



TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

PLACEMAKING SITE CONCEPT PLANNING

BACKGROUND, ANALYSIS + DISCOVERY

DECEMBER 2025



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L03

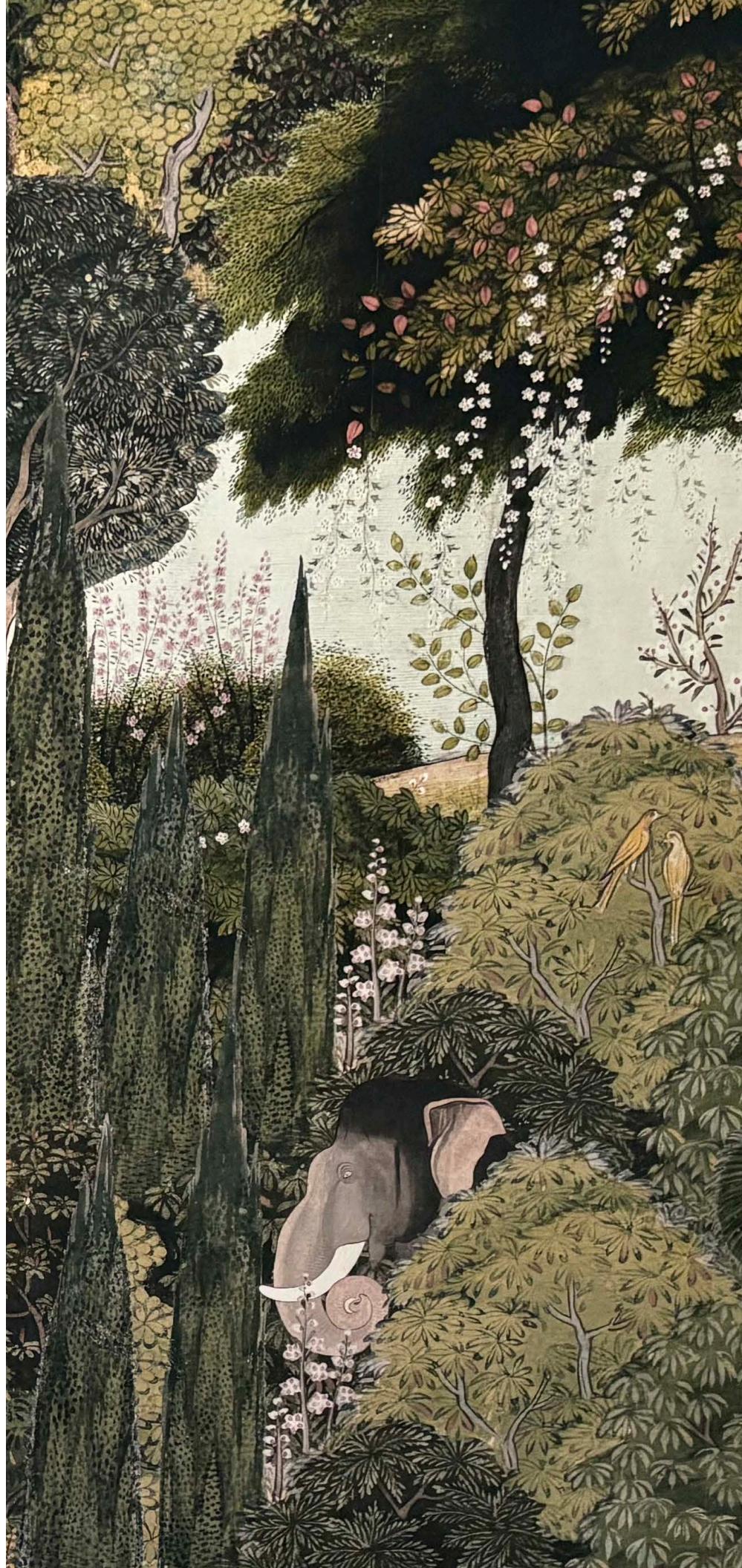
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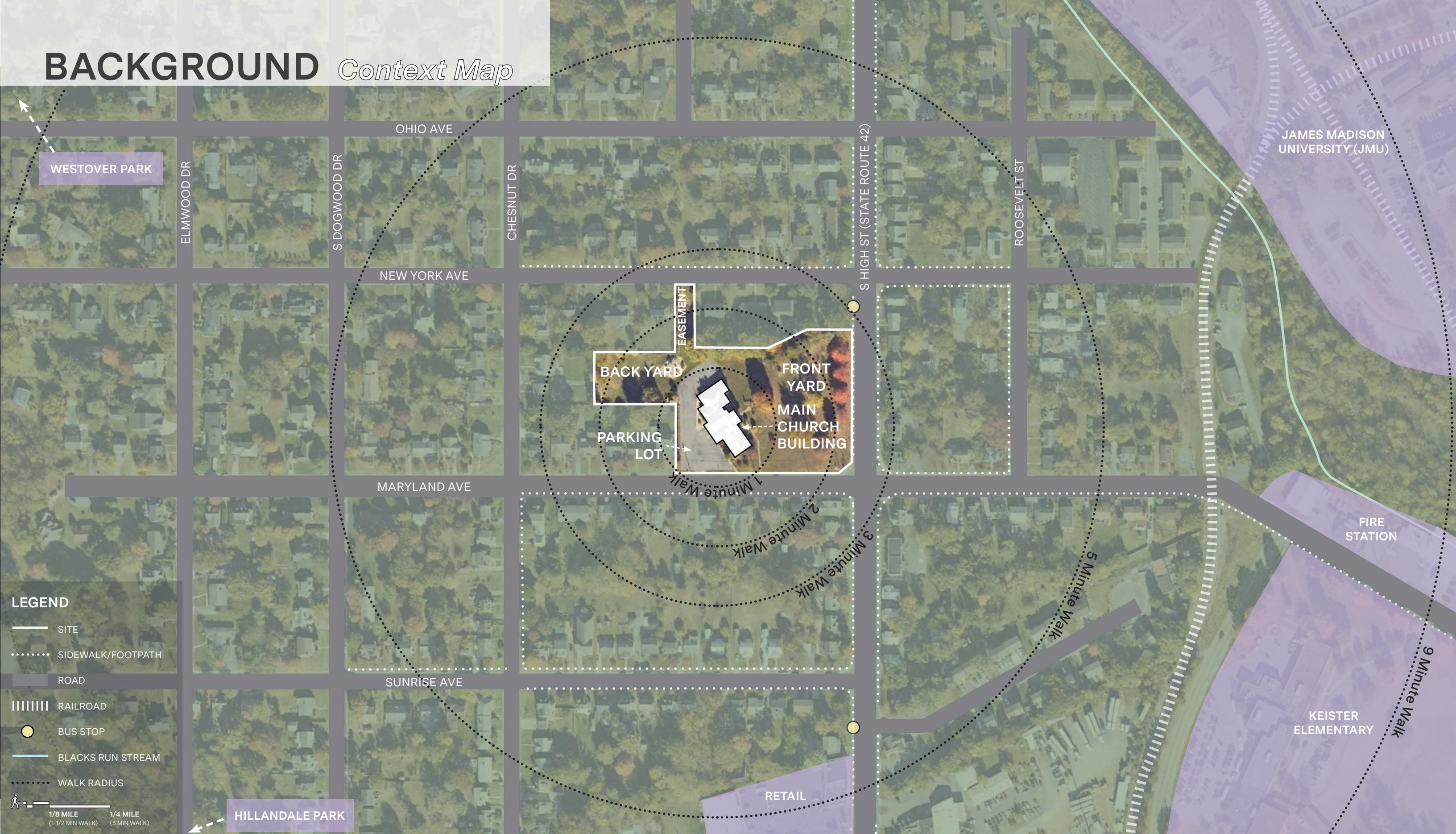




01 BACKGROUND **MISSIONAL PRIORITIES**

BACKGROUND

Context Map



BACKGROUND *Missional Priorities*

CORE VALUES

- Inclusive and progressive congregation
- Seeking to share God's expansive love
- Committed to building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty

WORSHIP

Creative and participatory

NURTURE

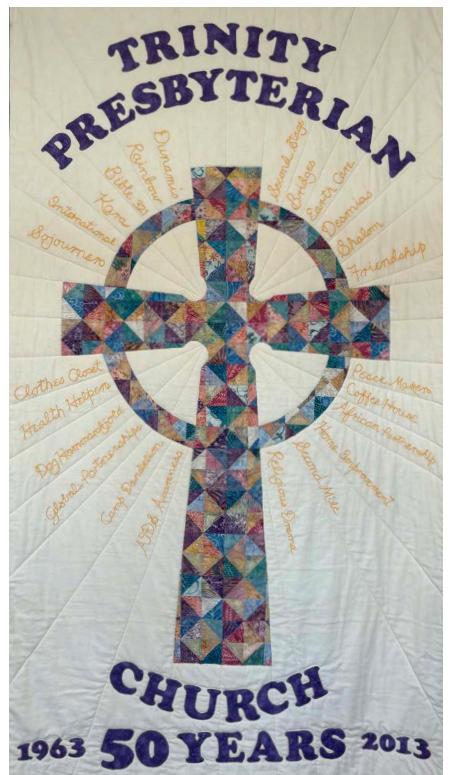
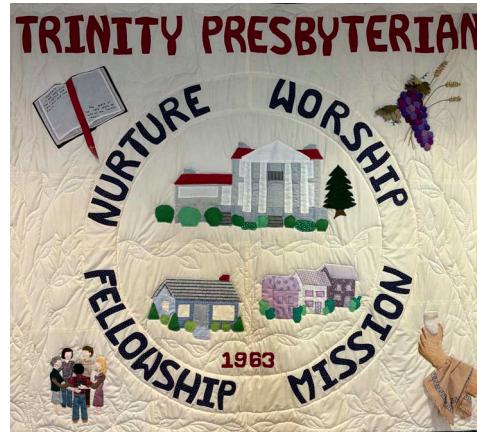
Fearless of the questions and challenges that faith stirs within

