

As part of our “For All the Saints” stewardship campaign this year, we’ve asked a number of parishioners under the age of 50 to reflect on their lives and Holy Trinity Parish. The two questions were:

1. What does Holy Trinity Parish mean to you?
2. What ministries of HTP are close to your heart and why?

Here are some reflections for this stewardship season.



Mary Martha Penner

I have been to a number of weddings over the last few years (particularly in pre-COVID times). Small and large, first and second marriages, formal and casual, Christian and secular - each one different. Nathan and I were married at Holy Trinity a bit over two years ago. One thing that I still marvel at is that most of the people involved in and present at the celebration and blessing of our marriage, besides our family members, were not schoolmates or work friends like many of the weddings I have attended, but people we know and love from Holy Trinity.

As someone who grew up at Holy Trinity, I didn’t necessarily plan to stay here into adulthood, even knowing that Holy Trinity will always be special to me. What I am finding, though, is that even multiple decades after it became my family’s church, Holy Trinity and I are still growing together. The kids I grew up with have largely dispersed, but folks I have met here or become closer to in adulthood have become dear friends and trusted mentors.

Some of our church’s traditions and ministries have stayed the same, and some have changed. Like many of you, I have been involved in different ministries in different seasons. One ministry increasingly meaningful to me in the last few years is a less formal one: how members of this community support and minister to each other in hardship and mourning. I am still mourning losses of dear ones from Holy Trinity, and maybe you are, too. Some of my most special memories of church in the last few years are sharing Christ’s abundant love with each other as we endured sadness and challenges - mourning loved ones in death, asking for healing, lending help, cooking food, praying for the deep hopes and fears of our hearts, and keeping a sort of vigil in isolation: as the choir sang each week, “God be with you ‘til we meet again.”

Through different seasons, I have still been able to find and give thanks for my place here as I continue my walk with Christ. I know this doesn’t describe everyone’s experience with Holy Trinity or church in general. We are imperfect, trusting in God’s power to be made perfect in our weaknesses. I have hopes, as I’m sure you do, for growth in our mission and ministries, opening hearts to God and doors to community.

I pray that I will continue to do my part, and trust that the Holy Spirit is forming us and our whole church. I pray, too, that in whatever season you are in - celebrating the most joyful days or mourning the most difficult - you will find a loving place here, too.