

Banner Project Proposal

Project Proposal

The medium *is* (sometimes) the message. The dramatic gothic spires of the bell tower, the impressive internal organ, the windows of stained glass all create a stunning experience of Trinity for a guest, new or old. For a new visitor, the decoration and adornments of the church might be an attractive quality to the parish before even getting to the good stuff– the ministries, liturgy, sermons, etc. For old timers, the decoration and adornments of the church take on new personal meanings for each of us, reminding us of certain moments of our lives, liturgical seasons, or as simple as places for our eyes to wonder in contemplation.

The 8 banners that line the walls of the sanctuary were made many years ago by a team of parishioners which included Ann Mclean Mealy, Jane Hahn's mother, whose family has been part of Trinity since the 1950s (fig 1). When facing the altar, the banners show nativity scenes, festival motifs, and words of praise.

When facing the font, they each display a cross variant.



(fig 1.)

Banners when facing the altar (taken from the font).



Banners when facing the font (taken from the altar).

This Banner Project proposes a framework in which to create a new set of double-sided banners that reflect our congregation's values. While our stained glass windows are beautiful, they are white-washed and pre-date most current attendees. Fabric banners offer an opportunity to “update” the sanctuary with more contemporary values and missions of Trinity while being low cost and easily rotatable.

Through a series of 6-7 workshops– 3-4 for adults, 3 for youth– parishioners will work through ideas and creative exercises to come up with designs and motifs for the new banners. These workshops will be facilitated by a small group of parishioners and overseen by the Rector and Associate Rector to help curate the vision. There will also be an adjointed group for assembly purposes that brings the congregation’s ideas to life. Both the old and new banners will be honored through a liturgical movement and hanging ceremony.

Project Mission

Inside the historical, adorned walls sits a unique congregation of academics, artists, priests, and other community members alike. This banner project is an opportunity for the diverse congregation to have a hand in the “beautification” of the sanctuary. Art-making and the pursuit of creativity is a spiritual practice that Trinity values in many other outlets through the Music Ministry, Summer Sacred Arts (fig 4), adult formation, screenings, Compline, and more. This Banner Projects offers an embodied, tactile visual-arts-focused series of workshops to foster our congregation's own creativity and self-expression.

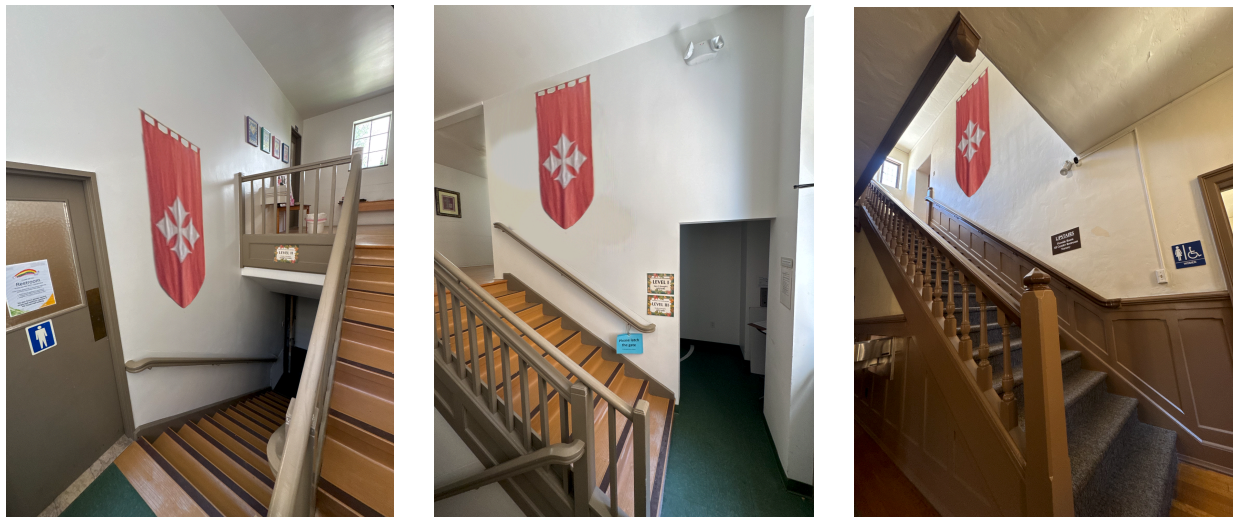
In Sunday services we use all the senses: the touch of a hand in peace, the taste of the wafer and wine, the smell of the church and our neighbors, the sight of the sanctuary and ritual, the sound of the music and group prayers. The Banner project is not only about the final product– the banners which will line the sanctuary to please the eye– but also about the process of making: the conversations with congregants, the play in experimenting with materials, the drafting and trying out designs, the expression of values. The holistic, slow, and integrated approach to the Banners aims to build trust with the congregation during this transition of Banners. All of these moments in the making of the banners are important to the project and to the vitality of the congregation, so that we may all feel that the banners are in fact one body, made by we who are many. (fig 5.)

