

ALL SAINTS' ANGLICAN CHURCH, PETERBOROUGH

Parish discussion regarding the Anglican-Lutheran Churches in Peterborough held on October 15, 2017

Introduction

Following a lengthy process of working to discern the needs of our Anglican-Lutheran congregations going forward, the Bishop announced her plan at two meetings held on Oct 1 & 2, 2017 at All Saints' and St. John's respectfully.

To provide as many All Saints' parishioners with the opportunity to attend and have their voices heard, there was one service at 9:30 on October 15 followed by a gathering of the parish.

The session was opened by Pastor Jim followed by parishioners joining one of seven discussion groups. There was a facilitator and recorder at each group. The discussion period lasted over an hour.

The following questions were used to help guide the conversations:

1. Why is All Saints' importance to you?
2. Who would you like to share that with?
3. What support or direction would you like from the Ministry Team of Priests, Deacons and Choir Director?
4. What do you need from the Lay Leaders in the Parish? i.e. the Wardens etc.
5. What distinct role this parish have in the community, or could this Parish have, that makes it different from other parishes?
6. What are the possible benefits of coming together with the other Parishes?
7. What questions would you have for our Bishop?

Other than clarifying language there has not been any editorializing of the comments made or questions asked.

The following handouts were made available to those attending:

- Summary of Attendance, Offerings, Revenue and Expense patterns since 2001.

Note: Although attendance and finances were not included in the list of questions, several groups did refer to this handout. The following comments were made:

- *Confirmation of the reduction in attendance over the years;*
- *The financial information indicates that All Saints' is financially stable at this time;*
- *The church is not in debt.*
- A report from Syd Birrell, Organist & Choirmaster at All Saints'
- A report by Alan Wotherspoon entitled "Comments on the Process and Final Decision"

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*Note: If you receive this report via e-mail or the web site, **the 3 handouts will be attached.** For those who receive by mail or pick-up at church, please contact the office and they will prepare copies for you. This is so we can keep postage costs as low as possible.*

Comments

Question 1. Why is All Saints' important to you?

Sense of Community & Family

Family History – great quantity of donated items
Sentimental: Grew up here, baptized & married here;
Church family;
Family history;
Great amount of donated property;
My whole family has attended AS
Family baptisms & weddings
Feels like home: History of Family heritage - Grandparents and parents attended All Saints'
Sense of Family – Co-workers were here – brought my 8 children here;
Feel welcome;
Community;
Tradition/history;
Community;
The people;
Was a bit hard to fit into the community but feel very much a part of it today;
Tight knit community group full of love and support; Feels like home;
People of All Saints';
ACW;
Strong ACW;
Quilt Group;
The people are welcoming;
Support when in need – phone calls-rides to church or appointments;
People will drive us to church, bible studies etc.;
Nice people;
Family feeling;

Liturgy

Liturgy;
Like the liturgy;
Like 8:30 service especially;
“The sharing of the Peace” reflects a “welcoming air”;
New Pastor will bring people to worship together

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Music

Shopped around – was drawn here by Music; Best here in almost 60 years;
Music;
Love the music;
Came from St. Alban's: Love the choir-refreshing with more people participating;
Choir and Organ are fantastic;
Choir Family;
Choir master;
Choir;
Member of choir;
Love the Music;
Unique Choral tradition;
The choir is important to me;
Choir Director's abilities and qualities are very important – a big asset for us

Worship Space

Open Building: love the beautiful stained glass
Feels like a House of God;
Ease of access;
Open church – no pillars;
Geography/location not an issue;
A peaceful space for prayer and thought;
Acoustics;
Acoustics great;
Warmth;
History of personal refuge;
Nice Stained-glass windows;
I love this church's feeling;
Better pews than St. John's;
The floor at AS does not vibrate like the floor at St. John's

Stewardship

We have been good stewards of our property;
Well maintained;
No structural needs that are outstanding (with exception of Kitchen – if we choose to do that in the future);
New heating – roofs – pointing etc.
No debt;
Major upgrade/update after fire;
Financially secure: Terraces, St. Alban's;
Problem is attendance numbers;
What other church might consider joining us if we stayed open;
Concern that the Lutherans may get lost in all this – we need to be considerate of their history and traditions;

Location

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Central location
Parking - accessibility;
Deacons
On bus route;

Other

Elevator in Hall is user friendly;
Elevator in Hall

Question 2. Who would you like to share that (see Q. 1) with?