FELLOWSHIP

*Building together a loving,
forgiving, and caring community*

MISSION

Called out to work with God for justice, peace, and love





02 SITE ANALYSIS **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

SITE ANALYSIS Site Analysis Map

NEW YORK AVE

SDOGWOOD DR

SUGAR MAPLE
TREE LINE IN
POOR HEALTH, TO
BE REPLACED

SHIGH ST

PUBLIC SIDEWALK

TRAFFIC
SIGNAL

MARYLAND AVE

LEGEND

1	KITCHEN
2	COMMONS
3	CLOTHES PANTRY
4	STORAGE
5	CHILDREN'S ROOM
6	SITTING ROOM
7	FRONT ENTRY AND FOYER
8	MAIN ENTRY AND FOYER
9	OFFICE
10	SANCTUARY
—	PROPERTY LINE
—	10' CONTOURS
—	DIRECTION OF WATER FLOW
●	UTILITY POLE
●	FIRE HYDRANT
▲	DOORS
+LP	LOW POINT
+HP	HIGH POINT
•	VIEWSHED
—	OVERHEAD UTILITY LINE



SITE ANALYSIS *Photo Inventory*

KEY SPACES



FRONT STEPS



MEMORIAL GARDEN



LABYRINTH



PUBLIC WITNESS



ASH TREE BENCH



NEWLY PLANTED TREE GROVE



COMPOST



PICNIC TABLE



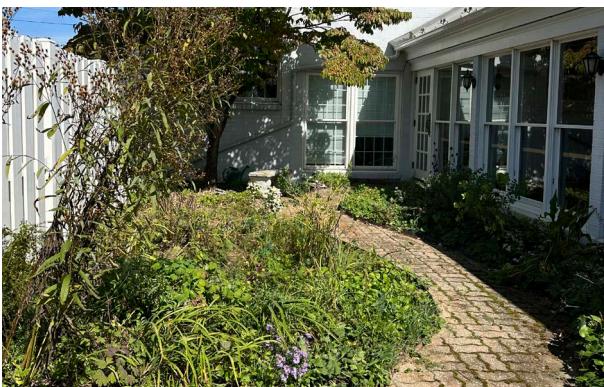
POLLINATOR GARDEN



PLAYGROUND



MAIN ENTRY (BACK DOOR)



MEDITATION GARDEN



FRONT PORCH

Denotes Meditation Walk Stations

SITE ANALYSIS *Photo Inventory*

KEY SPACES



CHURCH SIGN



FRONT YARD & FAÇADE



BIORETENTION GARDEN



PLANTING BEDS (MULTIPLE)



PARKING LOT SOUTH



PARKING LOT NORTH

KEY VIEWS



SANCTUARY (MEDITATION GARDEN VIEW)



SANCTUARY (FRONT YARD VIEW)



PUBLIC VIEW TOWARDS CHURCH BUILDING

SITE ANALYSIS *Photo Inventory*

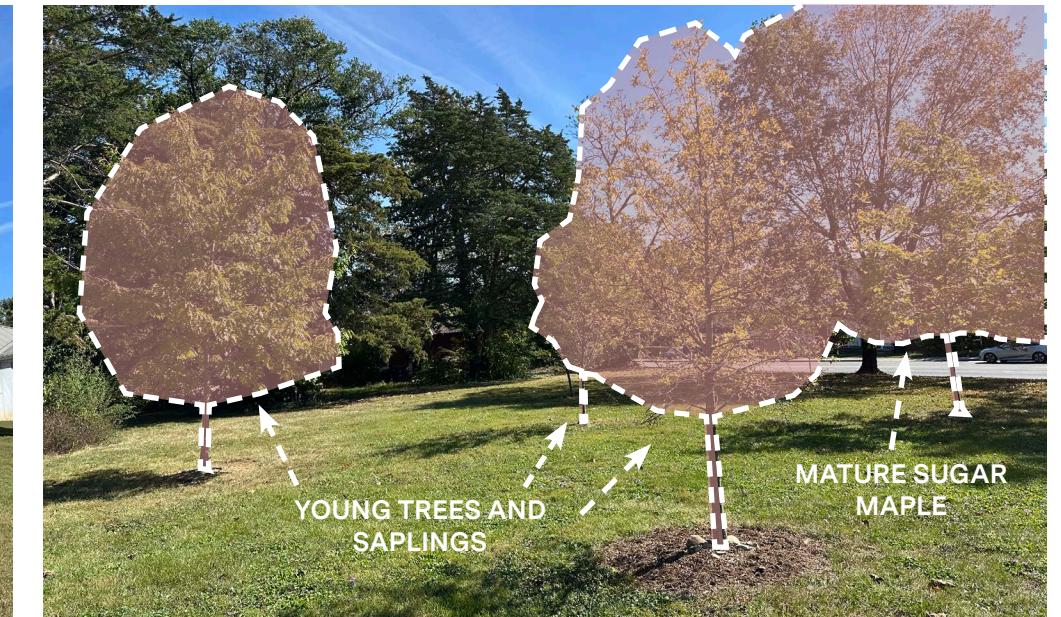
FRONT YARD



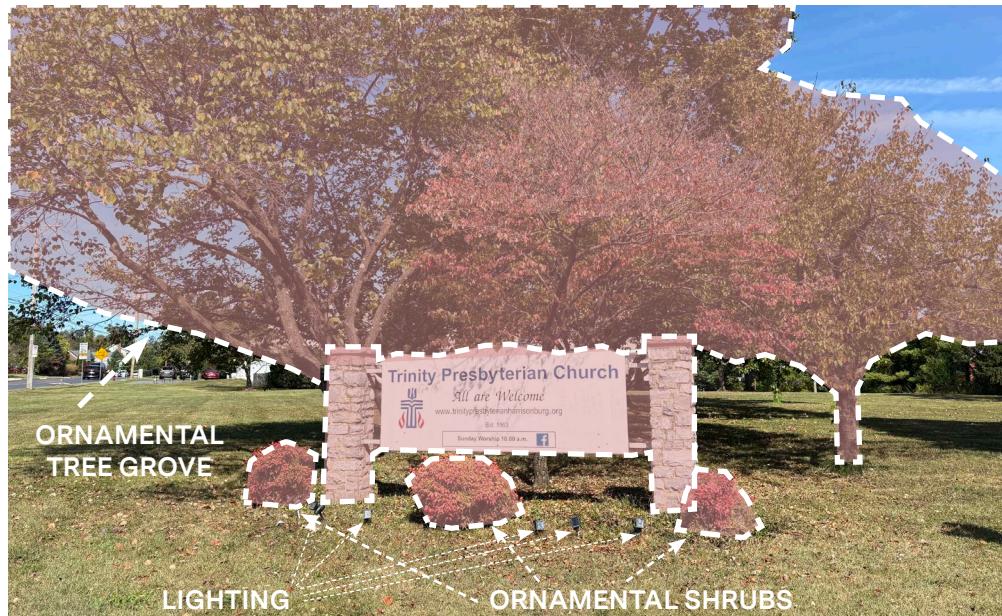
Public-facing building facade. Opportunity to reconfigure circulation and entry sequence around historical front entrance and memorial garden, including adding ADA accessible paths.



Mature oak trees flank building entrance and memorial garden. Opportunity to open up views with selective pruning and provide clearer signage and designated pedestrian access to the labyrinth.



Mature sugar maples line sidewalk. Young tax credit trees interspersed throughout interior space. Opportunity for pathways and seating around trees, and to replace infected sugar maples.



Trinity Presbyterian Church main signage. Opportunity to enhance planting and lighting around sign.



Informal sign staging area. Opportunity to formalize and deter vandalism.



Bench made of ash tree felled onsite. Opportunity to enhance area surrounding bench, and improve access and use.

SITE ANALYSIS *Photo Inventory*

BUILDING PERIMETER



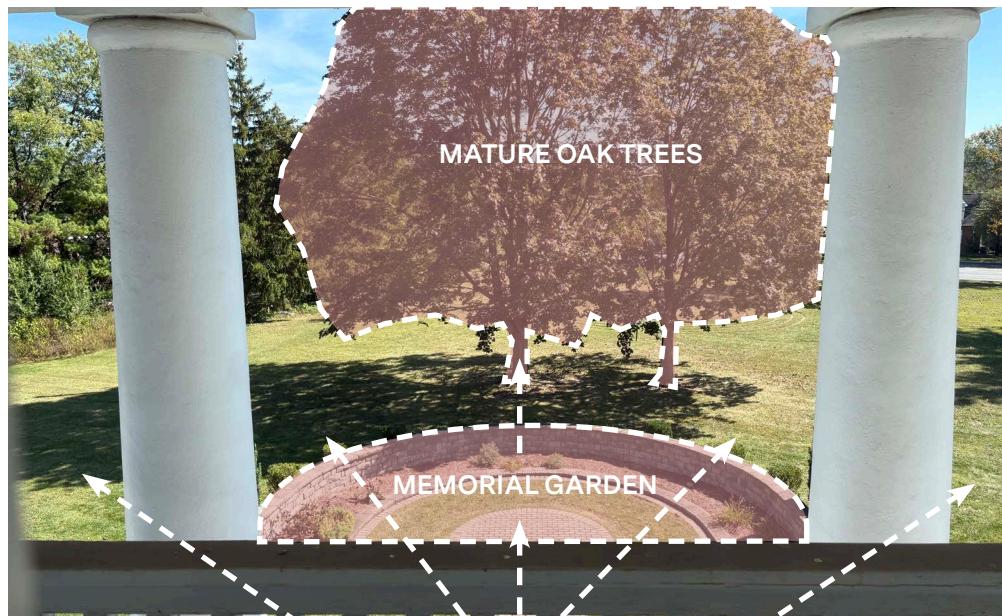
Meditation Garden. Opportunity to enhance garden elements, improve view from interior, and open up access into the garden from the exterior.



