespeare Festival is facing a serious financial shortfall, which influences Ashland’s business economy. The festival is among the key employers in our community. Along with other communities in the valley, Ashland works hard to protect wildlands and adapt to climate change. The city supports Firewise USA, a national leader in reducing wildfire risks in our region. The work to protect old trees, wildlife habitat, homes, trails and our water sources is ongoing.

*Scenes from Ashland’s Lithia Park and other regional trails; Trinity Trekkers*
In addition to the Rector we have:

**Parish Administrator** - 25 hours per week
Provides administrative support to the congregation and its ministries. Prepares reports, bulletins, bulk mailings and other communication materials for the parish. Answers emails, phone calls and other requests for assistance. Maintains the church calendar and vital church records.

**Finance Manager** - 9 hours per week
Carries out the accounting functions of the parish including bill payments, cutting checks, receiving pledges, handling the general ledger and balance sheets, and providing financial information to the church treasurer and vestry.

**Sexton** - 20 hours per week
Keeps the parish in good order through routine cleaning and minor maintenance of church buildings and grounds. Stocks supplies. Arranges set-ups for recurring meetings as well as special events.

**Organist**
Prepares music and plays for 10 a.m. Sunday service and Celtic service. May also play for various special events including marriages and funerals.

**Minister of Music**
Directs the music program and choir.

**Cantors** (4) Cantors lead the congregation in singing the psalms and lead sections of the choir.
Our Financials

The (financial) good news? Our church facilities are owned outright; the parish has no debt. The congregation has reserves for the “rainy days” we know will come. In addition, we have recently received a bequest of approximately $150,000, $30,000 of which is earmarked for youth programs.

As to cash flow, prior to the pandemic we had a history of running close to a balanced budget; however, Covid coupled with our transitional interim status has made it more of a challenge for pledges and income to cover the rising costs of operating. In round numbers, for 2023 we have 125 pledges totaling around $307,500 plus other anticipated income of $41,100 for a total projected income of $348,600. Comparing this to our projected expenses of $393,000, there exists a projected deficit of approximately $44,500 before adding capital from reserves. Currently we have operating reserves of $60,000, a General Ministries Fund of $330,000, and an endowment of $300,000. As always, our lay leaders are keeping a close eye on our financials. A letter sent by the Vestry asking people to make or increase their pledge for 2023 has already shown encouraging results.

Trinity Cash Flow 2019-2022

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For more information on our financials, see the Supplemental Materials [link](#)
The Episcopal Church in Western Oregon consists of 60+ faith communities, including Trinity, dedicated to growing, expanding, and redefining what it means to be the Beloved Community of Christ in western Oregon. Our diocese originated as part of the Missionary Jurisdiction of the Oregon and Washington Territories in 1853 and became its own diocese in 1889.

The Rt. Rev. Diana D. Akiyama was ordained and consecrated as the eleventh Bishop of Oregon on January 30, 2021. She was the first Japanese-American woman to be ordained to the priesthood and the first Asian-American woman ordained Bishop in The Episcopal Church. Speaking the truth in love expressed through authenticity, trustworthiness, compassion, and clarity of vision are the hallmarks of Bishop Akiyama’s spiritual leadership. "I am energized when my leadership helps communities to shift assumptions, restore expectations, and imagine a new way forward. Listening with empathy, courage and openness allows me to walk with individuals and communities to connect their deepest yearnings with God’s call,” Bishop Akiyama stated.
The Rector We Seek

“We need a rector involved in outreach and pastoral care, one who truly cares.”

In the robust response to our survey, the five characteristics most desired in our new rector include:
- Communicates Effectively
- Delivers Engaging Sermons
- Deals Effectively with Conflict
- Provides Pastoral Care and Nurturing
- Shares Leadership by Working as an Effective Team Member

The importance of pastoral care and fellowship was stressed throughout survey responses, not surprising in an aging congregation. We are a people who love and want to be loved, individually and collectively.

In a sermon we want, “depth, spirituality, inspiration, soul searching, interpretation of scripture, and application to personal and community life.”

Further top attributes sought include the ability to build a sense of community among people with whom they work, administer church finances, facilities, and staff effectively, and bring joy and humor to relationships. This combination of bringing people together and building up the community while filled with a joyful spirit, is key to success!

The survey also recognizes that the new rector cannot do all these things alone. For example, the most highly-ranked activities of our church were parish members ministering to each other, the parish meeting transportation needs of seniors and people living with disabilities, and providing support groups for widows, widowers, and others with special needs. The laity also takes the lead in keeping the church’s financial affairs in order, contributing to a monthly newsletter, and maintaining a website. Bubbling up through the survey responses was a desire for more hands-on outreach ministries as we seek to reactivate and reimagine our service to the greater community.

Our hope is for a loving rector with deep spiritual grounding who will work with us in developing and strengthening our faith and ministries so that we might more fully be Christ’s hands and feet in this world.

How to Apply

Candidates are invited to submit a cover letter, resume, and OTM portfolio to the Missioner for Thriving Congregations, The Rev. Christopher Craun at ceraun@ecwo.org.

All applications and communications with applicants will be treated with complete confidentiality. Applications will be reviewed for completeness when received. Our Search Committee will strive to keep our applicants updated on the process.

We are a “Range E” parish on the Diocesan SHU (link). We’re looking for a rector with 5-10 years’ experience in a Range E parish, or comparable experience elsewhere.
Profile Committee:
Linda Wilson, chair
Sara Brown
Victoria Costello
Meg Economy
James Johnson
Katherine Kendrick
Harry Piper

Vestry:
Carolyn Anderson, Sr. Warden
Ken Hearnsberger, Jr. Warden
Christiana Carr
Chris Hope
Suzanne Lang
Douglas McDonald
Linda Morris
Donna Ritchie
Becky Snow

A Special Thanks to:
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Maureen Wilson-Jarrard for her invaluable help in creating our profile survey.