



TRINITY
UNITED CHURCH
Smiths Falls, Ontario, Canada

TRANSITION TEAM UPDATE

Transition Team Newsletter : Issue 8

October 9, 2016

TRANSITION TEAM WORKSHOP
"ENVISIONING OUR FUTURE"
SEPTEMBER 25, 2016

Our Transition Team held a workshop for the Trinity church family on September 25, 2016 to seek input regarding the "Vision Statement" that has been prepared as the guide to action moving into a new pastoral relationship.

Participants were placed in groups of four and they were asked to focus on the vision statement provided to them and answer the question ... What is God calling you to do in order to live out the mission statement provided. The first step was to individually dream as to how they could see the vision statement being fulfilled...next they shared their ideas with another person at their table and through discussion see if any additional dreams arose and then repeat the exercise with the other participants at the table.

Here are the questions and responses received.

- 1. On our Journey of faith we will become more intentional in living out our living mission and core values; we will "walk the talk".**
 - ◆ Inviting all to be a part of groups within
 - ◆ Everyone working together
 - ◆ Try to understand the issues – understanding that the youth have many ideas & finding ways to incorporate those ideas
 - ◆ Make sure that decisions are not made unilaterally but together
 - ◆ Sharing ideas and expressions of who we are verbally and physically
 - ◆ Improve communications
 - ◆ Outreach by being more proactive with community causes

- 2. On our Journey of faith we will embrace changes and take risks to live by our Living Mission.**
 - ◆ Allow all individual and groups to be heard
 - ◆ Small groups and everyone a chance to speak
 - ◆ Respect holy manners
 - ◆ Show love, be patient, open to understanding
 - ◆ Listen, listen, listen to people's needs so they can be met
 - ◆ Be more accepting of others ideas
 - ◆ Be more welcoming
 - ◆ Recognize we come because we love God
 - ◆ Interfaith, intercultural... education
 - ◆ Live by example (Faith)
 - ◆ Things are not carved in stone – be flexible and adaptable
 - ◆ Be open to constructive change
 - ◆ We don't know another person's suffering
 - ◆ Know when to ease up on the "reins"
 - ◆ Build on the positives



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3. On our Journey of faith we will practise stewardship of all resources.

- ◆ Too much paper being used
- ◆ By communication – Create visitation teams

4. On our Journey of faith we will ensure that God's house is open, accessible and sustained.

- ◆ Start "Messy Church"
- ◆ An alternate time for church service
- ◆ Build up Sunday School
- ◆ Communication, more transparency, more communication between teams
- ◆ Love and caring for members of the church
- ◆ Open our minds and hearts
- ◆ Practice what we preach
- ◆ Be gentle with one another
- ◆ Do to others as you wish to be treated
- ◆ Church needs to be open for the community & as well as for Trinity members... People need quiet times for personal meditation
- ◆ Church needs to have more accessibility

5. On our Journey of faith we will foster communication between Church Council, its teams, the congregation and the greater community.

- ◆ Genuine listening
- ◆ Email tree, phone tree, website, face book
- ◆ Outdoor signs
- ◆ No fear about posting signs
- ◆ Cable TV, Lake 88 (radio)
- ◆ Bulletin boards
- ◆ Comment - Teaching was included but don't know the implication
- ◆ Communicate – sharing of information to all

6. On our Journey of faith we will provide ongoing faith development opportunities for all ages.

- ◆ Does everything that Trinity endeavours reflect back to our core values
- ◆ Provide multiple interactions during service and socially, that build a community that is happy; that helps us take on the work we do collectively and with joy
- ◆ Maintain and build a strong music program at Trinity, and allow the community to participate or enjoy
- ◆ Continue to lead in social issues, youth pregnancy, food shortage – poverty
- ◆ Bible study group of all ages