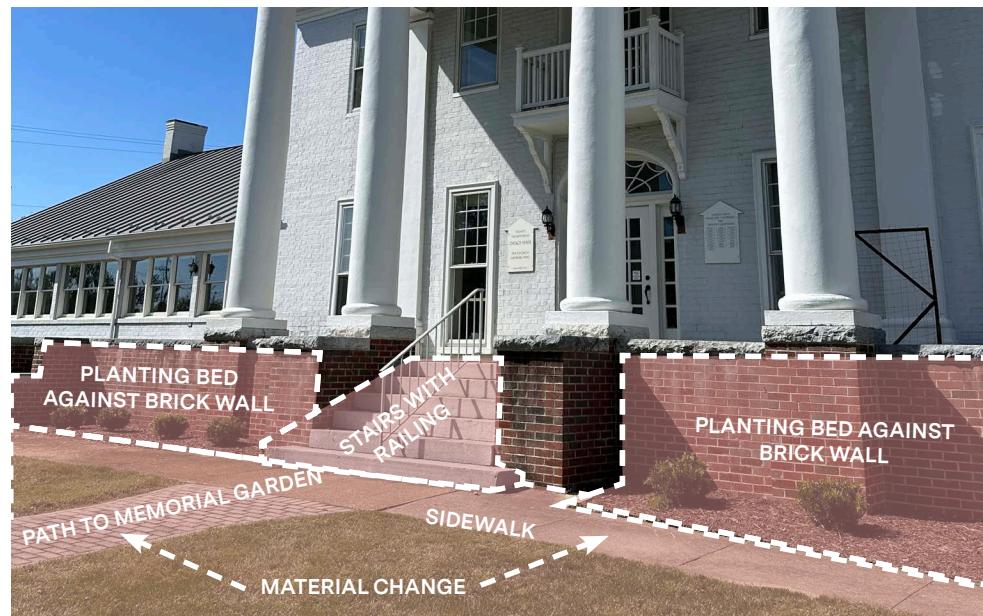
View from Sanctuary interior looking out onto the Meditation Garden. Opportunity to create a more intentional view.



View from Sanctuary interior looking out onto green space and S High St. Opportunity to create a more intentional view.



View from historical front porch onto Memorial Garden, oak trees, and green space. Opportunity to improve connectivity between entrance, porch, and memorial garden.



Front facade of original building. Opportunity to enhance planting beds and entry sequence to be more cohesive with the building and to increase usage of the front entrance.



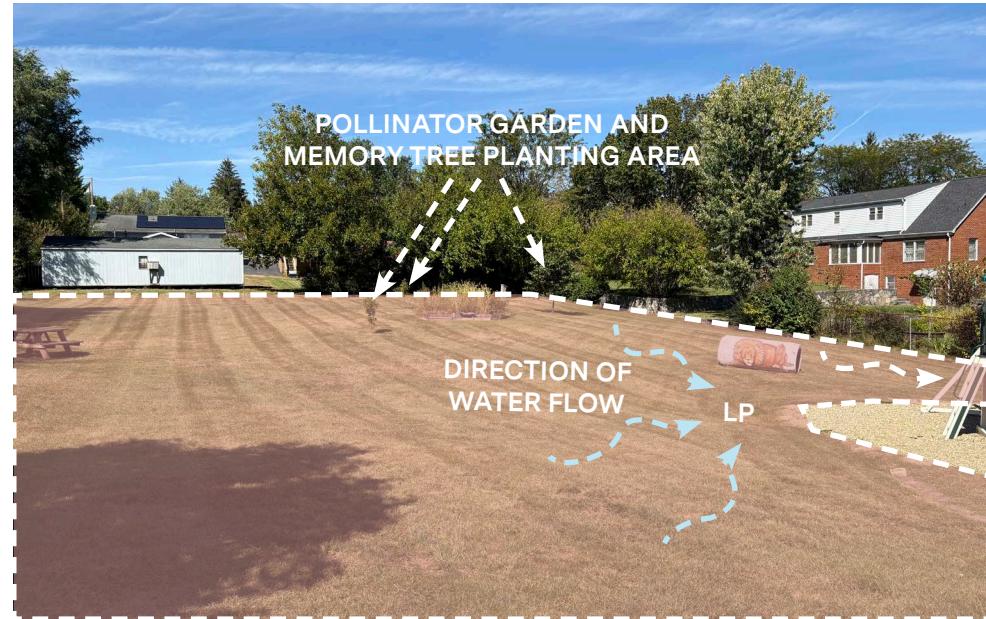
Front facade of original building viewed from Maryland Ave side. Opportunity to improve paths leading to and around the building, including ADA accessibility.

SITE ANALYSIS *Photo Inventory*

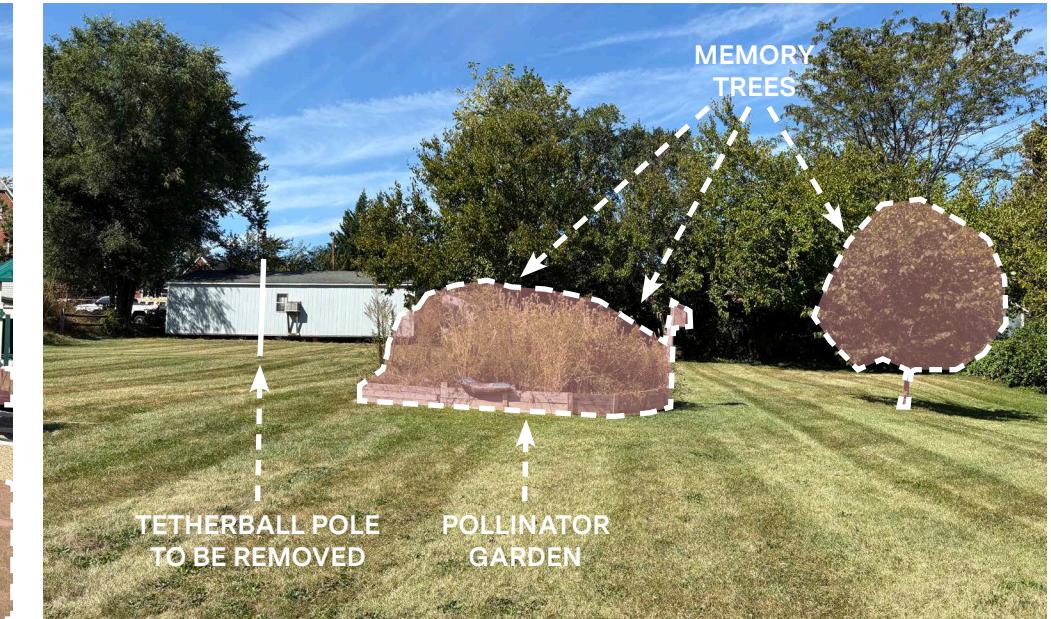
BACKYARD



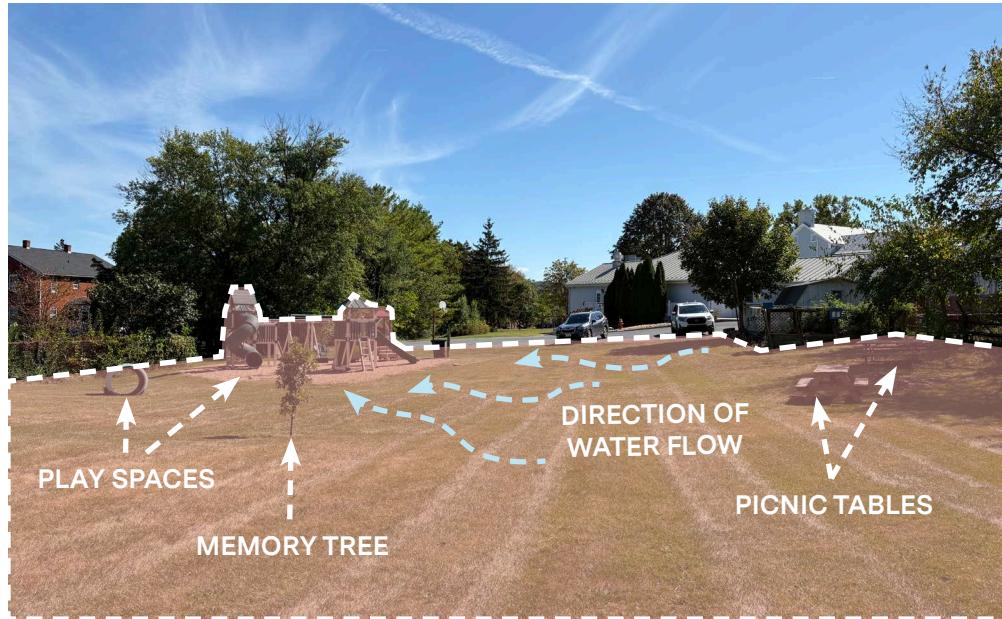
Playground. Opportunity to update to meet safety regulation standards, expand designated play area footprint, and add security fixtures to deter vandalism.



View of backyard from parking lot. Opportunity to increase utilization of this area by improving circulation, program, and connectivity between each space.



Back of property near pedestrian access path. Opportunity to improve circulation, program, and connectivity between each space.



View of backyard from back of property. Opportunity to improve circulation, program, and connectivity between each space, as well as drainage.



Back of property behind memory trees. Opportunity to extend planting into this area and provide decorative fence and gate to delineate church property boundaries while maintaining accessibility.



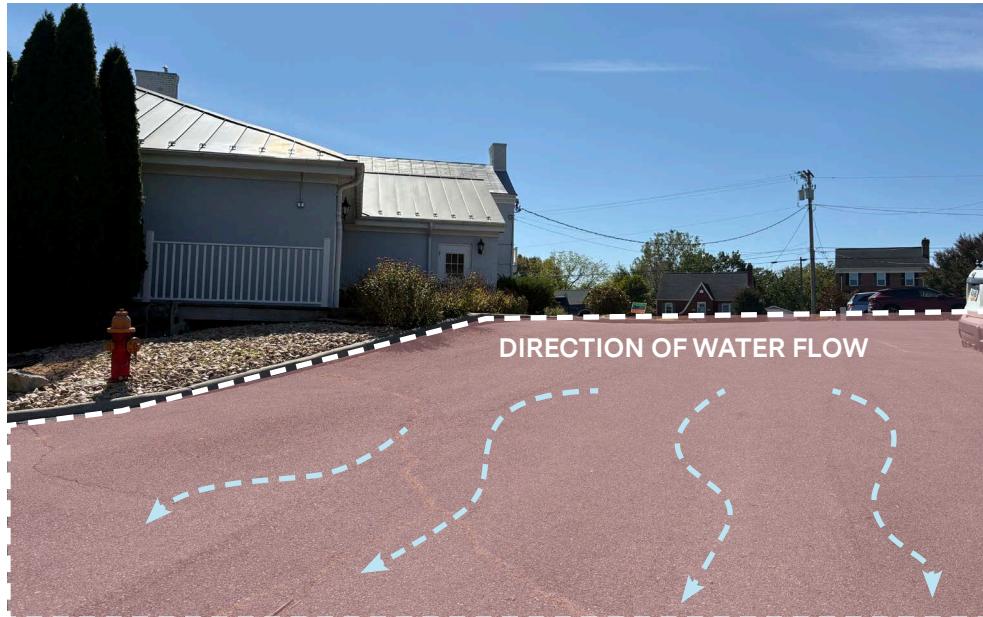
View of easement left over from previously planned street connection. Opportunity to create pathway to improve accessibility.

