



Trinity Baptist Church History

Trinity Baptist Church had its beginnings after William Henderson, a seminarian from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, came to Nashua to discover believers who might be interested in a new evangelical church. People came from several churches in Nashua to join a weekly Bible study, led by Bill Henderson at the local YMCA.

Two years later, in August 1950, 25 people, including teenagers, signed a document of intent to step out on faith and committed themselves to form a new church. They believed that Nashua's churches had become too liberal and the Bible message was being clearly preached in only one small Nazarene church. The name, Trinity Baptist Church, was chosen to stand for their conviction about the Trinitarian Gospel.

The first service was held in Abbott Hall on French Street on November 5, 1950. A total of 28 persons attended the morning service, and 29 were present at the evening service. Rev. Harold Burchett was called to be the first pastor in May 1951.

The church on Main Street

After an extensive search and many prayer meetings, Pastor Burchett announced that he had found the building that he felt God wanted Trinity to have. However, it was owned by a lawyer who was unwilling to sell. With the strong feeling that it was God's will for them to have this house, the entire congregation prayed and fasted, not only for the sale of the property, but for the price they would pay.

The owner eventually relented and was willing to sell for \$25,000, but then reduced the price to \$21,000 during the third meeting about purchasing the building. By God's leading, five people gave \$1000 each for the down payment. Some even mortgaged their homes to raise the money. A mortgage

was secured for the remaining \$16,000.

In June 1951, the house at 269 Main Street became the Trinity Baptist Church building. Dedication services were held on August 13th after considerable alterations to the building. The main sanctuary held about 100 people, with church offices and Sunday School rooms scattered throughout the remainder of the building. The pastor's apartment was also located in the building.

From the outset, missions was an important part of the church's agenda, and a large portion of the annual budget was set aside for local and foreign missions. That very first summer (1951), Vacation Bible School registration was held on the front lawn of the church building as well as in the center of town. Vacation Bible School was held July 30th through August 10th from 9:00 to 11:45 a.m., with evening sessions for teens directed by Eleanor and Arthur Rioux. Transportation was provided for those who needed it. During the early years, church attendance was often close to 200.

Trinity organized and hosted missionary conferences annually. Ralph and Polly Brown, Dennis and Shirley Grudda and Jim and Ruth Kreutter, who were career missionaries with Conservative Baptist Foreign Mission Society and supported partially by Trinity, participated in these conferences.

With a heart for reaching the Nashua area with the Gospel, Trinity sponsored "Above the Clouds," a broadcast over local radio station WOTW, every Sunday evening from the church auditorium. Later, the Sunday morning service was broadcast live from the auditorium. Special music was a part of the broadcast, including a chorus, ladies trio, and male quartet. Some of those active in the early music ministry included Rev. Harold and Mrs. Jane Burchett, Marguerite Gay, Clifford and Lillian Brooks, Vernon Schofield, and Herbert Stearns.

An equally important part of the church's missionary efforts was reaching out to the greater Nashua community. As early as 1951, Trinity held revival services using visiting evangelists such as Larry Doyle, Rev. D. L. Cornell, Jack Wyrzten, and George Sweeting, one-time president of Moody Bible Institute.

By 1953, Trinity had grown considerably. The first parsonage, located at 23-1/2 East Dunstable Road, was purchased in July 1953. God's hand on Trinity continued to be apparent. In 1956, Christian Service Brigade was initiated. Plans for the new church building were underway. Through financial pledges, goals were exceeded by 30 percent. Also, as a result of Trinity's early missions involvement, several young adults from the church dedicated their lives to God's work as they prepared for the ministry by attending Christian seminaries

and colleges. Included among those were Arthur Gay, Jr., the first to be ordained by Trinity, Judith Gay, Donald Magnuson, Richard Peters, Roy Schofield, Patricia Spence, and Isabelle Woods.

Trinity's presence begins on Lund Road

In 1957, 9.5 acres of land on Lund Road were purchased for \$18,000. An open-air dedication service was held on September 6th. The year 1958 was marked with change. In February, Pastor Burchett resigned to accept God's call to the Dover (NH) Baptist Church. Rev. Warren West was called by Trinity as its' second pastor in September. A ground breaking service was held for the new parsonage the following December. Ground breaking for the new church took place on June 1, 1960 with much rejoicing for God's leading and blessing. Having been called to another ministry, Pastor West resigned in 1962 and was followed by Rev. C. Albert Theis in 1963.

