

# HOLY TRINITY

*Avon, Ohio*

SEPTEMBER 2021 HISTORICIZING  
SESSIONS: SUMMARY OF RESULTS



Produced by:

**DELAMBOCONSULTING**

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## INTRODUCTION

In September of 2021, five listening sessions were conducted by DELAMBO CONSULTING with parishioners of Holy Trinity parish in Avon, Ohio. The purpose of these sessions was for the new pastor, Rev. Vincent Hawk, to:

- (1) better understand the history and culture of the parish; and
- (2) better understand the aspirations of parishioners regarding the future of the parish.

## METHODOLOGY

The technique used in these sessions, commonly called “historicizing,” asks parishioners to identify important moments, events, or persons in the history of the parish and records them on a timeline. Next, parishioners draw meaning from these events and what they indicate about the culture of the parish. Finally, parishioners look to the future and identify things that would heighten the mission, vitality, and overall health of the parish. For a fuller understanding of the process, and exact wording of the questions, please refer to the meeting agenda found in **APPENDIX A**.

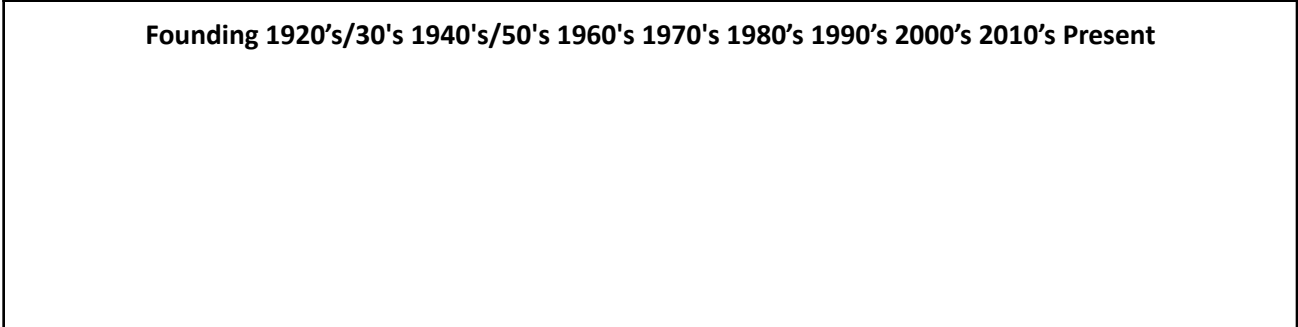
Listening sessions were scheduled from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM on the following dates:

- Tuesday, September 14
- Wednesday, September 15
- Tuesday, September 21
- Tuesday, September 28
- Wednesday, September 29

A mailing was sent to all households announcing the sessions, while pulpit announcements and parish bulletin reminders were also utilized to encourage participation. Registration for the sessions was handled through the parish website. Due to concerns related to COVID-19, sessions were limited to 60 people and held in the largest indoor space possible: the school gym. The number of participants at each table was limited to six, and tables were spaced apart six feet or more in accordance with the Center for Disease Control social distancing recommendations. Though masks were not mandated, many chose to wear them as an added precaution. While none of the sessions reached the maximum number of participants, attendance was strong with a total of 166 parishioners registering to attend – an average of 33.2 per session. Attendance was not taken at the sessions, however nearly all who registered in advance attended the sessions. The few who did not attend were offset by parishioners who did not register in advance but attended, nonetheless. The **TABLE 1**, below, shows the number of registered participants for each session.

<b>Table 1: NUMBER OF REGISTRANTS PER LISTENING SESSION</b>	
<b>DATE</b>	<b># REGISTRANTS</b>
9/14/2021	32
9/15/2021	22
9/21/2021	35
9/28/2021	46
9/29/2021	31
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>166</b>

At each listening session, a 25' long sheet of paper was hung on the wall of the gymnasium and a timeline spanning the history of the parish --from its founding in the 1830s to the present—was created.



Parishioners were asked to identify and share important events, people, and activities in the history of the parish which were recorded on the timeline. The stories shared helped Fr. Hawk and all present better understand the history, values, and traditions of Holy Trinity parish.

The facilitator then asked participants to draw meaning from this visual history of the parish, asking them to finish the statement: "Our history says to me \_\_\_\_\_." Responses were recorded on a flip chart and can be found in **APPENDIX B**.

Next, parishioners transitioned from the past to future by answering the following question:

*With money being no object, if you could imagine or transform Holy Trinity parish in any way you wished, what 1 – 3 things would you do to heighten its mission, vitality, and overall health? (Think facilities, ministries, programs, or activities that need addressing?)*

After a moment of silent reflection, participants were instructed to record 1-3 things they would do to heighten the mission, vitality, and overall health of the parish on a large index card. These cards were collected at the end of the session and responses organized into categories. The results can be found in **APPENDIX C**.

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Finally, participants were invited to share the 1-3 things they would do to enhance the parish with those at their table. Table members then identified the 3-5 “key recommendations” they most supported and recorded them on a large sheet of paper. These table recommendations are found in **APPENDIX D**.

## RESULTS

In what follows, general themes from participant responses will be offered as a type of “executive summary” or “overview” of the findings. Readers are encouraged to view the actual responses contained in the appendices -- which have been organized into topical areas-- for a richer, more nuanced understanding of the data.

### **“OUR HISTORY SAYS TO ME \_\_\_\_\_”**

The question “Our history says to me: \_\_\_\_\_” was designed to elicit how parishioners perceive themselves and offer insight into the culture of the parish. Participants at the five sessions offered a total of 50 responses which reflect seven major themes. These themes are listed below with the number of comments related to each theme in parentheses. According to participants, Holy Trinity is a parish:

- (1) With a history of strong lay leadership and volunteerism (15);
- (2) Characterized by a strong sense of community (10);
- (3) Which has experienced tremendous growth (6);
- (4) Which is resilient, and able to adapt and change (5);
- (5) Which is made up of people with strong faith (4);
- (6) Which has many long and meaningful traditions (3); and
- (7) Which values education/the parish school (3).