SITE ANALYSIS *Photo Inventory*

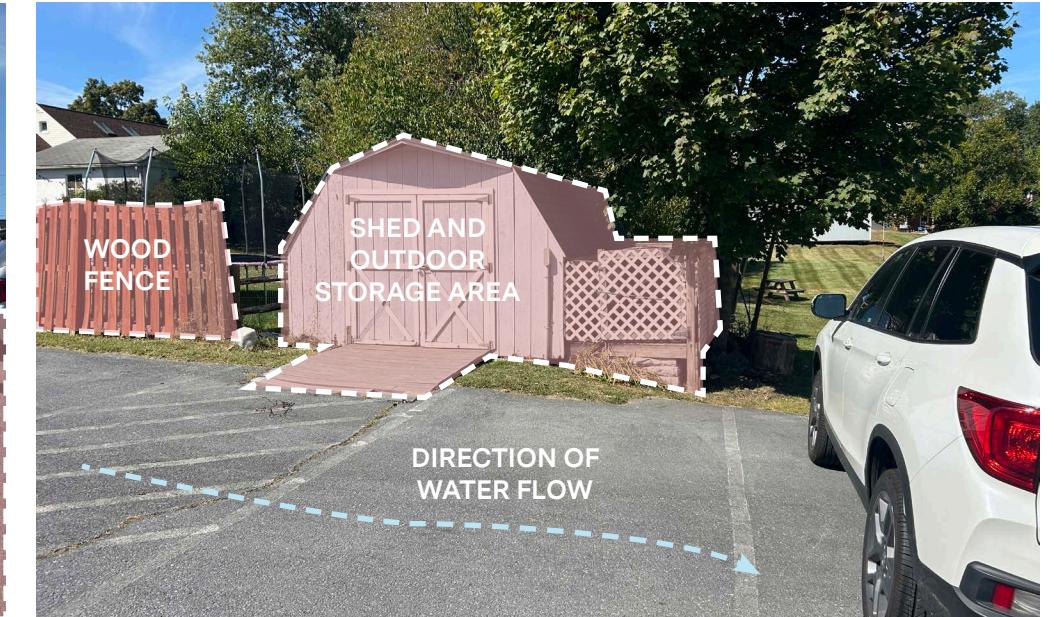
PARKING LOT



Front of parking lot. Opportunity to reconfigure parking spaces and circulation and incorporate sustainable stormwater techniques like permeable pavers and bioretention structure.



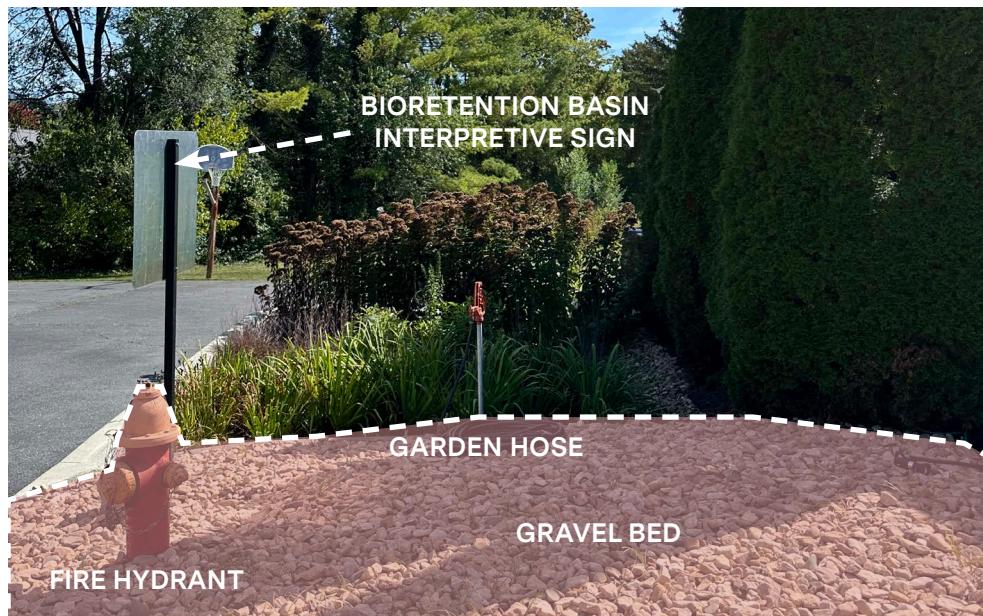
Parking lot looking towards Maryland Ave. Opportunity to improve drainage and reconfigure parking spaces.



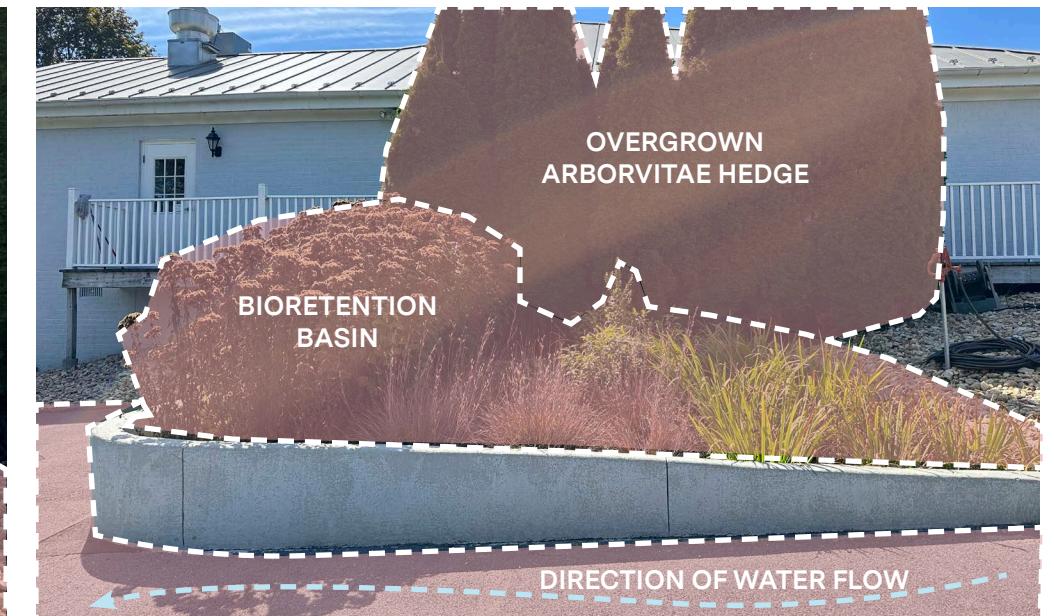
Storage shed, compost bin, and edge of neighbor's property. Opportunity to improve drainage and update storage shed and compost area.



Back of parking lot with basketball hoop and bioretention basin. Opportunity to improve circulation, connectivity, and usage of space, as well as improve drainage.



Gravel bed containing water access and fire hydrant. Opportunity to expand on bioretention basin to treat parking lot runoff.



Bioretention basin installed to capture roof runoff. Opportunity to replicate strategy throughout the property, especially the parking lot, and replace arborvitae hedge with lower growing shrubs.

SITE ANALYSIS *Photo Inventory*

ENTRYWAYS & UTILITIES



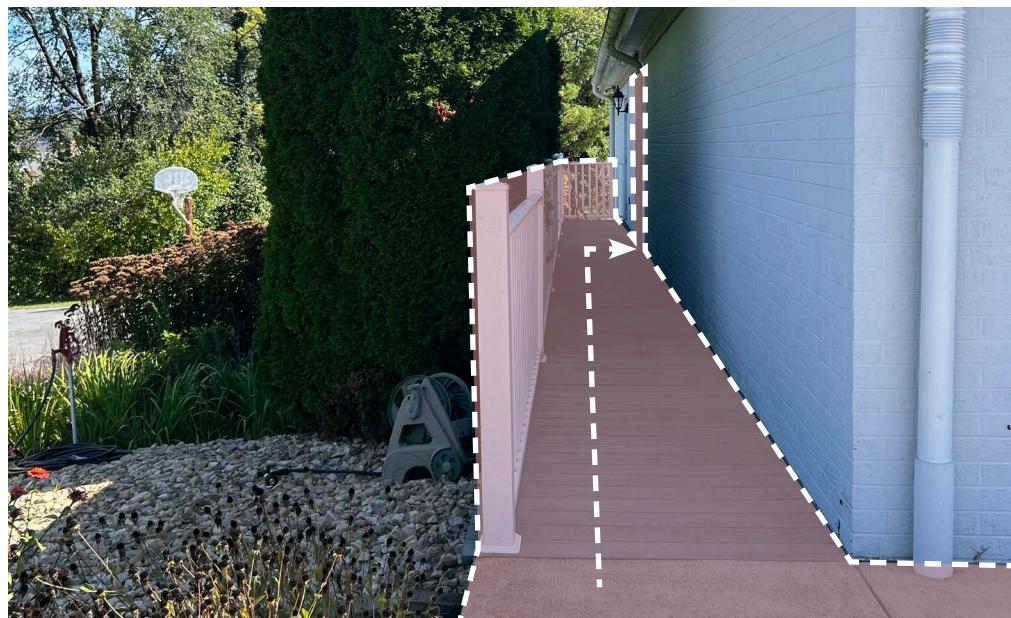
Main entry. Opportunity to enhance and expand circulation, planting, and paving to create a more open and inviting entryway.