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- 7. On our Journey of faith we will encourage, equip and empower individuals and groups for shared leadership.**
 - ◆ Look at rules that can facilitate leadership
 - ◆ An atmosphere that supports individuals & groups to use their gifts and interests
 - ◆ Teaching + an environment of open dialogue
 - ◆ Education, faith stories
 - ◆ Accepting the leadership of others
 - ◆ A safe place to take risks, failure is accepted and seen as an opportunity for growth
 - ◆ Opportunities for leadership built into our community of faith – intentionally
 - ◆ Embracing leadership styles
 - ◆ All people are included
 - ◆ Leadership – personal comfort zone is respected
 - ◆ Very difficult to participate freely in church events for fear of stepping on “toes”

- 8. On our Journey of faith we will invite the participation of all in our church programs and activities.**
 - ◆ We need to explore ways of getting young people with young families to attend Trinity
 - ◆ Perhaps we could provide Sunday or Church School during the week

- 9. Individual comments that didn't make it to the flip charts**
 - ◆ Find out what the children & adults like to do – gifts & interests
 - ◆ What they want to do
 - ◆ Teach “how to skills”
 - ◆ Educate in the Christian faith
 - ◆ Provide opportunities for children/adults to share
 - ◆ Help make the church more acceptable to all people of all ages
 - ◆ Interests and gifts – developing those interests in a faith
 - ◆ Teaching internet tools (opportunities)
 - ◆ Respect how people want to be recognized
 - ◆ Accepting the leadership of others without judgment or reservation
 - ◆ Embracing differences & change – not a comment on what happened before, but that differences are just part of life
 - ◆ All ages – rules that limit leadership
 - ◆ Communicate – transparency & accountability
 - ◆ #5 foster communication between teams and greater community
 - ◆ Become affirming
 - ◆ Worship at other times
 - ◆ Open our doors more
 - ◆ Youth – dynamic leadership relevant to them
 - ◆ Something for younger adults
 - ◆ Bible study
 - ◆ Youth Jam sessions where they learn Christian songs (hymns) relevant to them & the UCC ethos



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9. Individual comments that didn't make it to the flip charts continued

- ◆ Someone to lead them, love them and accept them
- ◆ Workshops for leadership that is fun and concise
- ◆ Be open
- ◆ Offer physical and financial support to those in need – step up to help others every day
- ◆ Reach out to others with encouragement by helping others by building a home for Habitat for Humanity
- ◆ Collect and give to the food bank
- ◆ Create an early evening program for children 1 1/2 hrs 6-7:30 faith, fun fellowship interdenominational – could also be done for adults
- ◆ Get involved in community outreach to feed the community
- ◆ Teach those who do not know how to use the website, internet
- ◆ Make the website and facebook the place to go for church info
- ◆ Become better listeners
- ◆ Think positively & expect positive responses
- ◆ Include everyone in discussions
- ◆ No little group discussions
- ◆ Listen to each other without preconceived opinions
- ◆ Respect other's opinions and have respect for each other
- ◆ "Do unto others"
- ◆ Be honest without being harsh when tough decisions must be made
- ◆ Vacation Bible school in the summer
- ◆ Encourage other people to take leadership roles if they have an idea that they want to explore

10. WRAP UP COMMENTS by Participants

- ◆ Church is family
- ◆ Change not for change sake... but based on a need for change (why change is needed)
- ◆ This event was worthwhile... should do it more often... keep talking
- ◆ Have to remember the seniors - not just programs for the young people
- ◆ See Observer Jul/Aug 2016 edition article on page 44
- ◆ There is hope
- ◆ Meeting everyone
- ◆ Strong support for messy church

Next Steps: The dreams, ideas and the questions raised will be part of our discernment as we continue the transition process. Your input will be collated and provided to Council and to the appropriate teams and committees for discernment and action in light of the Mission, Vision and Core value statements.

"Envisioning our Future" will be an on-going activity and a necessity, if we are to remain relevant to our church family and the greater community.

The Transition Team wishes to thank all those who provided comment on the Mission, Vision and Core value statements AND to those who participated in the "Envisioning our Future" Workshop.