An additional four miscellaneous responses fill out the list of fifty. See **APPENDIX B**.

### **HOW TO HEIGHTEN THE MISSION, VITALITY AND OVERALL HEALTH OF THE PARISH -- NOTE CARD RESPONSES**

Asking participants what 1-3 things they would do to heighten the mission, vitality and overall health of the parish was primarily designed to help Fr. Hawk identify priorities for the future – what parishioners would like to see happen. A secondary function, however, was to gauge the extent to which parishioner priorities for the future involved expanding current –or building new—facilities on the parish grounds. When assigned to Holy Trinity, the

Diocese told Fr. Hawk that a larger worship space was needed to accommodate projected population growth and allow for the celebration of fewer, larger Masses on weekends.

The note cards collected at the end of the session were used to capture specific recommendations for enhancing Holy Trinity parish. Over the five sessions, a total of 378 recommendations were made. These recommendations

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where then organized into 17 categories. **Table 2** lists these 17 categories, as well as the number and percentage of all recommendations in each category.

As **Table 2** clearly shows, recommendations related to facilities/grounds predominated. About four-in-10 recommendations (39.9%) fell into this category. The need for a bigger church and more gathering space led the comments. Many recommended building a new, larger church and a multipurpose facility/community center for meetings, social gatherings, athletic activities and the performing arts. Having a kitchen in this new facility was considered important for events like community breakfasts, showers, and funeral luncheons.

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b># RESPONSES</b>	<b>% TOTAL</b>
FACILITIES/GROUNDS – RENOVATIONS AND BUILDING PROJECTS	151 <b>REGISTRANTS</b>	39.9%
SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES	34	9.0%
FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AND SOCIAL GATHERINGS	27	7.1%
MINISTRY PARTICIPATION, OPPORTUNITIES, GROUPS, ETC.	25	6.6%
YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY GGROUPS,COcCOMMUNICATION, COLLABORATION (25 comments)	25	6.6%
SOCIAL SERVICE / SOCIAL OUTREACH	21	5.6%
ADDITIONAL STAFF -- PRIEST, DEACON, LAY	18	4.8%
SCHOOL-RELATED ISSUES	17	4.5%
TECHNOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENTS: SOCIAL MEDIA, WEBSITE, SOFTWARE	11	2.9%
LITURGICAL PRACTICES SOFTSOFTWARE(comments)	10	2.6%
EVANGELIZATION – FILL THE CHURCH	10	2.6%
SOUND SYSTEM	9	2.4%
WELCOMING	8	2.1%
RE-ESTABLISH PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL / COMMISSIONS / FINANCE COUNCIL	8	2.1%
SENIORS GROUP	7	1.9%

MONEY MATTERS / STEWARDSHIP	4	1.1%
PRESERVE TRADITIONS	3	0.8%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>100%</b>

Participants also valued preserving the existing church and restoring it to its original beauty. Several maintenance projects were proposed, such as fixing broken pews, repairing the stairs to the choir loft, remodeling the bathrooms, improving handicap accessibility, adding a crying room, replacing the pipe organ, and rebuilding the steeple. Recommendations related to improving the sound system –which were given their own category—are also related to the renovation of the existing church.

Keeping the current church or building a new one is probably not an “either/or” proposition, but a “both/and” scenario. Restoring the current church makes sense. It’s an historic building, an Avon Lake landmark, the symbol (logo) of the parish, and has great curb appeal. Given its limited seating capacity and ornate beauty, it is ideally suited for daily Mass, weddings, funerals, and Eucharistic adoration. Building a new church with a greater seating capacity also makes sense. It offers the possibility of having fewer, larger Sunday Masses. With a growing

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population in Avon, no parochial vicar, and few priests available to help on weekends, the current Mass schedule will become untenable in the near future.

Whether restoring the current church or constructing a new one, many participants recommended building a multi-purpose facility / community center, as there is a dearth of meeting and gathering space at Holy Trinity. Developing a site-plan for how the property may be best utilized to meet the present and future needs was recommended as well.

Another facilities-related recommendation was doing away with the modular school units and building on to the school so that the Pre-K program could be housed in the main building. The modular units appear to be in disrepair –losing shingles on the roof-- and have outlived their projected lifespan. What’s more, it’s possible that the space they currently occupy may be needed when the new facilities are built.

Nearly a quarter of all recommendations (22.7%) involved expanding spiritual enrichment, fellowship, and ministry opportunities. (See **APPENDIX C** for the complete list). Popular spiritual enrichment recommendations were bible and topical studies, small faith-sharing groups, and guest speakers during Lent. Recommended fellowship opportunities included bingo, festivals, coffee and donuts after Mass and couples’ groups. Regarding ministry opportunities, recommendations involved starting new initiatives (e.g., prison ministry, bereavement support groups, and funeral luncheons) and bolstering established ones (e.g., Extraordinary Ministers of the Eucharist, lectors, altar servers, etc.). Many recommendations advocated greater parishioner engagement in parish life and ministry through recruitment, training, and better communication of opportunities.

The loss of Fr. Gerard, who was a stable, pastoral presence at Holy Trinity for two decades, was a blow to the parish, and many participants voiced a desire for additional staffing of some sort to assist Fr. Hawk.

Several technological enhancements, which include better use of social media, an increased web presence, and improved parish management software, were recommended to improve communication with parishioners, particularly tech-savvy young adults. Other recommendations, such as improving youth and young adult ministry, reflect a similar desire to make Holy Trinity more relevant to younger Catholics.

Recommendations to reconstitute the Parish Pastoral Council (PPC) and Commissions reflect the parish's history of strong lay leadership. Participants saw these organizations as helpful to the pastor in the past in carrying out initiatives, projects, and event. Perhaps they could be helpful once again. There was a call to reconstitute the Finance Council as well. This organization already exists, but participants may see the need for it to play a larger role if the parish is to build.

