

## EVERYBODY'S DOING DIVERSITY—BUT NOT LIKE THIS

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Diversity is all the rage. Everybody's doing it. This would seem to make Trinity School's new Diversity Statement quite unremarkable. We might as well feature the school's Personnel Handbook in the next issue of the *Column*. But Trinity's Diversity Statement *is* remarkable, and we've enclosed a copy of the statement in this issue, so that you can see for yourself.

And while some may be yawning, others may be bristling. Some of us will be skeptical at the very mention of a diversity statement. "Everybody's Doing It" is not a particularly biblical slogan. Whatever happened to not conforming to the world? Read for yourself and see whether you think the school has managed to chart a vision for diversity which is distinctively Trinity—and Trinitarian.

I think we have. This is Trinity at its best: Engaging the culture (If everybody's talking about diversity, shouldn't we have *something* to say about it?), but challenging it too by taking captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ (2 Cor. 10:5). The statement is a sort of exegesis of Trinity's Mission—the Mission is dominant. We have not changed the school's motto to "Truth, Goodness, Beauty, and Diversity." Rather, we have asked ourselves "If Truth, Goodness and Beauty are our transcendent vision, what does this mean for diversity at Trinity?" I hope that you will be as excited as we are by some of the answers this statement begins to imagine.

It is fitting that we should launch this statement in a year when we have dedicated ourselves to living out the biblical injunction to "show hospitality" (1 Peter 4:9). The Hospitality of God is profound: In Christ we who were God's enemies have been made sons and daughters. This journey from hostility to hospitality is a steep climb, impossible apart from the Incarnation of God, and everything in our baser nature wants to go the other way. The stranger is one to be feared, not welcomed. He threatens my world, my peace, my comfort, my tidy worldview. If I open the front door and invite her in, what will this stranger bring? What will she ask of me? Will she take my silverware? Will she take, somehow, my very self away from me? Do these questions seem over the top? When we've asked our students to speak and write about these things, they sometimes reflect attitudes and fears which show that we have a lot of work to do in this area. The Hospitality of God is a hard act to follow, but that is what 1 Peter 4:9 calls us to. It is that Hospitality which this statement praises. "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it," but he opened his front door and invited us in, despite all the mud we track in and the fact that we are inclined to steal his candlesticks. And around the Hearth of God we find people who are different from us in all sorts of ways. And if the Lord has accepted them, how ought we to live? Our Upper Schoolers aren't the only ones who need to ask themselves this question. This Diversity Statement is for us all.

The statement has been a long time in the making. By my count there have been three Diversity Task Forces or Committees of the School. The first, going back at least to 2001, did a lot of reading and praying, under the guidance of former Board member Rick Adams and our own Betsy Poole. The second, under the leadership of former teacher Deidra Coles and former Director John Sharon, wrote a strategic plan for diversity. The Board received that plan in 2006 and put the first recommendation into effect: to establish a Board Committee for Diversity. That committee, which it named the Koinonia Committee, went right to work on this statement. Many thanks go to Chair Alicia Ramos and Committee member Perrienne Davis, who were the Jefferson and Adams of this project. The entire board approved this resolution last spring at its April meeting.

We are proud to show this statement to our prospective parents, to colleges who are now visiting our Upper School and checking us out, to candidates who apply to teach here, to our accrediting organization. And most of all to you, our parents, grandparents, and friends. Please join us in celebrating this vision and in doing all we can this year to practice hospitality and thus enhance the diversity which we already enjoy here at Trinity.