Entrance to commons. Opportunity to enhance entryway.



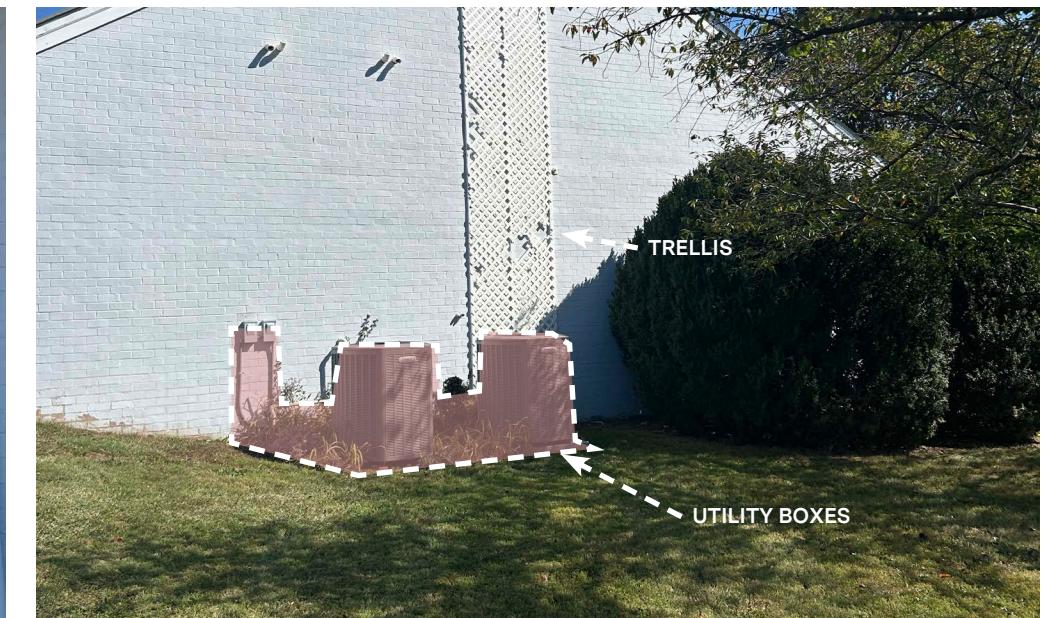
Entrances to clothes pantry and storage area. Opportunity to enhance entryways and provide seating.



Back entrance and walkway to kitchen. Opportunity to enhance circulation and visibility.



Solar utility boxes. Opportunity to enhance screening and provide educational signage about solar energy. Recommended increase of height of handicap parking signs to meet code.



Utility boxes along southwest wall facing Maryland Ave. Opportunity to enhance screening, paint mural, and expand main church entrance sequence along this side of the building.



03 DISCOVERY **PROGRAMMATIC PLANNING**

DISCOVERY *Church Values*

■ SIMPLE AESTHETIC

■ BUILD UPON NATURAL BEAUTY

■ DEMONSTRABLY ENGAGED

■ INTENTIONAL - FORM FOLLOWS FUNCTION

■ MULTIPURPOSE/FLEXIBLE SPACE

■ HISTORY - A PLACE FOR BELOVED SAINTS

■ COLOR AND VIBRANCY

■ CONVEY WELCOME, NOT RISK



*Values identified during Proximity Project workshop 11/8-11/9

DISCOVERY *Church Priorities*

HIGH PRIORITY

- Accessibility
 - ADA access from parking lot
 - Pedestrian access from street corner, front lawn
- Wayfinding
 - Signage: Parking lot, Playground, Labyrinth, Memorial Garden, Meditation Garden, street corner
- Shade
 - More trees, pavilion or picnic shelter near playground (min. capacity of 50)
- Seating
 - Flexible seating, seating near playground, front lawn
- Lighting
 - Front entry, playground
- Meditation Garden Enhancements
 - Public access, signage, buffer to maintain view from sanctuary, flexible space
- Gathering Space
 - Flexible space for gathering on front lawn

*Priorities identified during Proximity Project workshop 11/8-11/9

MEDIUM PRIORITY

- Art and Color
 - Murals, walkways, parking lot circulation and games
- Playground
 - Reconfigure and/or relocation
 - Improved seating, shade, signage, code compliance
- Historical Markers
- Pollinator Garden
 - Natural plantings reinforce circulation, opportunities for seating
- Parking Lot
 - Reconfiguration of spaces and vehicular circulation
 - Remove basketball hoop and portion of paving
 - Install permeable pavers

LOW PRIORITY

- Labyrinth enhancements
- Memorial Garden enhancements
- Public witness enhancements
- Water fountain, dog fountain
- Play space for older kids
- Amphitheater
- Community garden
- Cutting garden
- Edible orchard
- Painted parking lot for games
- Bilingual signage
- Bike maintenance station

DISCOVERY *Church Challenges & Concerns*

CHALLENGES & CONCERNS

- Topography
- Landscape maintenance capacity
- Poor lighting
- Respect for columbarium
- Community involvement for design/implementation
- Security and safety
- Liability
- Vandalism
- Cost
- Resistance to change
- ADA accessibility
- Accommodating neurodivergent users



*Challenges and concerns identified during Proximity Project workshop 11/8-11/9



04 CONCEPT DIRECTION & PROGRAM **SPATIAL PLANNING**

CONCEPT DIRECTION & PROGRAM *Key Spaces and Enhancements*

CIRCULATION	ENTRY & APPROACH	MULTI-PURPOSE LAWN	MEMORIAL GARDEN	LABYRINTH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A network of paths throughout front yard guides visitors through the space and establishes connectivity from the sidewalk to the church building Wayfinding signage supports navigation of the property 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a welcoming space that is more visible from the street and draws people into the main entrance An expanded patio at the main entrance provides space for people to gather and socialize before entering the building Wayfinding signage and markers support navigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The front yard can be used as a flexible space that facilitates a range of activities and moments from contemplative walks and sitting to larger gatherings and events A range of activities is supported via a combination of paths, signage, lighting, seating, and planting 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Improved planting and pathways better define the space and facilitate rest, reflection, and small gatherings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A combination of paths, planting, and seating better defines the space and draws visitors to spend time at the labyrinth
PARKING LOT	PLAYGROUND	BACKYARD	MEDITATION GARDEN	SEATING
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A reconfiguration of the spaces improves traffic flow A combination of permeable paving and expanded bioretention plantings improves drainage and brings more native plantings into the space, supporting wildlife and increasing biodiversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reconfiguring the playground facilitates better, safer play Incorporating seating and shade invites children and families to stay 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A cohesive design that connects the playground with a native garden, memorial trees, increased seating, and a new pavilion invites visitors to the space and facilitates movement, play, socialization, and reflection 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The view from inside the sanctuary is protected via a more subtle buffer fence or a “wall” of plantings The threshold between the garden and the exterior is opened up to invite visitors into this contemplative space A mural along the building facade facing Maryland Ave., along with enhanced planting and seating, creates a more welcoming entry point 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased seating throughout the outdoor spaces provides more opportunities for rest, reflection, and gathering

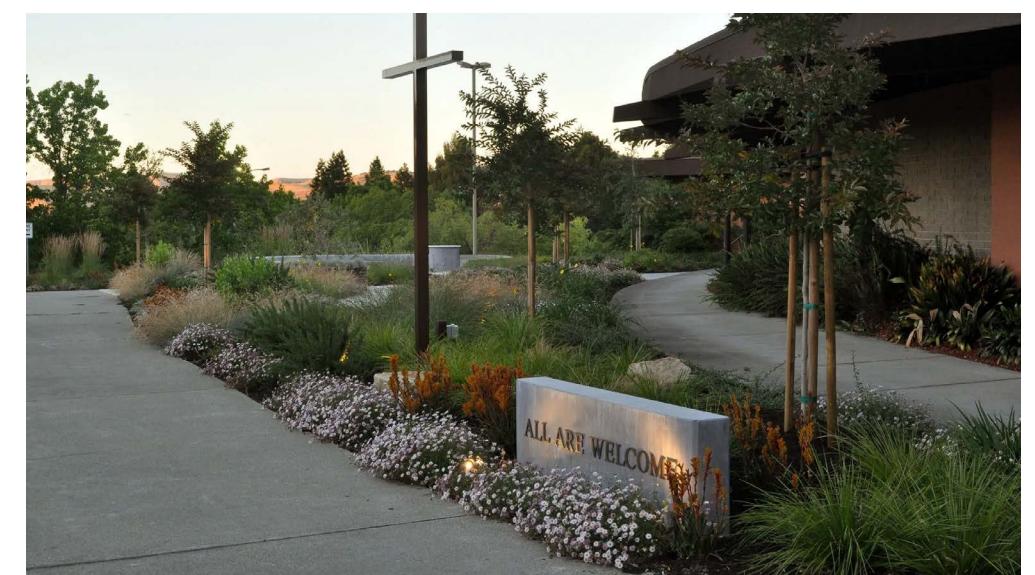
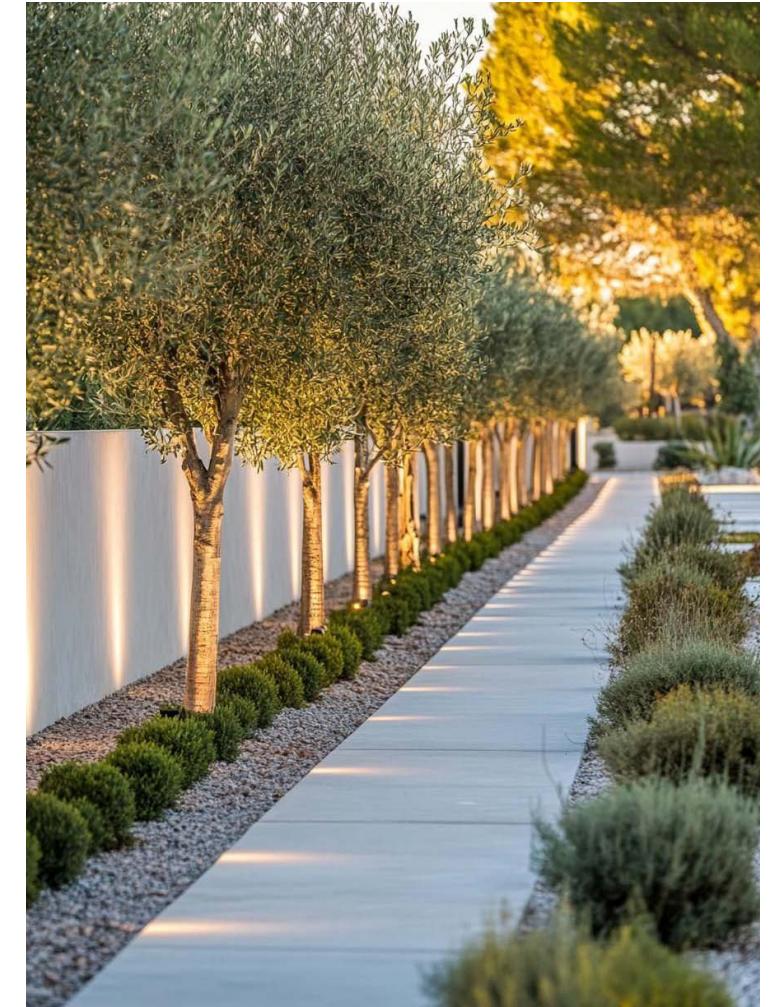


