

Pastor's Two Cents:

NEWSPAPER HEADLINE: Coplay Church to provide space for new Pediatric Clinic for underprivileged children in Whitehall and surrounding areas and hopes to hire a new “permanent” pastor while financially struggling in this ever challenging economic climate.

That's right! There are wonderful OPPORTUNITIES and major CHALLENGES set before this little church of 150 members in the borough of Coplay, just north of the third largest city in Pennsylvania. This Christian church reminds me of a church I visited in Egypt while on my Cross Cultural Trip during my Seminary education.

When I went to Egypt I visited a little church called “Saray” church in Alexandria on the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. This Christian church of only “150” members had a daycare for severely mentally disabled children, a 4 story rooming house for mentally challenged adults and a 5 story medical clinic in the poorest area of the city for women and children. Their congregation was made up of Egypt's middle class and working poor. Yet, they had a mission that set them apart from the rest of Egypt, which is 90% Muslim and only 10% Christian. Saray church is the home of this vital and needed ministry set amidst staggering odds that most odd makers in Vegas wouldn't even touch. But the grace of God keeps them operating in the black year after year.

Trinity UCC in Coplay also reminds me of a church that I served prior to coming to this congregation. St. Peter's, as many of you know, is an ONA church which means that they accept Gay and Lesbian members and even perform Holy Unions for the LGBT community. Many in our church today, either have family or friends who are gay and feel very strongly that they too should have the right to worship God and be committed to the one they love. But once again, they have no place to call a spiritual home. Could Trinity provide that home? Trinity's Consistory realizes that change MUST happen for us to continue to grow “spiritually” and truly follow the teachings of Jesus Christ found in Scripture. Will we open ourselves to truly LEARN what God's Word teaches us or just pick and choose the Scriptures that best fit our own fears and personal agendas? Will we be open to anyone who wants to worship God? That's the REAL question.

Yes, we have GREAT opportunities and SIGNIFICANT challenges in front of us. With permission from the Congregation, our Consistory has entered into negotiations with Dr. Monica Gavin to lease a portion of our Parish House to serve the poor in our area. We will need to construct a stroller ramp and supply Air Conditioning to the Parish House. The Church's chimney will not pass inspection without a new liner. The Consistory is preparing to negotiate a new contract with me to become your permanent “ordained” minister. For the past 13 years you have operated with a “part-time” Supply Pastor. If YOU, the congregation, approves me as your permanent pastor you will still have a part-time minister but on a permanent basis that can now become a part of YOUR CHURCH. Yes, remember, for the last 3 years I keep calling this YOUR church.....hopefully, I can call it OUR church in the very near future.

BUT there is a lot of work that needs to be done and a lot of **COMMITMENT** that must be made in order for this all to work out. Do you remember when I ask what would it mean to the community if Trinity no longer existed? Your answers were interesting but outside of the Food Bank or providing the Word of God, Trinity lacked a clearly defined mission. NOW, we have the opportunity to have a vital and worthwhile mission for our community and one that truly follows God's Word and Jesus teachings. May God Bless Trinity while Trinity does the will of God through the teachings of God!

Pastor Steve