Continuing growth necessitated the construction of additional classrooms in 1969 to carry on the Christian Education program. Rev. Duane Berry became the next pastor in June 1971. A Christian school was established with George Lay as principal. Rev. Gary Mueller, our first associate pastor, served from 1974 to 1976. In September of 1976, Rev. George Renner became pastor of Youth and Education. Sensing God's call to remote Canada, Pastor Berry, a native Canadian, resigned in March 1977 and Pastor Renner became the senior pastor in October of that year.

Recognizing the need to minister to the youth of Trinity and of Nashua, the church called Michael Rowe to become Youth Minister in 1979. He was ordained for this ministry in March of 1980 by Trinity Baptist Church. Pastor Rowe's tenure included several short-term youth group mission trips. Following God's leading, Warren Manley became Trinity's first staff Administrator/Choir Director in September 1979.

A new sanctuary is built

Attendance grew to the point where the sanctuary was insufficient for Easter in 1980; the worship service was held at the Nashua High School Auditorium. The year 1980 also marked the first phase of a five-year expansion program, including the renovation of the parsonage into a counseling center, administrative, offices and youth facilities, now known as the Diakonia House (or "D House). The expansion program continued into phase two with an additional parking area. Finally, phase three, the sanctuary expansion, was

begun in 1983 with the dedication of the new sanctuary on May 24, 1985.

While at Trinity, Pastor Renner completed his doctoral program. After ten years of ministry at Trinity, he accepted God's call to become Professor of New Testament Studies at the Seminary of the East in 1986. Rev. Mark Norman was called to Trinity as Senior Pastor in December 1987. In July 1989, Pastor Michael Rowe responded to God's call and became the senior pastor of an Osterville, Massachusetts church. James Beattie was led by God to leave an engineering career to become Trinity's youth pastor.

In December 1989, Pastor Norman left Trinity to pastor a church in Maryland. Rev. Dr. Gwyn Walters, Gordon-Conwell Seminary Professor Emeritus, Rev. William Bickmore, and other area ministers served as our pulpit supply from January 1990 until March 1992, when Rev. Theodore Brewer was called from Minnesota as the next senior pastor of Trinity.

Pastor Brewer resigned in 1994, and James Van Yperen became Interim Pastor for one year. It was during this period that the church was reorganized to include a Governing Board in addition to the Elder Board. The first Governing Board met in June 1995.

Recent years at Trinity

Rev. Steve Murray answered God's call from a church in San Jose, California, to become Trinity's senior pastor in 1996. Rev. Cliff Anderson was named Assistant Pastor of Discipleship and Pastoral Care in 1997, and Kevin Kokx was appointed Student Ministries Director in 1998. Rev. Kevin Cunningham later joined the staff as Assistant Pastor of Discipleship, Fellowship & Ministry.

Since 1997, Trinity has enjoyed a resurgence of new programs and activities. The Nehemiah Fund was begun in 1997 to provide much-needed funds for major and minor property repairs. A total of \$75,000 was raised by the congregation and many of the needed repairs have been completed. A debt-reduction program was completed in 1998. Thanks in part to an anonymous benefactor who provided matching funds, the \$120,000+ debt on the present sanctuary was reduced to approximately \$20,000. The mortgage was paid in full in 2000.

A \$180,000 pledge drive was completed in 2000 to purchase the property located at 29 Lund Road. This property, which sits in the middle of the church's 9.5 acres, became available in 1999 and had been sought after for many years

to expand church ministries. The congregation made the commitment to pay for the house over a three-year period, and the Lord moved in His people to accomplish this ahead of schedule (Jan. 2003).

In 2007, the church began a new Mission Faith Journey and members pledged giving across three years to help finance building expansion and revitalization plans. In the fall of 2012, the expanded lobby and bathrooms were completed, and we have a new completely furnished kitchen as of early 2014.

In 2008, Kevin Kokx transitioned into a leadership development role and then left later that year to serve at Monadnock Bible Conference. In 2009, Brandon Sanford was called as our new Director of Youth Ministries. Brandon served until August, 2012. Shawn Allen accepted our invitation to become our new Director of Student Ministries on February of 2013.

Committed to discipleship and evangelism, Trinity continues to actively support global and local missions; programs for children, students, young adults, adults, and senior adults that include Sunday School, Adult Bible Fellowships and Small Groups; and many opportunities for prayer, fellowship, and growth.