

A Lifetime of Trinity 100 Years of Progress

- 1880's** The residents of Prospect Park, north of University Avenue, need a church in their own neighborhood. The closest one is downtown, too far to travel for Sunday Services.
- 1887** October 11th, R.H.H. O'Neal holds the first meeting of the Prospect Park M.E. Church. It is decided that the neighborhood can support a church. Plans are made to build a structure at the corner of 8th and Washington.
- 1888** The first services are held in the new building.
- 1898** A financial panic ruins the financial stability of the church and forces Prospect Park M.E. into foreclosure.
- 1899** The Prospect Park Church is sold with a mortgage to the newly organized North Des Moines M.E. Church. Enough money is raised to pay the mortgage and make extensive repairs to the building. The Church loses membership during the struggle, but increases under new leadership.
- 1909** The lot at 8th and College is purchased for \$1,700 and plans are made to build a Northern Italian Romanesque structure with plenty of room for Sunday School classes, a sanctuary to seat 600, and a fellowship hall for social activities.
- 1910** The Trinity Methodist Episcopal Church building is constructed and the congregation is renamed. The total cost for the land, building, furnishings, and a marvelous pipe organ is \$38,413.60. There is a mortgage of \$15,000 after a successful fundraiser. A list is published giving the total amount given by each donor! The old building is sold to the Seventh Day Adventist for \$5,500.
- 1911** The Trinity building is dedicated on June 11th. The newspaper reports that 65 men, women and children join the church that morning.
- 1926** The mortgage is paid in full on December 17th, 1926.
- 1940** The name Trinity Methodist Church is officially adopted.
- 1944** The Ladies Aid, Women's Home Missionary Society, and the Women's Foreign Missionary Society combine under the name of Women's Society of Christian Service (WSCS).

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- 1945** The Epworth League, a Methodist association for young people aged 18-35, is reorganized as the Methodist Youth Fellowship, known as MYF.

- 1955** Trinity establishes a church office and hires part-time secretary. The minister and the secretary share the same space.

- 1956** A major remodeling project of the west wing is started. More classroom space is provided, the entire roof was replaced, the kitchen updated, lights are replaced with fluorescents, and the fellowship hall receives a new floor. By the time the projects are finished in 1959, a crib nursery and a first floor lounge area have been added.

- 1958** The church office is divided to provide separate pastor's study. Many memorial gifts are used to provide a grand piano, carpet, and candle holders.

- 1960's** The city's expansion to the west, the new MacVicar Freeway and changing economic times bring about great changes in the Trinity neighborhood. Church membership built to 900 in the 1940's and 1950's drops drastically as the neighborhood changes. The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development categorizes the area as one of "slum/blight."

- 1967** The Iowa Methodist Conference establishes the Inner City Cooperative Parish, made up of Burns Methodist, Gatchell Methodist, and Trinity.

- 1968** Trinity agrees to host a before-school Breakfast Club for neighborhood children (provided by donations).

- 1974** Trinity begins sponsoring and hosting various tutoring programs for neighborhood children.

- 1976** Trinity begins a summer recreation program for children and youth in the inner city.

- 1978** Trinity is the site for the DMARC Emergency Food Pantry. By 1987, an average of 330 families uses this food pantry per month. Special gift money helps to pay part-time staff.

- 1981** Daniel Ellsberg speaks at Trinity at a fundraiser on behalf of individuals arrested for making editorial comment on the Strategic Air Command headquarters' billboard that proclaimed, "Peace Is Our Profession."

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- 1983-1985** Trinity opens the fellowship hall during the winters for homeless men unable to find shelter elsewhere. Up to eighty men find the dining room floor more comfortable than being out in the weather.
- 1987** The inner City Cooperative Parish initiates the Supper Club at Trinity.
- 1991** The Inner City Cooperative Parish is dissolved. Trinity begins to host other, smaller congregations, in addition to holding their own services.
- 1992** Within the Trinity building, Children and Family Urban Ministries (CFUM) becomes a mission agency for the Iowa Conference of the Methodist Church.
- 1992** Trinity United Methodist Church becomes the first Methodist Church to become a Reconciling Congregation, welcoming full participation of all people, regardless of their sexual orientation.
- 1994** United Methodist Hispanic Outreach begins at Trinity under the leadership of Rev. Gil Dawes. Spanish worship services and Bible studies are held on Sunday afternoons.
- 1997** Trinity members vote to become a sanctuary church for persons fleeing wars and persecution in Central America.
- 1999** Hispanic Ministry at Trinity is formally named "Las Americas Comunidad de Fe."
- 2000** English as a Second Language (ESL) is begun by Trinity and Las Americas.
- 2000** Justice For Our Neighbors (JFON) is founded in Des Moines with Trinity and Las Americas supporting as congregations.
- 2007** Trinity and Las Americas join together for bilingual worship every Sunday morning.
- 2010** The Cornerstone 2010 Capital Campaign is launched and major restoration begins in the sanctuary.
- 2010** A service of "Reconciliation and Love" is held at Trinity on 9/11 to build relationships between Muslims and Christians. Scriptures were read in Arabic, English and Spanish.

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Trinity Las Americas United Methodist Church Today

- 2016 Within the Trinity Building, 8th and College Connections (8CC) becomes a non-profit organization and continues ministry Of ELL (English Language Learners) classes.
- 2017 Trinity IJMC and Las Americas Comunidad de Fe officially merge as one multilingual, multicultural congregation, Trinity Las Americas United Methodist Church.
- 2020 As a response to the global Covid-19 pandemic, TLA moves entirely online for the first time ever. Services are shared via videoconference on Zoom, with congregants and visitors sharing and listening to scripture, songs, and messages all remotely. For the first time, homebound or ill congregants can worship together as a community. Online worship remains a part of TLA's worship well after the pandemic's restrictions and risk passes.
- 2025 TLA formally joins the Rainbow Faith Coalition, a Des Moines coalition of faith communities, churches and organizations that affirmatively support LGBTQ+ children Of God. In part, TLA agrees that "It is integral to our faith community that LGBTQ+ identities are God given, honored and celebrated" and agrees to worship downtown Des Moines every year during Capital City Pride with local congregations.