

Joint Amalgamation Committee
Trinity/Emmanuel United Churches
360 Reid Street /534 George Street North
Peterborough, Ontario
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Trinity and Emmanuel Exploring Amalgamation
Bringing United Church congregations together

Tuesday, December 18, 2018, Peterborough: A Joint Amalgamation Committee (JAC) has been struck to explore the possibilities of amalgamation of two downtown United Churches: Trinity (360 Reid Street) and Emmanuel (534 George Street North.) While no decisions have been made, the two congregations have been coming together in discussions at parlour talks, in congregational surveys, and in worship at joint services to gather information about opportunities and challenges that this possibility presents.

“The purpose of the JAC is to guide the two congregations in determining if a shared ministry is beneficial, to ensure transparency and to provide all members of both congregations with all of the information regarding potential amalgamation in preparation for a vote on April 28th, 2019,” says JAC spokesperson Martin Deeley. “All substantive United Church decisions are voted on by the members of the congregations and both Emmanuel and Trinity United Churches will provide opportunities for their members to vote at each location.”

Why amalgamation? Why now?

Bringing rich histories and contributions to Peterborough, we see the benefits in growing together spiritually and jointly serving the needs of the community. With sustainability considerations addressing both the environmental and economic challenges of maintaining two substantial heritage properties, amalgamation has become a viable opportunity that other congregations have successfully approached in the past, here in Peterborough and across the country. Emmanuel itself is the result of a recent amalgamation of George Street and Saint Andrew’s United Churches, now referred to as the East and West Campuses of Emmanuel United. Worship services for the Emmanuel congregation are currently held at the

George Street location (534 George St. N,) while the West Campus property at 441 Rubidge Street is currently for sale.

The Voting Process

“This is not uncommon practice for United Churches across Canada and we are finding that we are well supported in our explorations. We want to be very clear about what a yes or no vote will mean to our congregations.”

If the result of the congregations’ votes are “no”: then the JAC will disband and the councils of both churches will return to their own processes to determine their own next steps.

If the votes comprise a “yes” for amalgamation: the current JAC will assist both councils in a transition that will involve taking steps to move both congregations to a single location which could be one of two current locations: 534 George St. N (Emmanuel) or 360 Reid Street (Trinity) or a new better location. This move would include a complete restructuring of the organizations.

Assessments in Progress

Both properties have initiated processes to assess the physical requirements of the buildings and grounds, including accessibility, architectural, acoustic, electrical, engineering, plumbing, etc. A small sub-committee with members from each church will also work together to determine space assessments with regards to how the facilities can best allow for comfort and realization of the mission and vision of the new church.

“What has really impressed me is the spirit of collaboration that these two congregations and church councils have embraced,” says Deeley. “At this time of year it is a wonderful reminder of how we can best support each other as we navigate change together and traverse meaningful discussion about what is important to every member of our community.”

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For further information about the JAC, please contact: Martin Deeley, mdeeley3@cogeco.ca.