Improving evangelization and welcoming were recommended by a few participants. The number returning to Mass after parishes were closed due to COVID-19 is much lower than before the pandemic. This, combined with the Pope's call for all Catholics to become "missionary disciples" has heightened the need to attract and retain parishioners.

**HOW TO HEIGHTEN THE MISSION, VITALITY AND OVERALL HEALTH OF THE PARISH -- TABLE RESPONSES**

Having participants discuss and reach consensus at their tables on the best recommendations for the future was a means of weighting responses. Not all responses are equal. Some are more reflective of group than others. Over the five sessions, a total of 98 recommendations were made after table discussions. These

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recommendations were then organized into same 17 categories identified in the note card responses. **Table 3** lists these 17 categories, as well as the number and percentage of all recommendations in each category.

<p><b>Table 3:</b>  <b>RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HEIGHTENING THE VITALITY OF THE PARISH BY</b>  <b>CATEGORY -TABLE RESPONSES</b></p>		
<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b># RESPONSES</b>	<b>% TOTAL</b>
FACILITIES / GROUNDS – RENOVATIONS AND BUILDING PROJECTS	<b>REGISTRA</b> <b>NTS 42</b>	42.9%
MINISTRY PARTICIPATION, OPPORTUNITIES, GROUPS, ETC.	14	14.3%
ADDITIONAL STAFF -- PRIEST, DEACON, LAY GGROUPS,COcCOMMUNICATION, COLLABORATION (25 comments)	9	9.2%
FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AND SOCIAL GATHERINGS	6	6.1%
SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES	5	5.1%
YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY	4	4.1%
TECHNOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENTS: SOCIAL MEDIA, WEBSITE, SOFTWARE	4	4.1%
SOFTSOFTWARE(comments) SOCIAL SERVICE / SOCIAL OUTREACH	3	3.1%
SCHOOL-RELATED ISSUES	3	3.1%
LITURGICAL PRACTICES	3	3.1%
EVANGELIZATION – FILL THE CHURCH	3	3.1%

SOUND SYSTEM	2	2.0%
RE-ESTABLISH PPC / COMMISSIONS / FINANCE COUNCIL	1	1.0%
WELCOMING	0	0.0%
SENIORS GROUP	0	0.0%
MONEY MATTERS / STEWARDSHIP	0	0.0%
PRESERVE TRADITIONS	0	0.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>100%</b>

Again, recommendations related to facilities/grounds (i.e., renovations and building projects) ranked first on the list. As with the note cards, about four-in-10 recommendations (42.9%) fell into this category. Specifically, participants wanted a multi-purpose facility / community center for gatherings, meetings, events, etc. Many also recommended expanding the existing church or building a new, larger one. Several recommended renovating/remodeling the current church and building on to the school. Getting rid of the modular units which house the preschool relates to expanding the school building. A few recommended demolishing the old rectory and building a new one. **APPENDIX D** has a list of all recommendations by category.

About one-fourth of all recommendations (25.5%) related to creating more spiritual enrichment, fellowship, and ministry-related opportunities. See **APPENDIX D** for specifics. Another 10% of recommendations concerned adding staff. Suggestions like bringing Fr. Gerard back or having a parochial vicar assigned to the parish are unrealistic. However, adding a deacon or a non-ordained pastoral staff member would be possible.

Several recommended enhancing the parish’s social media presence, website, and parish bulletin to improve communication and give Holy Trinity a larger presence in the community.

A few school-related recommendations, such as assessing the school’s academic competitiveness and improving relations with the parish, were also put forth.

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Surprisingly, recommendation in categories such as WELCOMING, SENIORS GROUP, MONNEY MATTERS, and PRESERVING TRADITIONS –which were present on the note cards-- were not found among the table recommendations. It appears that facilities, staffing, and opportunities for ministry, fellowship, and spiritual enrichment were deemed more significant during table discussions.

## CONCLUSION

As stated earlier, the primary function of these “historicizing” listening sessions was to help the

pastor: (1) better understand the history and culture of the parish; and

(2) better understand the aspirations of parishioners regarding the future of the parish.

Both goals were accomplished. The creating of an historical timeline educated both the pastor and participants about key events, moments, and personalities in the history of the parish. Insights into the culture of the parish came through reflecting on the timeline and answering the question “Our history says to me: \_\_\_\_\_”.



The secondary function of these sessions, namely, gauging the extent to which participant priorities for the future involved expanding current or building new facilities on the parish grounds-- was also accomplished. Recommendations from the note cards and at tables exhibited strong support for expanding parish facilities. Participants recommended of building a multi-purpose facility / community center for gatherings, meetings, events, etc. They also favored creating a bigger worship space, though the preferred method (adding on to the existing church or building a new, larger one) is unclear. As stated earlier, keeping the current church, or building a bigger one is probably not an "either/or" but a "both/and" proposition. Restoring the current church makes sense given its beauty, historic value, and curb appeal. It is perfectly suited for daily Mass, weddings, funerals, and Eucharistic adoration. It would be difficult, however, to sufficiently expand this building. Building a new church with a greater seating capacity solves the problem, offering the possibility of having fewer, larger Sunday Masses in the future when weekend help becomes scarcer.

The shortage of meeting and gathering space is acute and has limited the spiritual enrichment, fellowship, and ministry-related opportunities the parish might otherwise offer. Participants desire a vibrant, well-rounded parish with a full complement of ministries (e.g., spiritual enrichment, faith formation, social service, social justice, youth ministry and evangelization). Addressing the shortage of space through building new facilities or repurposing existing ones is a first step. Additional staffing and strong lay leadership are also necessary components.

The need to create a site plan to determine the best way to use Holy Trinity's property to meet present and future needs was mentioned. Based on Fr. Hawk's comments after each listening session, the search for an architectural firm to perform this task is already underway.

