

Make Number 6 a Reconciliation Centre

Each Sunday we properly acknowledge that we occupy land that was once settled by the Mississauga and other First Nations. I would like to propose that we give consideration to making Number 6 a "Reconciliation Centre". We would need to work with appropriate First Nations people (Toronto Urban Native Ministry, and others) to sort out just how the Centre would work--a healing centre? An educational centre? A dialogue Centre? We could invest some of the Holy Trinity Foundation money for operating purposes on a trial basis. The idea is to translate our Sunday morning declaration into action.

Staffing?

To be explored,

Volunteers?

Various members of HT already involved with First Nations projects/activities

Money?

From the HT Foundation Money

Space?

Number 6

Other Resources?

The Rev. Chris Harper?

Anything else to share?

This is a starting point proposal. It assumes there is considerable interest in reconciliation programmes both in the parish and in the Diocese.

Full time presence on Trinity Sq

We are open more than almost any church in this city already, but even so, I frequently hear when I hold after hours events, from people who say they've walked by for years and the doors are always locked. Obviously, this is just about the times they are going by, but it also speaks to people's desire to be part of, in some small way, what we have here.

We are close to political centres and the commercial centre of the city. The city is losing artistic venues every month. There is a need for places where spiritual needs can be met with less baggage than is generally on offer. I think we are uniquely placed to be a space of engagement for many more people.

Operating as a more conventional café would provide an opportunity to fund that work with a funding model that most people are comfortable dealing with in day to day life in a way many aren't with the idea of donating to a church for unclear purposes.

I am imagining we would be open from roughly 8am to 8pm every day. The anchor space for this would be the café which would always be open those hours. The basic service would be a café with popular food and drink service, but with staff who are knowledgeable and have a pastoral presence. It would probably be "dry" during the day, but could become a "wet" venue in the evenings and/or for special events.

This basic space would provide a space for impromptu meetings and conversations about things that matter in our community (both HT and the wider community). This basic staff would be complemented by volunteers in a similar vein to People Presence. While the café would be open to everyone, it would not be simply a free drop in. That would be maintained during at least the current hours in the nave. However, hopefully the space would be a little more porous with the nave.

Training and support programs would hopefully remain a part of it either with the current tenant or with a new partner.

It would be a space that anchored weekly events like a community choir, book club, small concerts, art exhibits, vinyl potluck, or any number of things. These events might make use of other spaces like the nave or the chapel/pub upstairs, but the café would be the gateway.

Staffing?

Regular café staff (chef, cooks, barristas, servers)

Volunteers?

Pastoral and community engagement volunteers

Money?

Some seed money would likely be needed, but given our location, I strongly believe that the right business plan would make it self-sustaining or even profitable.

Space?

The café, all day every day. Some event use of other spaces.

Anything else to share?

This could possibly be done in concert with Trinity Square Enterprises (and they should be given every opportunity to engage with the idea and help shape it), but could be done with another partner, or even by employing expertise.

Daily programming in the nave

There should be optional programming developed for daily activity in the nave.

This could be simple things like a craft circle where people bring or learn crafts like knitting, sewing, or other hand work. It could also be more directed "classes" like yoga, computer use, computer programming, song circles, podcast or book club.

This would not replace the open hours and would be not a "dominating" activity that precluded other uses, but would be a way to draw people who wish to have something clear to do or a simple, but clear context in which to engage with others. I hope it might also provide a road to better social engagement for some of the regulars and an opportunity for those who are more advantaged to engage at a human level with those who are not and build new relationships.

Staffing?

Someone would need to coordinate and help recruit

Volunteers?

I'm imaging most or all programming would be run by volunteers

Money?

Unknown, but probably some needed for materials at least

Space?

Program appropriate locations in the nave

Voices in the Square/ Reclaiming Our City

To claim our place in the political, community and pre-election discourse by beginning the conversation on our terms. Place the values of Holy Trinity front and centre in a conversation that invites the whole city into Trinity Square. Positioning ourselves in “the Heart of the City” next to city hall.