Trent U;
S.S.F.C.;
Need to be relevant;
Reach out to other churches: to check out programs that bring families in;
Ads in Papers & other media;
Other family members;
Anyone who might want to attend church;
People outside the church – to get them to come
Everyone on our Parish list
Diocese
Due to expected decline with amalgamation: need to find replacement parishioners;
Note: Brockville example of a church that chose not to amalgamate (St. Paul's) is still open;
The Bishop: we don't know where today's discussion fits in the process;
Everyone affected;
The Congregations from other churches;
Young people
Unsure as to what this question meant;
Anyone & everyone who wants to share with us;
We are an open group;
Advertise at College and University;
Flyer in Peterborough This Week;

Question 3. What support or direction would you like from the Ministry Team of Priests, Deacons and Choir Director?

An ear to listen;
Fight with us to keep AS open;
We don't understand where this discussion fits in the process?
Be on our side;
Take the pulse of our choir;
Meet with other parishes looking for partnerships;
Need hope from Ministry Team;
Need visioning leading to concrete plans and steps forward;
Explain to congregation how decision was made to choose St. John's;
Need the Diocese side of the "decision";
Does the Ministry Team support whatever the decision the Parish votes for: Yes to amalgamate
(to one church); No to amalgamation which leads to AS continuing as a Parish;

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We have not had a Parish Selection Committee with input from the congregation: We need to oppose the Diocese appointing one now without a Parish Selection Committee;
Is everything off the table now that the new build options has been removed?
Has the “decision” already been made by the Diocese
Advocate for answers on behalf of the Parish;
Look at the work that has already been done – Local Commission Report supported two churches; we started process accepting two churches;
Need for more communication about what is going on;
Show cohesiveness & alignment;
Insight into where Pastor Jim stands;
Get more people involved;
Involve young people in services;
Leadership to take us down a new path to strength so that our numbers will increase;
Appreciative that Pastor Jim has set up a solid Ministry team;
Continue with the visiting of members of the congregation in their homes – it is really important for those who can’t get to the church;
Sermons are more meaningful now – some like delivery from pulpit – some prefer the lectern;
Deacons are excellent in pastoral visiting – especially in the hospital;
Make sure choir members can hear sermons – Pastor Jim is aware of this and makes an effort by turning towards to choir frequently;
Need more efficient ways for the leaders to communicate to us about what is happening in the church;
More sharing amongst ourselves;
Use of Social media – projection screens in the Nave during services – e-mail – etc.;
Effective, understandable “communicating” is the greatest priority need in the Parish right now;
More “gathering” opportunities need to be conducted;
More opportunities to worship - e.g. Saturday night
Neighbourhood kids in choir;
Leadership needs to support us;
Offer Contemporary services;

Question 4. What do you need from the Lay Leaders in the Parish i.e. The Wardens etc.

Who are the Lay Leaders, anyhow? Churchwardens; parish advisory board members; leaders of various groups e.g. - of the ACW, Missional Outreach Group, Chancel Guild, Worship Committee, Property Committee, Heritage Trust etc.?
Names of the Wardens? What are their responsibilities and what do they do?
Wardens: What decisions are they making? We never hear anything they do.
The Parish Advisory Council needs to communicate better - communicate effectively as to what ideas, decisions have been raised”.
Need to keep the people in the pews informed - We may need to work on listening skills too;
We need to learn ways to act together;
Techniques to consider: audio visual screens; people receiving prior input (briefing materials) before attending meetings.
Access to training to become leaders;
Get a common understanding of what is happening in the process;
Present a Common Goal;