The prospect of addressing the administrative, ministerial, and sacramental needs of a parish the size of Holy Trinity without pastoral help is daunting. Adding staffing and reconstituting the Parish Pastoral Council/Commissions/Finance Council were recommended by participants as ways of lightening the pastor's workload. Also, having a functioning and effective Parish Pastoral Council and Finance Council with so many capital expenditures pending seems prudent.

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Finally, removing the modular units and bring pre-school into the main school building makes sense. Participants saw the modular units as having outlived their usefulness. What's more, the space these units currently occupy may be needed in the new site plan.

**APPENDIX A**

***HISTORICIZING LISTENING SESSION AGENDA***

## HOLY TRINITY HISTORICIZING LISTENING SESSION

7:00 – 9:00 PM

### AGENDA

**Welcome, Introductions, Overview of Meeting**

### **Remembering the Past**

*QUESTION:*

*What are the most important moments/events in the history of our parish?  
(i.e., joys, struggles, significant people, heroes, inspiring moments, etc.)*

- Personal reflection in silence
- Participants record moments/events under the appropriate decades on their timeline handout

### **Drawing the Timeline and Telling the Stories**

- Record important moments/events in the history of the church on large timeline

### **Interpreting the Past**

*QUESTION:*

*Our history says to me \_\_\_\_\_?*

*(i.e., key meanings or values derived from these stories)*

- Personal reflection in silence
- Sharing response to question aloud

### **Visioning the Future**

*QUESTION:*

*With money being no object, if you could imagine or transform Holy Trinity parish in any way you wished, what 1 – 3 things would you do to heighten its mission, vitality, and overall health? (Think facilities, ministries, programs, or activities that need addressing?)*

- Personal reflection in silence
- Small Group Discussion
- Large Group Feedback (table reports)

**Thank You. Next Steps. Blessing. Departure**

## **APPENDIX B**

### ***RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION “OUR HISTORY SAYS TO ME: \_\_\_\_\_”***

**HOLY TRINITY HISTORICIZING SESSIONS**  
**VEBATIM RESPONSES TO THE QUESTION**  
**“OUR HISTORY SAYS TO ME: \_\_\_\_\_”**  
**(GROUPED BY CATEGORY)**

**STRONG LAY LEADERSHIP AND VOLUNTEERISM**

- We are a generous parish (e.g., “Giving Tree,” “Day of Service,” etc.)
- We have had great leaders (e.g., priests, women religious, lay persons, teachers, neighbors) •

Our parishioners have a spirit of generosity

- We have a vibrant, active parish
- We have a very long history of community participation
- Many played an important part in the history of our parish
- Our parishioners are characterized by faith, commitment and works
- We have a tradition of volunteer service
- We have parishioners who are supportive, involved, and active
- “If we cook it, they will come.” Many parish events, activities, and fundraisers involve food

(e.g., fish fries, spaghetti dinners, and chicken dinners)

- Our parishioners drive (lead) parish activities
- We are self-sufficient as a community
- We are a very social parish. We like to eat, party and gamble
- We have benefitted by the positive influence of the Notre Dame Sisters
- We have a very vibrant parish

### **STRONG SENSE OF COMMUNITY**

- We have a strong sense of community
- Our parish is like a family. All pitch in and our kids are involved.
- Community is important: fellowship, family, and friends
- We are community-oriented and take care of each other
- We experience community through involvement
- It is hard to establish community here
- Our parishioners experience a sense of family togetherness
- We are a welcoming community
- We have a close network of people
- We are characterized by community, togetherness, and growth.

### **GROWTH**

- We have experienced lots of growth in people and facilities
- We are comfortable with change
- We’ve had continual growth in everything!
- We have grown as a parish, but large-scale events are down
- We have experienced lots of growth and change
- We are working together for growth

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### **RESILIENT, ABLE TO ADAPT AND CHANGE**

- We are a resilient community
- We are survivors who have had lots of ups and down in our history
- We have longevity!
- We are survivors, evolvers, and growers
- We have embraced our opportunities (in the past)

### **STRONG FAITH**

- Spiritual development is important
- We are a strong, faith-based parish
- We strive to build God’s Kingdom

- Sacraments have been central, and devotions nourish us

#### **MEANINGFUL TRADITIONS**

- We have long traditions
- We have many meaningful traditions
- We have a rich tradition to be honored and remembered

#### **IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL**

- We value education
- Our parish school is integral to the parish
- We financially support what we value

#### **MISCELLANEOUS**

- There is a lot for youth to do in this parish: CYO, scouting, helping with events • We pay attention to infrastructure needs
- We need to get back to basics. Evaluate ministries and activities and make a plan • School and PSR students have always been separated, all the way back to the 1940s and 50s.

## **APPENDIX C**

### ***NOTE CARD RECOMMENDATIONS***

## **HOLY TRINITY HISTORICIZING SESSIONS**

### **NOTE CARD RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **GROUPED BY CATEGORY**

**(TOTAL NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS IN CATEGORY IN PARENTHESES)**

***“With money being no object, if you could imagine or transform Holy Trinity parish in any way you wished, what 1 – 3 things would you do to heighten its mission, vitality, and overall health?” (Think facilities, ministries, programs, or activities that need addressing?)***

#### **FACILITIES/GROUNDS – RENOVATIONS AND BUILDING PROJECTS (115)**

- Build facilities to accommodate growth (e.g., church, school, meeting rooms) •  
Build a new church



- New church
- Envision beautiful circular windows in our new worship space of the Holy Spirit Dove, the Sacred Heart of Jesus and the Immaculate heart of Mary • Update master plans that include larger church and gathering space

- A larger church without changing the whole ambiance of the exterior and interior •

Bigger church

- New worship space to bring everyone together. No cry room
- New church
- Larger worship space
- Bigger church
- Bigger church
- Larger church-if needed
- Large worship space
- Do not expend the church until the masses are full
- Bigger church
- Enlarge / build on to church
- Expand the church
- Enlarged church capacity – crying room
- Concern about preserving church building
- Don't change original church building
- Update church and school
- Remodel church or build another one to add on
- Repairs to buildings. We have church
- Take care of church and fix anything that is needed
- Refurbishing church interior
- Modernize church – do it in a way that preserves feature of current church
- Make the church larger to hold more people
- Save the church. Add masses as needed