We would host a series of conversations -- lectures, panels, question & answer, or whatever format seemed most conducive to productive conversation.

We would have a non-partisan pre-election focus in the fall.

Hosting a mayoral or local councillor debate might be a part of the process, but we would likely want to focus on housing, truth and reconciliation, inclusion or other issues closest to us.

Staffing?

To be sure this happened, we would probably need to have at least a part-time co-ordinator, but a dedicated volunteer team might be able to pull it off.

Volunteers?

We would need volunteers to help with various logistical tasks: ushers, etc.

Money?

We would probably need to pay speakers an honourarium.

Space?

the nave

Weekly market

Weekly market in Trinity Square for local artists and craftspeople, food vendors, community service orgs. I would imagine using our churchiness and current old-timely nostalgia to play the "church bazaar" vibe up. Could be a real draw as long as the food and other market aspects are good.

We would work with the BIA and the city to enable this. It would mostly happen outside when the weather is good and would probably be an 11am-6pm thing to get lunch and after work, although the hours would need to be experimented with I'm sure.

I'm imagining a ring of booths around the church and drawing a lunch crowd for sure, but maybe some after work as well. I would imagine us running some especially "churchy" things like a bit of a "tea room" in addition to being the host.

I would also see it as an opportunity for us to gently draw attention to some of the community issues and opportunities that concern us. It could be a great engagement tool and be another place to draw people into contact with us and the rest of community.

I expect it would generate a modest income that could be used to support the People Presence program.

Staffing?

Probably would need some staff time to co-ordinate, but I hope the income would at least cover this.

Volunteers?

Some to run a tea room and maybe form a management committee?

Money?

Maybe some seed money, but to be worthwhile it would need to be a revenue generator or at least be self-sustaining.

Space?

Mostly outside, but possibly in the nave in bad weather.

Community Art Space

WHAT: Create an art studio in #6 that can be booked for workshops/studio space -- worktable, storage cupboards, sink, basic tools, materials, cupboard space. Maybe artists can rent their own cupboard space to store materials.

Could develop a set of criteria for the kind of art we want to support -- i.e. social/environmental justice, right relations, healing and health, spiritual practice. Maybe artists/organizations pay a membership to access a certain number of hours and storage space?

WHY: Space and set up are big challenges in offering creative workshops -- so this could be useful. Potential engagement with folks who are spiritual seekers, may be looking for this kind of activity. Could be a potential alternative space/workspace for young people on Sunday's/during the week. Maybe build on the 'tool library' concept of sharing materials?

Staffing?

Oversight of the schedule/space -- although it could be somewhat self-managing. Could be a resource for staff people -- like a youth minister, summer student to run programs.

Volunteers?

Volunteer steering group could set guidelines and criteria and keep it connected to the community. Maybe an overall Coordinator to keep on top of things.

Money?

Renovation and set up cost; ongoing cost for maintaining some minimal supplies. Rental income. Grant income? ,

Space?

One big room, with good storage and workspace.

Other Resources?

Connect to our website and publicity; increase in care-taking; utilities; security.

Anything else to share?

This is a very preliminary kind of idea -- just floating it out there to see if there's interest in developing it further. I haven't checked this out with other artsy types in the congregation/extended community to see if others would be interested in using/helping to establish such a place. This idea has a self-interested component as I would love to be able to use a space like this to offer workshops. I'm talking about more than a table and some cupboards full of junk though -- imagining a dedicated art space that looks and feels like a studio space with good quality workspace and storage, so the investment in the start up would be key.

Learning, growing, walking together

A quarterly engagement between Church of Holy Trinity and Masjid Toronto at Dundas - sharing meals, exchanging ideas and insights, growing in our respective faiths, taking actions together for a better neighbourhood and a better Toronto.

Staffing?