05 PROJECT PRECEDENT **INSPIRATION**

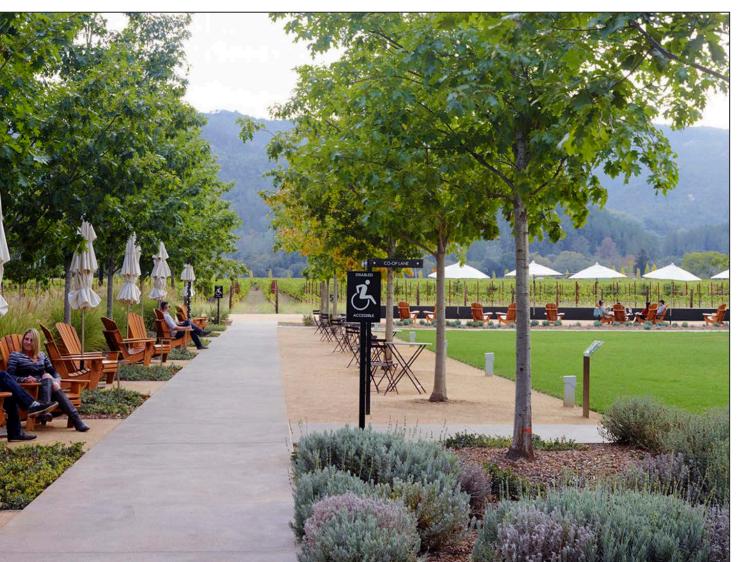
INSPIRATION *Circulation*



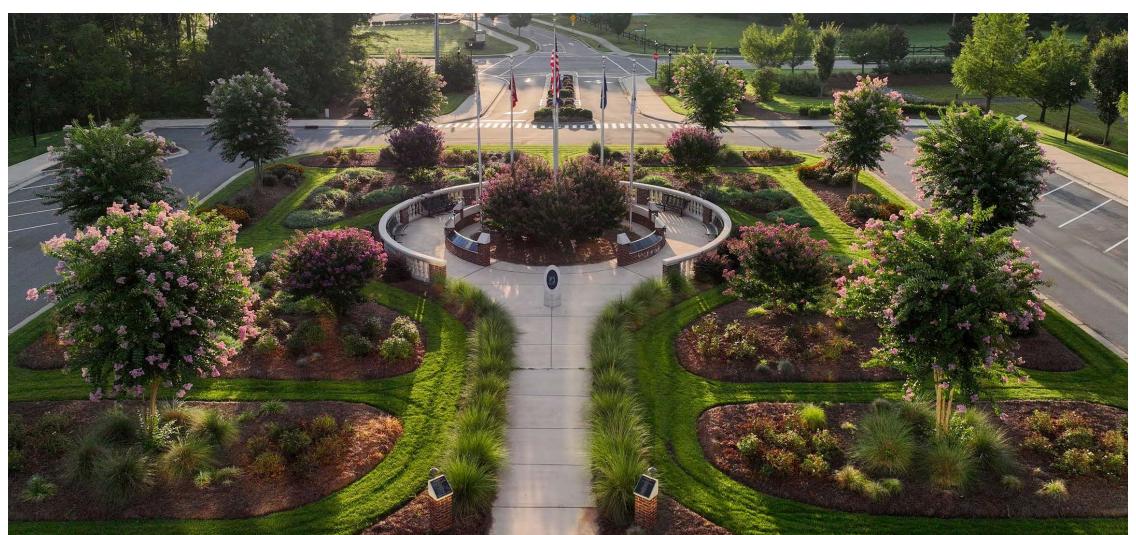
INSPIRATION *Main Entry Plaza and Approach*



INSPIRATION *Multi-Purpose Lawn and Gathering Spaces*



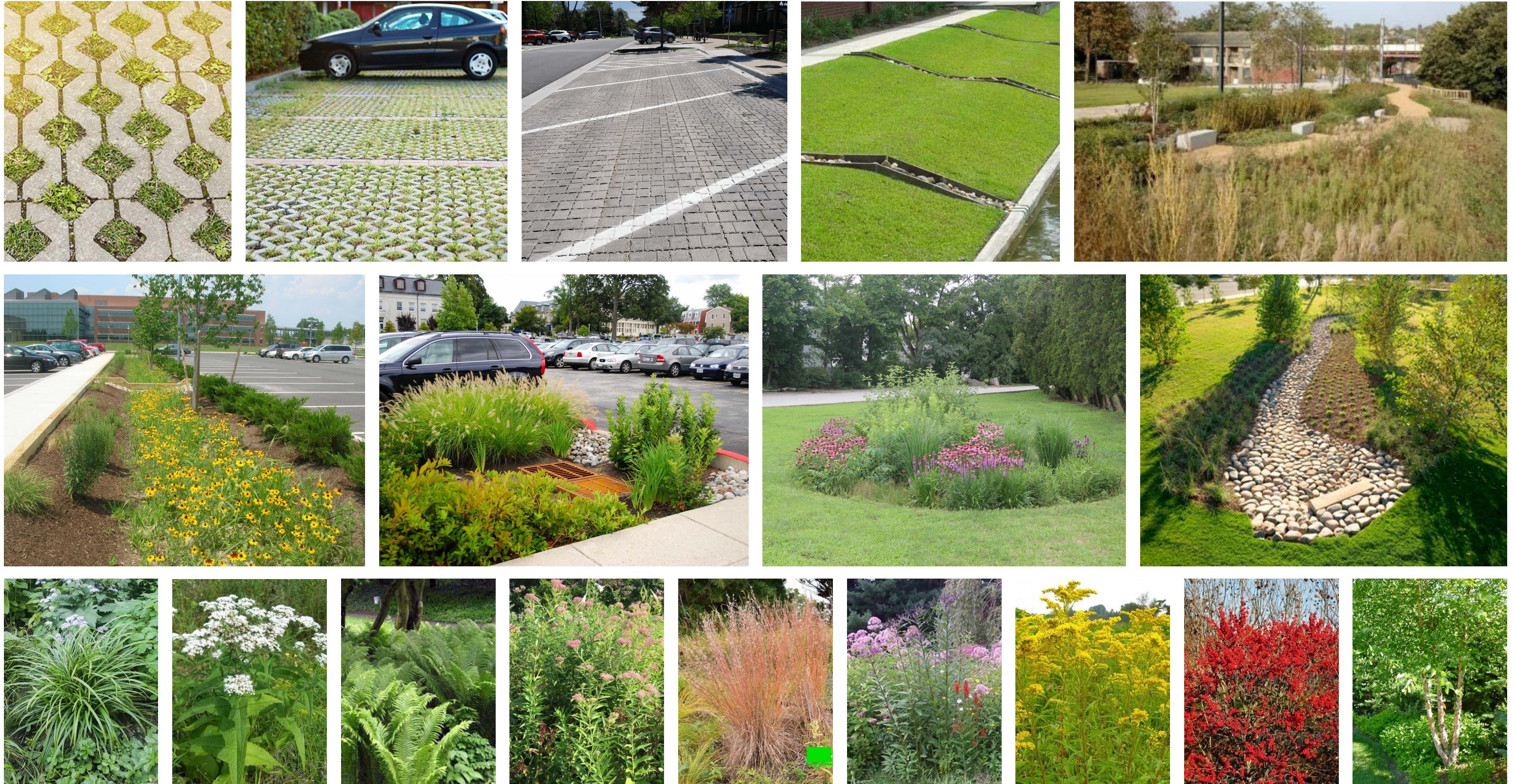
INSPIRATION *Memorial Garden Enhancements and Expansion*



INSPIRATION *Labyrinth Enhancements*



INSPIRATION *Parking Lot*



INSPIRATION *Playground Enhancements*



INSPIRATION *Backyard*



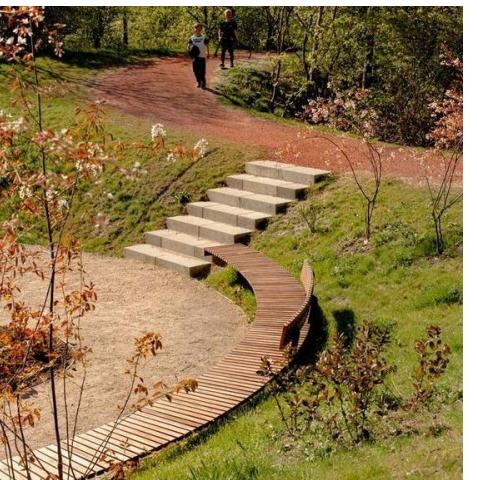
INSPIRATION

Meditation Garden Enhancements



INSPIRATION

Seating and Reflection



ORDINANCE RESEARCH

City of Harrisonburg Zoning Code

ZONING MAP



Trinity Presbyterian Church (725 S High St) has an R-2 Residential District Zoning Designation. Adherence to the City of Harrisonburg Zoning Code is based on this designation.