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- Don't tear down church just to make it bigger. Add masses
- Restore church to original beauty
- Restrooms-need remodeled
- In church – install new bathroom(s)
- Better washrooms in church for men and women
- Crying room for church
- Crying room
- Crying room in the church
- Better access for disabled in church – better facilities
- Church - restore or repair pews and improvements/restorations
- Fix pews
- Remodification of the sacristy chair, robes
- Elevator into church for those with difficulties
- Room for hearing impaired and handicapped of all ages
- Stairs to choir loft need repair
- 24-hour adoration chapel
- Steeple back on church
- Expand choir loft with young children area enclosed below

- New pipe organ
  - Multipurpose facility which can provide space for parish and school events (like St. Joe's) •
  - Add a parish center with a connecting hall to the church
  - Gathering spaces
  - Nature walk between church and cemetery with stops for reflection. Prayer (statues?) •
  - Room for more activities in the parish
  - Gathering space for fellowship
  - A space close to the church to socialize before and after
  - Build dedicated hall for church community to use, beyond school gym
  - Community hall connected to the church with weatherproof walkways.
  - Build a parish hall!
  - Community room for showers, funerals, open to the public
  - Expand community building activities – handicap accessible
  - New parish activity center
  - Community center
  - Build a community/parish center
  - Parish hall or additional space for Mass (fieldhouse-sports/Mass/lunch/recess) •
  - Gathering space attached to the church
  - Large parish gathering place-allows more space for activities that grow faith, not compete for the gym space
  - At a community center for multi-use
  - Parish hall
  - Facilities expansion
  - Identify Catholic community needs for facilities expansion
  - A gathering place to meet out of the weather for funerals and weddings, and before Mass, etc. •
  - If building new facilities-must fill it with activities that people want to participate in • Performing arts space
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- Gathering place
  - New or remodeled kitchen
  - Community room with kitchen
  - Separate cafeteria
  - Parish hall, offices, kitchen
  - Rebuild with meeting spaces, classrooms, and functioning office for parish staff •
  - Update school for no use of modular buildings
  - Better facilities for small meetings
  - Build a facility that will meet the needs of social gatherings, meeting rooms, school entertainment programs, etc.
  - Meeting space
  - Facility for parish organizations to have meetings and social gatherings
  - Community meeting space – the growing school
  - A campus that incorporates the historic aspects (i.e., keeps the original church) while expanding the capacity for services, includes the school and meeting spaces with a large hall for community activities
  - Vibrant parish center for meetings, retreats, bridal. Replace modulars
  - Replace pre-school and get rid of modulars
  - Meeting place for after Mass and after funerals
  - Meeting space needed
  - New community meeting rooms and large meeting space for speakers, community breakfast, after-

## funeral luncheon

- New meeting rooms
- Replace modular classrooms / new school construction
- New church, new school, new meeting room. Facelift
- New, larger meeting building
- Common meeting space – modern
- Upgrade facilities (the preschool mods are the pits)
- Facilities: meeting rooms, office, storage
- Common meeting space/hall/flexible space for large and small groups
- Build a social hall with rooms for meetings and possibly Sunday school
- Fieldhouse-kitchen, meeting rooms, second Jim. Rent out the second Jim for private social events

(i.e., bridal/baby showers)

- Meeting rooms
- Meeting space for parishioners to hold events: bingo, night at the races, etc.
- Gathering space for parish events and fellowship / meetings
- Facilities-meeting rooms
- Building with space to hold Bible study groups.
- Build a new rectory
- Nice rectory
- New rectory
- Redo priest house
- New rectory. Take down the former one
- New rectory
- Renovate the rectory

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- Priest house needs updating
- Physical upgrades to church and rectory, choir loft, steps to bathroom in church • Parish house be done or used for other purposes
- Update facilities (rectory) while maintaining the structure
- Growth study – rectory needs to be replaced?
- Update the school and facilities
- Expand school buildings
- Ability to expand school when needed
- Modernizing school and enlarging
- School community can eclipse other groups space needs (adult groups, scouts....) • School stage for drama club and maybe school band
- More classrooms for the school. Dedicated space for art, music, band, extracurriculars, etc. •

School expansion. Need a separate eating facility (cafeteria) for the school children, then the multipurpose center can be utilized during the day if needed by the church • Incorporate preschool into school

- New school
- New preschool

• Growth in the parish activity centers, school space for more teachers, preschool • New preschool building-it has exceeded its shelf life. Could attract more students. Grow the preschool.

Maintain enrollment in K-8

- Add a preschool that will allow for more growth and feed into K-8
- Add a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor to Notre Dame
- Demolish the parish office, modular units, and garages

- Move preschool into school as a new wing of the building instead of the “temporary” modules • Building to replace the trailers
- Get rid of a small trailer and make building
- Trailers???
- Future facility needs
- More parking
- Cohesive campus (instead of a mishmash of buildings)
- Cohesive campus
- Parish – outgrowing its facilities
- Don’t fill all the green space with buildings-children need to run. All parish activities must have outdoor space for festivals, etc.
- Better use of land
- Meditation grounds
- Follow through with new plan around space for kids to play and grow
- Identify future Catholic community growth
- Add another exit to parish lot
- Keep responding to growth
- Art in right places? Review \_\_\_\_ space

#### **SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES (34)**

- Focus on spiritual growth – don’t lose sight of Jesus with all activities
- Spiritual growth for all

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- More programs for spiritual growth
- Expand spiritual growth opportunities
- Nourish our spiritual needs to prepare us for community outreach
- Spiritual enrichment
- Engage families in spiritual activities outside Mass
- Help people to encounter Christ – with all his mercy and his call to conversion
- Engage young families in spiritual activities beyond Mass during Advent, Lent, Easter, Christmas.