One part-time co-ordinator

Volunteers?

Half a dozen from HT; half a dozen from Masjid Toronto.

Money?

\$20,000 annually

Space?

Space at HT and Masjid Toronto

Other Resources?

Shared office space, access to internet and printer

Anything else to share?

This is a process-oriented Big Idea, as opposed to an outcome-oriented initiative. The Big Idea is that a quarterly gathering of people from Holy Trinity and Masjid Toronto would gather to consider a particular theme (for instance, homelessness, Islamophobia, Islamic financing for affordable housing, refugees and newcomers, and other themes to be generated by conversations at both faith institutions) over a meal, with a facilitated conversation that would include subject matter specialists. Each gathering would have three parts: An examination of the issue; responses from each of the faith traditions; and action items that can be taken back to the Mosque or Church. The goal is to support interfaith dialogue, interfaith engagement and interfaith actions. The money would be required to pay for food and other costs associated with the gatherings, as well as a small stipend for a part-time co-ordinator.

Connecting with the community

- Connect with Muslim community
- Open daily from 10 - 5
- More involved with the guys and they with us
- paid social worker, nurse, etc.
- Can we learn from and work with Redeemer and others?
- Make use of #6 for housing?

Staffing?

Social worker, nurse, housing worker,

Volunteers?

Lots

Money?

\$50,000?

Space?

#6 for housing

Anything else to share?

We are looked upon as a social justice church; let's live up to that.

Community Deathcare Centre *(with a better name, Lavender something?)*

It's relatively recent in human history that we've lost touch with caring for the dead as an ordinary part of living. These days most of what used to be done by families has been turned over to professionals. But that is starting to change, as people are taking back some choices at the time of death, questioning the value of costly funerals and toxic disposition of the body, and connecting what they value in their living to their dying.

Community deathcare is a growing, diverse, grassroots social movement reclaiming lost knowledge and practice and experimenting with new ideas including death cafes, family-directed and home funerals, green burial, secular celebrations of life and community acts of remembrance. At the same time as there is declining engagement in traditional churches and funeral rites, there is a growing curiosity and interest about death and dying.

Christian churches are not a significant presence in this growing movement although we potentially have a lot to offer. Christian communities can be: places to engage and make meaning of the big questions that present around the time of death; bridges between ancient ways of knowing and new understandings; and sites for living out care for creation and care for community. The community of Holy Trinity is well positioned to build a bridge between the alternative death care movement and people with a Christian inheritance.

Rooted in the community of Holy Trinity, a centre for deathcaring, would aim to strengthen the broader community to reclaim dying and deathcare and make space in the wider community for conversations about death and grief. A centre is an opportunity for sustained engagement providing education, services, ceremony and advocacy:

- hosting community conversations about death (death cafes <http://deathcafe.com/>);
- creating new liturgies and ceremonies to meet contemporary issues and diverse needs in the church and in the community (funerals, home-based ceremonies like shrouding the body, rites for particular kinds of loss);
- exploring the depth Christian teaching and faith-based funeral practices historically and to the present-day;
- supporting community acts of remembrance like cyclist memorials, survivor-led memorials, (both existing and new);
- educating and empowering people to care for their loved ones at home after death (resource centre, blog, workshops);
- supporting people in grief;
- educating about green burial and ecologically just choices in disposition of the body;
- networking with the alternative deathcare movement.

Staffing?

Half-time to start?

Volunteers?

Lots of opportunity for engagement here, at least a steering group to start.

Money?

Staffing, office, program budget, meeting space -- might be grants available

Space?

Office and program space and access to nave and chapel for services

Anything else to share?

Although complimentary to hospice care, this is not a duplicate of the hospice model of accompanying people who are dying. It might be fair to say that this work picks up where hospice care leaves off. Coordination with incumbent and anyone engaged with hospice would be good. Similarly, there could be coordination with pastoral care in the community -- that could be added to the vision but it would increase the staff time.