- 725 S HIGH ST
- EASEMENT
- Yellow R-1 SINGLE-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
- Green R-2 RESIDENTIAL
- Blue R-3 MULTIPLE DWELLING OR MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- Blue R-3C MULTIPLE DWELLING OR MEDIUM DENSITY RESIDENTIAL
- Brown M-1 GENERAL INDUSTRIAL
- Orange B-2 GENERAL BUSINESS

SEC. 10-3-25. - OFF-STREET VEHICLE PARKING REGS

Off-street parking requirements shall be met as stated herein for all new buildings and structures and all existing building types included herein which are hereafter enlarged, altered and/or changed in use. For the purpose of implementation of this section, "well-defined" shall mean the appropriate use of surface materials for vehicle use that clearly establishes and delineates the limits of parking areas and avoids off-site drainage conditions. Exemptions and modifications may apply as stated within this section, in accordance with the following requirements:

(1) Definition of a "parking space:" The area required for accommodating one (1) automobile or other motorized vehicle on private property, which shall be a minimum of nine (9) feet in width and eighteen (18) feet in length, not including passageways. Twenty-five (25) percent of the total parking provided may be designated for compact automobiles. Compact spaces shall be a minimum of eight feet by seventeen feet (8' x 17') for regular spaces and eight feet by twenty feet (8' x 20') for parallel spaces and that all such compact car spaces be clearly marked, using vertical signage, with the wording "Compact Cars Only."

(2) Where a creation of a paved or graveled parking lot may cause stormwater runoff due to grade conditions, review and approval by the city engineer's office is necessary before the improvement is to be made.

(3) [...]

(4) In addition to the number of parking spaces required by use under this section, nonresidential uses permitted in residential districts shall meet the following requirements.

a. Nonresidential parking spaces shall be designated so as to provide continuous visual separation of at least five (5) feet in width between parking and adjoining residential property, where applicable, by means of landscaping, fencing or ground cover. In addition, all areas between building setbacks and public street frontage shall be restricted to fifty (50) percent development for parking area.

b. All areas on-site which comprise the off-street parking plan shall be visually defined by paved or graveled surfaces which shall be duly maintained.

(5) For all uses other than single-family and duplex, on-site parking shall not depend on the public right-of-way, other than alleys or transient easements, in order to maneuver into or out of parking spaces, and the moving of any vehicle on site in order to maneuver another vehicle on site shall not meet the intent of this section [...]

(6) All means of ingress and egress for parking on lots fronting on more than one (1) public street shall be located at least twenty-five (25) feet from the intersection of property lines (rights-of-way) of such streets.

(7) [...]

[...]

(11) Churches, funeral homes, auditoriums, theaters and similar uses of public assembly (excepting schools): One (1) parking space for each ten (10) fixed seats in the assembly use of the largest capacity ten (10) percent, or **two (2) spaces for each ten (10) portable seats in the assembly use for the largest capacity twenty (20) percent**. When assembly uses may borrow parking from other public or private parking facilities in close proximity, the planning commission, upon comprehensive site plan review, may modify these requirements.

SEC. 10-3-25.1 - OFF-STREET BICYCLE PARKING REGS

This section is applicable to all uses other than single-family detached and duplex dwelling units. Reference the Design and Construction Standards Manual Bicycle Parking Detail drawings 2.6.10 for visual aids of the applied regulations.

(1) Location requirements:

- a. Bicycle parking shall be located in a highly visible area within fifty (50) feet of a main entrance. For shopping centers, a single entrance may be used to satisfy this requirement.
- b. Bicycle parking shall be on a dust-free surface with a slope no greater than three (3) percent. Surfaces shall not be gravel, landscape stone, or wood chips.
- c. Bicycle parking spaces shall be a minimum of one (1) foot from vehicular parking, vehicular travelways, and all vertical surfaces such as, but not limited to, walls, fences, and curbs.
- d. Bicycle racks shall be placed such that each bicycle parking space is accessible without moving another bicycle, and its placement shall not result in a bicycle obstructing a walkway or drive aisle.
- e. Bicycle parking shall neither encroach on accessible paths nor interfere with the adequate sight distance standards as specified within the Design and Construction Standards Manual.

(2) Spatial and structural requirements:

- a. Bicycle parking spaces shall be a minimum of two (2) feet by six (6) feet and accommodated by a bicycle rack.
- b. Bicycle racks shall be spaced a minimum of four (4) feet apart and accommodate cable locks and "U" locks, permit the locking of a bicycle frame and one (1) wheel to the rack, and support a bicycle in a stable position.

(3) Bicycle parking space requirements by use:

USE	PARKING REQUIREMENT
Houses of worship, [...]	0.5% of maximum occupant load or 4 spaces minimum, whichever is greater

SEC. 10-3-29 - OTHER REQUIREMENTS

(a) **All off-street vehicle parking spaces for handicapped persons shall conform with the most recent American Disabilities Act regulations.**

(b) **All off-street parking spaces, loading areas, driveways, travelways, parking bays and entrances shall comply with the city design and construction standards manual.**

DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION STANDARDS - SITE LIGHTING

(2.9.1) Orientation

Site lighting shall be designed such that light is directed away from adjacent properties and public right-of-ways and shall be directed downward to minimize light emission directed at the sky. Outside flood-type lighting attached to building shall also be so designed.

(2.9.2) Location

Site plans shall show location of lighting on site and indicate location of floodtype lighting on buildings. Plans shall also show, either on the construction plan or on a reduced scale insert, the foot-candle distribution of such lighting, drawn to scale, for the particular fixtures proposed. Illumination beyond the site boundaries shall not exceed 0.5 foot-candles.

SEC. 10-3-30.1. - PARKING LOT LANDSCAPING

(1) **Parking lots shall be separated from public street right-of-way lines by a landscaping border not less than ten (10) feet in width.**

(2) **Parking lots shall be separated from all side and rear property lines by a landscaping border not less than ten (10) feet in width or by a wall or fence of at least three (3) feet in height, except along adjoining lot lines which lie within a shared parking arrangement or where existing buildings on adjoining lots are located on shared property lines.**

(3) **Parking lots shall include well-defined and well-maintained landscaping areas equal to at least fifteen (15) percent of the total area of the parking lot.** Uses that have outdoor display areas shall include those areas for determining the required landscaping. **Only landscaping within the parking lot and/or within a thirty (30) foot perimeter of the parking lot, exclusive of the required landscaping border adjacent to public street rights-of-way and landscaping immediately adjacent (within five (5) feet) to a principal building/structure, shall be permitted to count towards meeting the fifteen (15) percent requirement. [...]**

(4) **Trees shall be planted and maintained within landscaping borders adjacent to public street rights-of-way according to one (1) of the following:**

a. **No less than one (1) large deciduous tree planted for every forty (40) linear feet of parking lot street frontage, or fraction thereof.** At the time of planting, tree sizes shall meet the requirements as defined in section 10-3-24, definitions. Tree locations within the border are at the discretion of the property owner/developer.

b. **No less than one (1) small/ornamental deciduous tree, planted for every twenty-five (25) linear feet of parking lot street frontage, or fraction thereof.** At the time of planting, tree sizes shall meet the requirements as defined in section 10-3-24, definitions. Tree locations within the border are at the discretion of the property owner/developer.

c. **No less than one (1) evergreen tree may be planted for every twenty-five (25) linear feet of parking lot street frontage, or fraction thereof. Evergreen trees shall not exceed fifty (50) percent of the number trees planted within the border.** At the time of planting, trees shall meet the requirements as defined in section 10-3-24. Tree locations within the border are at the discretion of the property owner/developer.

d. No less than a combination of large and small/ornamental deciduous and/or evergreen trees proportionate to subsections 10-3-30.1(4)a., b., and c. Tree locations within the border are at the discretion of the property owner/developer.

(5) Each terminus of a parking bay, unless adjacent to a landscaping border, shall have a landscaping island. **A single row parking bay shall have an island with a minimum of one hundred forty (140) square feet. A double row parking bay shall have an island with a minimum of two hundred eighty (280) square feet.**

(6) **Rows of parking spaces shall be divided at intervals of no more than twelve (12) parking spaces by a landscaping island of no less than one hundred forty (140) square feet.**

(7) **Each required landscaping island, as described in subsections 10-3-30.1(5) and (6), shall have and maintain at least one (1) large deciduous tree, one (1) small/ornamental deciduous tree, or one evergreen tree.** At the time of planting, tree sizes shall meet the requirements as defined in section 10-3-24, definitions. The planting of evergreen trees shall not exceed fifty (50) percent of the number of trees planted in landscaping islands. **In addition, at least three (3) deciduous or evergreen shrubs, at least eighteen (18) inches tall at the time of planting, shall be planted and maintained within each required landscaping island.** Landscaping islands that are less than five (5) feet in width are not required to provide large or small/ornamental deciduous trees or deciduous or evergreen shrubs.

(8) **Parking lots shall have landscaping of at least nine (9) feet in width for the entire length of every other interior parking bay, connecting the landscaping islands required above. Trees shall be provided at no less than one (1) large deciduous tree planted for every forty (40) linear feet of island length, or fraction thereof; no less than one (1) small/ornamental deciduous tree, planted for every twenty-five (25) linear feet of island length, or fraction thereof; no less than one (1) evergreen tree planted for every twenty-five (25) linear feet of island length, or fraction thereof; or no less than a combination to the above mentioned proportions. The planting of evergreen trees shall not exceed fifty (50) percent of the number of trees planted in this landscaping area. At the time of planting, tree sizes shall meet the requirements as defined in section 10-3-24, definitions. Tree locations within this landscaping area are at the discretion of the property owner/developer. Parking lots with two (2) or less internal parking bays are exempt from this requirement.**

(9) All areas within the parking lot, not used for parking spaces, travelways, or pedestrian ways, shall be landscaped.