More practicing Catholics coming together.

- Home groups / bible-faith groups – expand faith formation
- Have more study groups (Bible)
- Bible/church studies for adults
- More Bible study/adult education opportunities
- Bible studies
- Programs: stewardship, Scripture study, adult education
- Annual conference on challenges / topics
- Expand adoration hours and benediction
- More regular faith-based programming / speakers / retreats
- Annual conference with guest speakers
- Speaker series
- Bring in good speaker for Lenten mission (Gus Lloyd-Catholic radio, Father Mike Schmitz • Adult faith formation. For example: Lenten retreat and guest speaker
- Access to the church for private prayer
- Greater focus on the Eucharist via weekly benedictions, processions with the blessed sacrament and 24-hour adoration chapel
- Integrate with larger programming (Cursillo)

- Have excellent programming to engage and catechize adults and children
- Hook up with other parishes for studies and activities
- Extend commitment to Catholic education to include teen and adult continual formation •

#### Reflections

• Put more emphasis on instilling the faith into lives of parishioners through traditional devotions, improvement events to the liturgy, and sound catechetics

- Improve our RCIA program
- More dynamic/progressive resources (e.g., dynamic Catholic, formed, etc.)
- Presentations/classes on Catholic religion
- More lectors, Eucharistic ministers, leadership, involvement, speakers, evening Vespers

### **FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AND SOCIAL GATHERINGS (27)**

- Social gatherings – continue the ones that are successful
- Fellowship opportunities
- More parish events that draw on our parish culture and bond us as a community •

#### Activities for all ages

- Parishioner engagement / social gatherings / activities
  - More opportunities for parishioner engagement if don't have children in the school •
- Structured approach to heightening ministry and relationship building
- Community activities for the family (Bingo, raffles, movie nights)

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- Bingo
- Parish activities: Bingo, festivals, carnivals, retreats, prayer groups
- Ministry for couples, parents
- More ministry for couples
- Ministry for couples
- Sunday after Mass – have a coffee and donut social
- Parish gatherings – donut Sunday activities
- Use front yard tent after Mass for donuts and coffee
- Donut Sunday
- Bring back a parish festival
- Summer festival
- As parish grew and expanded, community activities have reduced
- Book clubs
- Women's golf outings/events
- Enrichment field trips/travel abroad opportunities
- Events to get the children of the parish together-family/volunteer events
- Engage in family togetherness
- Ministries for families
- Group learning opportunities to get together and meet more people as a newcomer. Senior citizens mostly may need this

### **MINISTRY PARTICIPATION, OPPORTUNITIES, GROUPS, ETC. (25)**

- Promote ministry opportunities
- New opportunities for all to participate in ministry (i.e., Eucharistic Ministers, Lectors) •
- “Recruiting” parishioners to become active in various ministries
- Continue to grow ministries
- New parish ministries / groups

- Engaging (young) families. More ministry opportunities.
  - Greater participation in ministries/advertise
  - Have more people involved
  - Parishioner involvement-more active
  - More ministry opportunities: prison ministry, sick visits, Bible studies
  - Create parish groups
  - Programs – for all ages
  - Have a bereavement committee to serve funeral luncheons in the new hall
  - Begin a funeral choir
  - Coordinate communication between ministries (transparency)
  - Improve communication / collaboration among groups
  - Disclosure of committees working in church
  - Improve connection with public school families (PSR and servers and ministries) •
- Engagement of parishioners
- Post Cana events young versus old
  - Ministry training
  - More welcoming sacramental preparation

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• Activities that bring us together to get through hard times. Example: how to handle COVID disagreements

- More volunteer Eucharistic ministers on lectors and team leaders
- Create a strong student/parent/church bond around the sacraments

#### **YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY (25)**

- Programs for high schoolers / young adults
  - Engage high school youth group and keep students engaged after grade school •
- Youth ministry
- Youth ministry
  - Teen youth group/activities
  - More active adult formation/youth ministries
  - Youth ministry
  - Youth ministry-senior and junior high school
  - Youth activities/ministry
  - Expand youth groups by sponsoring activities for teens
  - Teen / young adult strengthening
  - Vital teen / young adult programs
  - A thriving youth group that builds our faith in the next generation
  - Teen retreats
  - Feel disconnected once kids leave school
  - Once kids our out, they have no connection to the parish other than their Mass obligation •
- Keep youth involved in the church and God-centered in their lives
- Get children involved. Have them have leadership and present among some programs • Spiritually youth/family programs. They need more to develop a deeper understanding and stay with their faith when they are young adults
- CYO club
  - Grow CYO and fields
  - Young adult group

- Programs for young adults
- More opportunities for children, pre-teens, 18-30 age programs
- Young adult training

### **SOCIAL SERVICE / SOCIAL OUTREACH (21)**

- Service activities for adults and youth
- Provide youth group with service opportunities
- Parish activities that help the community to get kids involved– food drives, holiday help, yard cleanups

- Outreach ministry
- Service Sunday in January
- Continue to have interaction of people to help charitable purposes
- Utilize the Knights of Columbus for services to the parish
- Increase community ministry. Bring in speaker, volunteer for community
- Continuity of service projects throughout the year – build community
- Continuing service projects throughout the year

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- More family involvement in community
- Increase programs for the poor of Lorain / Elyria
- Increase programs that serve the poor
- Outreach programs into the community
- Develop a partner church in a low-income neighborhood
- Tax help
- Continue day of service and expand it
- Services to help fellow parishioners (i.e., funeral meals, transportation, connecting with social services, tax help for seniors, etc.)
- Serve our greater community
- Opportunities for parishioners to become active in the community. Re: MaryAnne Ksenich – “Service Day”
- Outreach to the less fortunate. Single mothers, for example

