

Priorities for an Amalgamated Congregation

Amalgamation Considerations

When considering amalgamation with another church, it is best practice to begin with a new vision for the potential future of a newly formed congregation. The Joint Amalgamation Committee (JAC) in 2018 led the process for the creation of a **proposed new vision and mission** for an amalgamation of Trinity and Emmanuel United Churches:

OUR VISION

We are a vibrant, multi-generational, Affirming United Church congregation in Peterborough, welcoming all, growing spiritually, learning theologically, and serving and transforming our community.

OUR MISSION

To achieve our Vision we will:

- Broaden our outreach program for all, especially the marginalized and disenfranchised, by engaging with them and discovering their needs together.
- Enhance our pastoral care programs.
- Provide a variety of opportunities to experience God.
- Engage with faith and non-faith organizations in Peterborough.

OUR VALUES

- Our community of faith is open to people of all ages, backgrounds, social situations, sexual orientations and gender identities for relevant worship and service to the community.
- Our community must be resource sustainable in time, talent and treasure
- We accept that we all don't walk in the same direction.
- We strive for inclusion and justice for all.

Based on this proposed vision and mission that was voted on by both congregations, **five key areas** were identified for further exploration and discussion by task groups with members from each congregation:

1. Youth and Family Programs
2. Ways to Experience God
3. Pastoral Care
4. Outreach/Affirming/Advocacy
5. Constitution and Governance (detailed work will take place only upon amalgamation)

In each area, task groups identified ideas and potential priorities, and incorporated feedback after a joint service in November, 2018. The following priorities are the results of that process:

Youth and Family Programs

1. Make church/worship service more meaningful to children by engaging children in the early part of the worship service and in other church activities; reformatting Sunday School under a different name; and introducing a new curriculum including fun Bible-based learning and activities.

2. Engage a Youth Educator to initiate and implement youth programs to bring young families into the church – eg. Friday or Saturday evening games nights or pizza and movie nights, homework clubs, camps to attract children and youth.
3. Engage a Junior Choir Director
4. Liaise with other churches to share programs and attract a wider audience to events

Ways to Experience God

1. Build a strong, user-friendly and modern web and social media presence.
2. Create interest and excitement in our worship by using a variety of worship styles and music styles.
3. Develop creative new ways of engaging our community of faith in a hub-like centre of worship.
4. Expand ways of growing our knowledge of God - lecture series, youth forums, meditation, interfaith and bible study etc.

Pastoral Care

1. A coordinator for existing and new Pastoral Care Programs so each person needing care is looked after.

Outreach/Affirming/Advocacy Task Group

1. Develop and expand our partnership with Nourish.
2. Reconciliation and advocacy with Indigenous neighbours and the LGBTQ community.
3. Create more partnerships; explore possible partnerships with organizations like Homeward Bound, New Canadians Centre and Peterborough Green-Up.
4. Explore and expand advocacy and ally-ship; pray, support, educate, take a stand on behalf of others – issues of peace, the environment, human rights.

Below is a series of steps that have been taken in developing these priorities:

- Statement of opportunities and challenges for an amalgamated congregation was developed after joint service - March 4th, 2018
- Draft vision, mission and values statement was developed and shared with congregations, based on opportunities and challenges identified
- Parlour talks were held to review and discuss the new vision, mission and values statements
- Draft Vision, Mission and Values statements was endorsed by both congregations in June 2018
- Key areas were identified for further investigation and assigned to task groups; Pastoral Care; Youth programs; Outreach, Affirming and Advocacy; Variety of ways to experience God; and Constitution and Governance.
- Workshop was held after Joint Service on November 18th, 2018 for congregations to provide feedback on the task group ideas
- Parlour Talks were held on November 25th, 2018 to process information, ideas, questions
- Results from workshop were summarized by task group leaders and provided to the JAC
- Priorities for an amalgamated congregation were drafted as above
- Priorities adopted at the February 4th, 2019 meeting of the JAC