(10) **All landscaping shall be located as to not interfere with the adequate sight distance standards as specified within the Design and Construction Standards Manual.**

(11) **All required landscaping is suggested to be of regional species and planted in accordance with the International Society of Arboriculture.**

(12) Vehicle parking and/or the display of goods in landscaping islands and borders is prohibited.

(13) **Owner(s) and their agent(s), heirs, or assigns shall be responsible for the installation, preservation and maintenance of all planting and physical features required to satisfy the conditions of this section. Any dead or missing vegetation shall be replaced (with like or similar vegetation) within one (1) [CY] of the vegetation's death.**

(14) **Required planting in easements:** Required trees, and other deep rooted vegetation, shall not be planted within public water and/or sewer easements. In particular circumstances where no other area within the required location can accommodate the required planting, such planting may be waived by the zoning administrator. Required planting in public general utility easements shall be coordinated with the department of public utilities.

(15) **Landscaping plan submittal:** Landscaping information shall be submitted with a comprehensive site plan and/or, if applicable, with a building permit, with a plan of the property at an appropriate scale to show accordance with this section. The plan shall be appropriately labeled and shall provide the following information:

a. The calculation of the required landscaping area as specified in subsection 10-3-30.1(3).

b. The location, size, and schedule of all proposed landscaping with the dimensions of landscaped areas indicated. Plant materials may be indicated in generic terms (i.e. large deciduous tree or small/ornamental deciduous tree, etc.).

c. Existing healthy trees or wooded areas, where such trees are required, may be preserved in lieu of planting new materials to meet the landscaping requirements. In such case, the landscaping plan shall indicate the trees and areas to be saved.

d. Verification that landscaping will not impede sight distance.

(16) **Nonconforming landscaping:** **An existing building/use that has parking lot landscaping that is nonconforming as to the minimum landscaping requirements of this section may be enlarged; however, parking lot landscaping requirements shall apply to all enlarged portions of existing parking lots,** including parking lots in the B-1 district that are enlarged beyond the exemption threshold noted in the opening paragraph of this section. Any enlargement of a parking lot on any property having an existing landscaping border separating parking spaces from public street right-of-way lines, which is five (5) feet or larger, shall provide trees within the border as required by subsection 10-3-30.1(4). (Note: Repaving, regraveling, redesigning, or restriping a parking lot or increasing the number of parking spaces without increasing the net square footage of a parking lot does not constitute an enlargement.)



06 LOOKING AHEAD **SCHEDULE & NEXT STEPS**



PLACEMAKING PROGRAM
ACTION STEPS

1

ADOPT AN ABUNDANCE MINDEST

Churches often have several community-related programs and relational or professional connections that serve as points of intersection between their congregation, their property, and the broader community. Naming these uses and corresponding community connections fosters an **abundance mindset**, helping you recognize the people and programs you already have which may be valuable resources to build upon. These existing connection points are foundational opportunities for discovering property improvements that will benefit both the church and the larger community.

As you begin the work of identifying your resources and property improvements to serve your community, [reflect on the Bible story of the Widow's olive oil](#).

Read 2 Kings 4:1-7

Key Lessons to Consider:

- *God works with what we already have.*

He didn't require the widow to get something new; He used what was in her house.

- *Faith and obedience activate God's provision.*

She had to take action – gather jars, pour the oil – and trust God in the process.

- *God provides not just for immediate needs, but also for sustainability.*

The oil was enough to pay her debts and provide for her family's future.

2

IDENITY EXISTING PEOPLE + PROGRAMS

Your team identified several property uses occurring beyond Sunday church services. Identifying these user groups is a great starting point to explore what property improvements could support and amplify the activities already happening on the grounds.

Review the lists below. Are there others that need to be added?

Existing Property Users:

- Trinity Presbyterian Church Congregation
- Clothes Closet
- Chess Club
- Centering Space Yoga
- Ad hoc play groups throughout the week
- Neighbors who compost
- Shenandoah Valley Bicycle Coalition
- Others?

Community Relationships + Connections:

- Keister Elementary
- Bluestone Elementary
- Nearby neighbors/residents
- Local council member (lives across from the church)
- Harrisonburg Mennonite Church
- Jubilee Farm
- Master Gardeners Network
- Library Environmental Ed Programming - Donna at Trinity
- VDOT - Norie Smith at Trinity
- Harrisonburg Public Works - Jeremy Harold at Trinity
- MTC - Larry Brown at Trinity
- Others?

3

QUERY THE COMMUNITY

Begin in Your Own Backyard

Start with the existing property users and events. Ask questions about how your outdoor spaces could be improved upon to make their time on the church property more enjoyable and useful. Personal conversations will provide the most direct feedback, so consider assigning someone from the church to reach out and make the inquiries. You could also set up a QR code survey and provide signage that invites people to provide input.

Explore the community relationships and connections you have by sharing with people what you are hoping to achieve and listening for where synergistic opportunities exist to support their programs and/or utilize their expertise. Having an opportunity to use professional knowledge and skills to support church placemaking work can be particularly energizing for congregation members,

Expand Your Horizon

Look at your church context on a map. Draw a one-mile radius around your church property as a way to consider "parish boundaries" for building relationships within the local community. Depending on the density of your location, you may need to have larger boundaries to capture enough nearby residents and/or businesses.

Make a list of all the businesses, churches and nonprofits or community organizations that are closest in proximity to your church property. Get coffee with another pastor, community leader, business owner, or residents (or all of them!). Find out the story of the community from their perspective.

Questions to ask:

- How long have you lived-in, or been engaged with, the local community?
- What changes have you seen over that time?
- What do you think makes the neighborhood great?
- What things do you think would make it even better?
- Where do you see positive momentum in our community right now?
- What would you like to see congregations like ours do in the local community?
- Who else would you recommend we talk with?

4

ASSESS YOUR FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Use the following matrices to think through the resources you can bring to this project. Categorize your project ideas into general dollar amounts to begin assessing financial resources needed to accomplish each. It's okay if you don't fully know how much each will cost. Simply use this rubric as a guide for a ballpark estimate.



Money: How much financial capital will your project ideas require and what options exist for monetary support?

\$100 Ideas	\$1,000 Ideas	\$100,000 Ideas

As you review possible project ideas, consider the following questions:

- *What money is available for this work?*
- *Could you (re)allocate mission or building funds for any of your project ideas?*
- *How easily could you raise money for a specific project?*
- *Are there church or neighborhood/city grants that might help with this work?*
- *Are there in-kind resources that could help with materials and services related to a project?*
- *Who needs to be consulted (or who has the ultimate say) over the appropriation of funds and other resources?*

5

CONSIDER YOUR INVESTMENT SCALE



6

BE WISE RISK-TAKERS

Inviting public use of your property can feel risky and will likely open the door to various concerns within your church community. Being cognizant of potential problems is important, but we encourage you to not let these fears stop you from carrying out redemptive placemaking work. We believe that Jesus calls his followers to be wise risk-takers. Here are some common apprehensions and suggested ways to navigate each of them.

Liability: Check with your insurance agent about sufficient coverage for events that are open to the community or improvements to your property intended for public use, but do not let this dissuade you from pursuing a project. Too often, churches will disregard exciting ideas because they assume that expensive insurance coverage is required without actually checking with their provider. You might be surprised how receptive your insurance company is to your project ideas. Moreover, churches are often already carrying extensive coverage that makes even bold projects require only minimal additions to the policy.

Vandalism: Putting out lawn furniture, games, and art for public enjoyment may subject these things to harsh treatment or even being stolen. We recommend starting with inexpensive options to assess whether or not these things will actually be vandalized. If you haven't spent thousands of dollars then the disappearance of a couple of chairs will not feel like such a significant loss. Additionally, consider brightly painting your accessories and placing stickers or signage that reads along the lines of: "Chairs are courtesy of 'Your Church Name'. Please enjoy sitting here." Small statements like this can make all the difference for curbing ill-intentioned action.

Research has also shown that public art, like murals, is often left untouched by tagging and vandalism because there is a culture of mutual respect that street taggers have for the work of other artists.

Soliciting Bad Behavior: Oftentimes people fear the types of people or activity that might be attracted to using outdoor seating and other community engaging accessories. Good behavior drives out bad behavior so that is why we highly encourage you to actively use the spaces you create and make continuous open invitations to neighbors to use these spaces as well. Perhaps you can even identify a block "mayor" who would be willing to keep eyes on the street and help serve as a safeguard for these places. One of the best avenues for keeping this issue in check is knowing your neighbors and stakeholders and creating partnerships that can provide oversight for these places. Providing good lighting and clear sightlines are also important for preserving the safety of a place.

One of the reasons we suggest you start with a small, low-risk project is this allows you to assess the legitimacy of the various apprehensions raised. Oftentimes people spend a lot of energy worrying about hypotheticals, which ultimately paralyzes them from moving forward. If you implement a small-scale project that requires only a little investment, you have the opportunity to root the conversation in reality. A pilot project will help you determine whether or not the apprehensions are founded, and you may actually discover other concerns that need accounting for in your project. Either way, when you have not invested large amounts of money, you are freer to take risks, adapt where changes are needed, and negotiate concerns.

SCHEDULE *Next Steps*

SITE ANALYSIS & PLACEMAKING PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

■ OCT

10/03

CD SITE
VISIT

■ NOV

11/04

CD TO SUBMIT 75%
DRAFT TO PP

■ DEC / ■ JAN

12/10

CD & PP REVIEW
OF TASK 1 DRAFT

■ FEB

WEEK OF 02/02
TPC REVIEW +
FEEDBACK DUE

■ MAR

WEEK OF 03/09

PRESENTATION OF
DRAFT CONCEPT
MASTER PLAN TO TPC
TASK FORCE

■ APR

WEEK OF 04/19

DELIVERABLE:
CONCEPT DESIGN
PLAN

11/08 & 11/09
PP SITE VISIT

01/14

PRESENTATION
OF DRAFT
PLACEMAKING
PROGRAM TO TPC

02/13

DELIVERABLE:
PLACEMAKING &
SITE IMPROVEMENT
PLAN

CD: CITE DESIGN

PP: PROXIMITY PROJECT

TPC: TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

CONCEPT DESIGN PLAN

THANK YOU