### **ADDITIONAL STAFF -- PRIEST, DEACON, LAY (18)**

- Another priest or deacon
- Increase pastoral staff (at least two priests and a deacon)
- Pastoral help – another priest, deacon, or regular associate to allow for greater access for parishioners
- Another priest on campus
- (Pastoral) help from the diocese for pastor
- Deacon or additional priest
- Additional staff – priest, deacon, parish manager
- Another priest to have with all daily and weekend duties. This way all the burden is not on the pastor
- Spiritual pastoral leadership. Add an Assistant Pastor (i.e., Parochial Vicar)?
- Associate/help for pastor
- We need a deacon
- More help for pastor
- Staff to lead ministries and programs
- More help for the pastor

- Bring back nuns
- Provide Fr. Vince with the resources to engage necessary staff to allow efficient operation as father feels appropriate (example: CFO / COO model) with pastoral assistant
- Love to see Fr. Gerard back
- Bring back Fr. Gerard to help

### **SCHOOL-RELATED ISSUES (17)**

- Greater integration of school and parish life so school parents can grow closer to the church • More activities to bring church and school together
- Better unite our church and our school
- We segregate parishioners (those with kids in the parish school vs. those with no kids in the parish school
- Better communication between church and school

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- Pastor to be more involved with the parish school and have a presence in classrooms. Get familiar with the kids, school.
- Taskforce to assess school competitiveness
- Ensure that Catholic school stays competitive
- Free tuition
- Keep tuition low
- Keep tuition lower
- Have school give more information on activities instead of just fundraisers
- Work with the city regarding growth so the school can accommodate but not get too large • Consistency in processes-the school is more advanced than parish office
- Grow the student body-more students
- Gifted (ALP) classes. Not sure if the school already has this.
- School program for service “clubs”-cleaning around the grounds, buildings, helping younger students, the elderly, etc. in whatever ways

### **TECHNOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENTS: SOCIAL MEDIA, WEBSITE, SOFTWARE SOFTSOFTWARE**

- (11) • Develop a social media presence – hire people to help
- Stable and prominent social media / digital presence to communicate in a new way about activities, events, and opportunities to engage with parish life
- Have an appealing, robust social media
- More active social media presence to advertise events, speakers, etc. Cannot rely on website • Contact info of staff (on website?)
- More information of diocesan activities on website if not bulletin
- Up-to-date web page. Twitter
- Add all this history to the website
- Better communication-tech tools, communication streamline
- Flock note-create text push notifications
- New software package, ParishSoft is bad.

### **LITURGICAL PRACTICES (10)**

- Project the truth of our faith in homilies and activities
- Include special liturgies during Sunday Mass, including baptisms, special blessings, “Living Your Faith”, RCIA candidates during their preparation



- Improve music – more vibrant
- Pro-Life Benediction
- Baptism at Mass
- Keep 7:30 AM mass with no music
- Readers/Eucharistic ministers training on a regular basis (1-2X year)
- Music at every mass
- Children’s liturgy of the word into one of the Sunday masses-have them physically come up-be prayed over and then dismissed
  - Children’s mass

### **EVANGELIZATION – FILL THE CHURCH (10)**

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- Find ways to communicate the gospel to a new generation without watering it down to suit a secular world
  - Reach out to the Catholics in the parish that re “on the edge” Catholics (e.g., those who do not attend Mass every Sunday and Sacraments)
  - Get people to return / come back to church and participate in bigger scale
  - Outreach - engage people of all demographics
  - Bring people back to church
  - Increase participation in Mass, ministries
  - Evangelize! Fill our church again!
  - Grow parishioners
  - Fill the church-get people back
  - Bring young families back into the pews and not just the school through dynamic ministries

### **SOUND SYSTEM (9)**

- Better sound system in the church
- Update sound system
- Better sound system and church
- New sound system
- New sound system
- Improvements to church (microphones)
- Speaker system
- Speaker system in church
- So much is known about electronics in today’s world. Our sound system needs the latest improvements in the church

### **WELCOMING (8)**

- Welcome newcomers
- Welcome new parishioners
- Establish a welcoming environment at Mass
- Welcome new parishioners
- New parishioner welcome
- New parishioner orientation
- New parishioner orientation-history of the parish/church/school
- Need to feel invited and welcomed to participate in activities and parish needs

### **RE-ESTABLISH PARISH PASTORAL COUNCIL / COMMISSIONS / FINANCE COUNCIL (8)**

- Need to attend or open up to Parish Council – in past it was always present • A parish council
- Reform parish council/commissions
- Bring back the Parish Pastoral Council. Reference Bishop villas directive (Canon 529???) • Parish council
- Finance council
- More help/resources for Father Hawk. Parish council or volunteers to help carry out initiatives, projects, events
- Church groups and/or brainstorming sessions for continuous improvement

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### **SENIORS GROUP (7)**

- Senior concerns
- Elder support
- Senior involvement
- Ministry to senior citizens-activities etc.
- Start a senior group
- Senior activities
- Senior discussions/speakers

### **MONEY MATTERS / STEWARDSHIP (4)**

- Parishioners should get an annual financial report on the state of the parish
- Better communication with parishioners as to finances, and plans for the future – annual financial reports
- Transparency
- Increase the amount of stewardship

### **PRESERVE TRADITIONS (3)**

- Maintain traditions inside the church (basket blessing, flowers, Corpus Christi procession) • Save traditions
- Return some favored historical traditions

**APPENDIX D**  
***TABLE RECOMMENDATIONS***

## **HOLY TRINITY HISTORICIZING SESSIONS**

### **TABLE RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **GROUPED BY CATEGORY**

**(TOTAL NUMBER OF RECOMMENDATIONS IN CATEGORY IN PARENTHESES)**

***“With money being no object, if you could imagine or transform Holy Trinity parish in any way you wished, what 1 – 3 things would you do to heighten its mission, vitality, and overall health?” (Think facilities, ministries, programs, or activities that need addressing?)***

#### **FACILITIES / GROUNDS – RENOVATIONS AND BUILDING PROJECTS (42)**

• All-purpose building for events, gatherings, and offices, with covered walkway to church • Gathering space: infrastructure to support community/parishioner involvement. Narthex. Large meeting space.

