

A Time of Prayer: Inspire

December Edition

INSPIRE

In case you missed it, October's edition of *Crosstalk* featured Trinity House and St. Jimmy's Table, pilot projects in contextual mission in the diocese. The article is reprinted below.

At last year's Synod, there was a lot of excitement and energy as delegates discussed new ways for the church to engage with the world. Archdeacon Mark Whittall, who has been leading this forward looking work, told *Crosstalk* that the central question is "How is God calling us to proclaim the good news in our time and place? And the response that we give to that is contextual mission.... It involves learning how to share the love of God in ways that are meaningful to our neighbours..." he said. "We live in a multicultural diverse city, diocese, region, which is really different than the way it was 50 years ago." That's why all parishes need to be doing contextual mission, Whittall said, adding that in some cases, they will discern that that requires starting a new worshipping community.

Two pilot projects on new worshipping communities are underway.

The first is based in the parish of Trinity Church in downtown Ottawa, where Whittall is the incumbent. Trinity House began with the idea of creating an intentional community for students and young adults living in a house owned by and adjacent to the church. "Looking at our context as a parish, we said, 'We've got Carleton University right here. And we've got students who have been in isolation during the pandemic, and the effects of isolation are really devastating. There's so many students who are coming to the neighborhood, but often they rent a room in a house and



they're not forming communities.... And there's not that many places in society where Christians can actually practice their faith together in a residential and living context." The parish discerned that creating an intentional community could be an expression of contextual mission and established Trinity House last year. This fall, they plan to begin weekly worship services.

The second pilot project is St. Jimmy's Table, a mission of St. James' Carleton Place that began in its current format in February 2018. It consists of a monthly event for families, with crafts and other activities, a meal, and child friendly faith formation. Some of the families who attend St. Jimmy's Table are parishioners at St. James, and some are not. St. Jimmy's Table aims to create a community for families for whom attending Sunday morning worship is not always feasible. The program continues to evolve, with the recent start of a youth component, "Young Leaders' Connection," tailored for youth ages 12-17. The parish's hope is that St. Jimmy's Table will continue to grow, to evolve and to offer a place for families to find community.

The Rev. Thomas Brauer told *Crosstalk* that the diocesan working group is excited to see the learning opportunities that will inevitably arise from St. Jimmy's Table. "This is an excellent example of the kind of creative and flexible thinking that can often be found in small-town and rural congregations. This is also an example of how to imagine a ministry that meets the needs of the participants first and responds to the congregation's own practices and desires second," he said.