Liturgical Integration

This project aims to be holistic in not just making new banners to replace the old, but to integrate education, community involvement and activity, support creativity, and tend to the spirit. Through two liturgical movements, or one combined, the banners, old and new, will be honored and recognized.

1. To remove and honor the current/old banners.
 - a. A liturgical movement must be crafted that honors their time in the sanctuary and Ann Mclean Mealy who made them. This could be a ceremonial honoring.
2. To bless the new banners
 - a. A liturgical movement to bless the new banners either before they are hung or after

There may need/want to be conversations around the old banners and if one might be hung on site somewhere, rotating, so as to not be forgotten. For example (fig) a banner could hang in a stair well to remember the labor and love that went into the “old” banners. (fig 6.)



(fig 6.) Mock-ups of banner displays in the Youth Building or Parish Hall stairwell to honor old flags.

Committees / Lay Leadership / Parish Involvement

Curatorial Committee

This project will be led by a small committee of artists that consults with and is overseen by the Rector and Associate Rector. This group will make final decisions and be the "curatorial filter." The Curatorial Committee is in charge of the overall aesthetics and execution of the project and will call in assistance from the Assembly Crew and Liturgy Committee.

Assembly Crew

The Assembly Crew may be separate from or overlap with the Curatorial Committee in that the Assembly Crew is a small group that is skilled in textile work and can fabricate the final banners.

Liturgy Committee

This project will be led by a small committee that consults with and is overseen by the Rector and Associate Rector. This group will craft the liturgical movements for the removal of the old banners and the blessing/hanging of the new banners. The Liturgy committee is overseen by the Rector and Associate Rector and consults with the Curatorial Committee.

Parish Involvement

The parish will be the foundation of the project. Through a series of workshops, our parish will create a total of 16 designs for 8 banners. The Banner Project relies heavily on parish buy-in to be involved in the ideation and creation of the banners. The Banners are meant to reflect the values of the church, not the small Curatorial Committee.

Workshops

It is an important part of this project's mission that all people of Trinity feel represented. The 6 (maybe 7) workshops will range from young children to youth to adults and to elderly. All people at Trinity have a unique creative voice and this project welcomes this, believing no matter how young or how old, these expressions are important.

Sister Corita Kent and the work she did at Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles will serve as our foundation for the series of workshops. We will use her Art Department Ten Rules and consider how her call to faith and service manifested through her art practice. Her work and messages are accessible to artists and “non-artists” alike. The first workshop will start with a screening of her film and then exercises inspired by her and the teachings of other artists and spiritual leaders. (fig 7.)



(Fig 7.) Feast of Saint Mary, Immaculate Heart College, Los Angeles. 1964. Unknown photographer.



FAQs

Are these going to hang up for 60 years again?

No. Hopefully this will be the first of a series of Banners Projects. The goal is not to replace these banners that have been up for 60 years with another set that will hang for 60 years, but to create an energy through the banners, keeping them rotating and alive in the sanctuary. This will be the first iteration– a “general” / “ordinary time” set of banners to ease into the change and involve the parish as much as possible. The long term goal is to have rotating banner sets to reflect liturgical seasons.