- Meeting facilities (spiritual and social)
  - Gathering space: for fellowship after Mass, parish meetings, larger space for events? •
  - Expand/build social gathering space/meeting rooms
  - Community hall
  - Meeting rooms
  - Parish center for meetings, faith formation, retreats
  - New community facility with kitchen, fireplace, multimedia (the new “White Hall”) •
  - New community/parish center
  - Facilities: meeting rooms, office, storage, update sound/tech in church, church restoration, fair use, improvements, bathrooms, and large school, subsidized tuition
  - Modern common meeting space with movable walls
  - Facility review. Are art and statues in the right places? Better electronics – sound system (can’t hear).
  - Better facilities for small and bigger meetings. We have inadequate space
  - Build a community center for events, meetings
  - Possible new church and rectory
  - Facility-new church and multipurpose building
  - A campus that preserves the ambience of the old church and altar. Larger church for mass. Meeting spaces. 24-hour adoration chapel. School to accommodate continued growth (get rid of modules). • Expand church to include gathering space/crying room
  - Bigger church with cry room
  - A new/renovated worship space
  - Larger worship space
  - Expanding facilities while preserving the integrity of church
  - Bigger church
  - Elevator for handicapped and church refresh
  - Modernize church: crying room, handicap assessable
  - Restore historic church to original beauty
  - Upgrades in church: bathrooms, steps to choir loft
- 
- Crying room in the back of church
  - Put steeple back on church
  - Replace modular classrooms-new school construction
  - One school/unit-get rid of modulares
  - Build on to school to omit mobile trailers
  - Update and expand school
  - Upgrade school and rectory
  - Expand school
  - New priest rectory
  - Bulldoze rectory
  - Identify needs for facility expansion
  - Nature walk for prayer and reflection
  - Connect church grounds to cemetery with statues, benches, picnic tables
  - Covered walkways/protection from wind
  - Better use of land

#### **MINISTRY PARTICIPATION, OPPORTUNITIES, GROUPS, ETC. (14)**

- Spiritual growth – knowledge of ministries, programs, speakers
  - More programs for spiritual growth-integrate with other Catholic parishes (e.g., Cursillo).
- Identify specific demographic groups for spiritual programs and special devotions. Travel to holy

places (i.e., pilgrimages)

- Improve communication and collaboration for all age groups
- Opportunities for spiritual growth. Pastoral leadership. New ministries (young family, teen, young adults). Programs
- More spiritual programming for all ages (ministry, support)
- Expand spiritual growth options
- Increase volunteers and ministries
- Bring back Bible studies
- Bring back “Holy Name” for men and the Guild for women once-a-month meetings • Stewardship: EMS, lectures, volunteer, leadership
- More opportunities for parishioner involvement of all ages (seniors, no kids in school, etc.) such as new parishioner welcome gathering, Bible study etc.
- Improve our RCIA program
- Bible study/adult education/prayer groups
- Increase participation in ministries Eucharistic ministers, readers, youth group, training session needed

#### **ADDITIONAL STAFF -- PRIEST, DEACON, LAY (9)**

- Permanent or regular priest and/or deacon committed to holy Trinity in addition to Fr. Hawk. (Need Fr. Gerard back)
- Associate priest/deacon
- Bring back Father Gerard to assist
- Additional priest (every day and weekend duties)
- Deacon help for father and home on-site

- Staff/commissions: assistant, deacons, parish Council, commissions, faith formation, prayer groups, social justice, active our RCIA, adult education
- Additional personnel
- More help for pastor!!
- Strong leadership/enthusiasm/vitality

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#### **FELLOWSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AND SOCIAL GATHERINGS (6)**

- A sense of belonging-community
- Bring back social events for seniors, singles, and newcomers
- Building community: service, outreach, engagement, welcome
- Family ministry and events (parish driven)
- Ministry for couples and parenting
- Bring back the festival/church picnic

#### **SPIRITUAL ENRICHMENT OPPORTUNITIES (5)**

- Nourish our spiritual deeds to prepare us for community outreach
- More pro-life discussions and activities
- Faith formation for all (commitment to Catholic education) including teens, younger adults, empty-nesters, and seniors
- More dynamic and progressive resources
- Bring in dynamic speakers for Lenten mission (Gus Lloyd and Father Mike Schmitz)

#### **YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULT MINISTRY (4)**

- Father being more active with parish school and CYO
- Young adult programming
- CYO club
- Youth ministry: vacation Bible school, retreats, service, faith formation

#### **TECHNOLOGICAL ENHANCEMENTS: SOCIAL MEDIA, WEBSITE, SOFTWARE SOFTWARE**

- (4)** • Improve webpage, social media, bulletin
- Website improvement
  - Facebook page for parishioners like Avon in the Know to share good, bad, and memories •
- Communication and technology improvement

#### **SOCIAL SERVICE / SOCIAL OUTREACH (3)**

- Increase programs that serve the poor
- Serve community
- Help for seniors: taxes, transportation, social services

#### **SCHOOL-RELATED ISSUES (3)**

- Building the relationship/communication between the school and parish
- Internal task force to assess school competitiveness
- Unify school and church

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#### **LITURGICAL PRACTICES (3)**

- Benediction
- Extend Eucharistic adoration
- Include special rituals/sacraments during mass: baptisms, special blessings, RCIA candidates

#### **EVANGELIZATION - FILL THE CHURCH (3)**

- Parish outreach: build a thriving youth group, more events/occasions to draw in “fallen away Catholics”
- Add something that will bring in the millennials
- Evangelize parish/community-fill the pews

#### **SOUND SYSTEM (2)**

- Update sound system
- Better sound system

#### **RE-ESTABLISH PPC / COMMISSIONS / FINANCE COUNCIL (1)**

- Improved communication-develop parish council