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Not enough leaders to help – invite new blood;
Support and direction;
Provide regular financial and attendance figures;
Reach out to your people;
Be accessible and easily identifiable;
Advocate for congregation;
Answer all questions;
Need to be accessible to congregation;
Choir – how do we transition?
Need to be Pro-active for future – shuttle bus;
Parking needs to be addressed to meet needs of demographics;
Leadership needs to deal with upgrades, maintenance and total church program;
Rationale and how choices are made – seems as if a lot of info is ignored;
Our wardens should meet with wardens of other churches;
Look at one parish with two locations;
Wardens and choir work together;
Wardens? Can we hear from them?
Who is the Parish Council?
Syd to continue his work;
Determine what quorum is for voting at a Special Vestry;
Some fellowship events in evenings – bible study; dinners

Question 5. What distinct role does this Parish have in the community, or could this Parish have, that makes it different other parishes?

Location;
Music program;
Choral Scholars;
Good evangelism area for outreach;
Should team up with Food Bank;
Church Hall – upgrade kitchen – turn it into a positive place for homeless;
Our Thanksgiving Dinners of the past and Christmas dinner, pancake supper etc. It was noted that now the One Roof Diner (located at St. John's) does this which lessens the incentive for this Parish to do its own "community dinners".
Efforts and projects of the Missional Outreach Group - we are in the middle of a low income residential community that needs help - we can/should do more to help our neighbours.
Easter Eggs program and the significant financial donations that derive from this for various non- profit agencies and causes
Ideas for different roles that we might develop/ consider:

- a thrift shop;
- host the warming room in lower parish hall.
- provide daycare facilities (operated by a competent professional agency);
- after school clubs activities for neighbourhood kids;
- facility for professionally operated children's day camps during school holidays;
- an arts centre;
- a music academy for children.

Need to keep church for concerts – make it a place to draw people in;

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Keep music (e.g. hymns) accessible – opportunity for suggesting hymns is great!

Need more than older people in our congregation;

Role/access for kids;

“Distinct Role” AS has and could have in the community;

- Music and Choral Scholars
- Pub Chorale
- Liturgy
- Accessible – elevator
- Parking
- Be open to new opportunities and possibilities
- Accessible to Rubidge Hall seniors residence
- Friendly coffee group
- Easter eggs
- Seniors group
- Men’s group

Sustain our Outreach;

Involve our immediate neighbours;

Keep our community tight;

Offer local social opportunities;

Offer a community garden;

Let the community know about our initiatives and invite them to participate;

Music Ministry – our strength;

Location in a needy community;

After school programs music, etc.;

Located in an area of great need – lower socio-economic - could be a centre for companionship

Opportunities because of our location;

Arts program;

After school programs (opportunity for young volunteers – field placement;

Sky is the limit;

Choir school;

Talent show(s) – identify needs

Question 6. What are the possible benefits of coming together with other parishes?

Nice feeling to sit in a church when it is almost full;

Need two and not one church in Peterborough:

- Reduce risk of losing Anglican faith in Community
- Outreach team could work together – worship-music-outreach programs
- In cooperation with St. John’s, we could invite and reach out to people from other churches that are closing
- St. John’s is not practical (as a single church in Ptbo) with accessibility issues;

A lot of healing can begin;

Need energy and will to “do” – a bigger pool of people with amalgamation;

Exciting to become a bigger family;

Join programs;

More resources;

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St. John's has a new Youth Minister;
More help inside the church;
More \$
More Outreach;
Better Sunday School – more children to learn together;
More sharing of strengths;
Pool \$;
New energy;
New ideas;
More outreach;
We need to offer more as a parish/community;
Need inspiring ministers to fuel the fire within us;
Financial;

Question 7. What question(s) would you have for our Bishop?

What were you thinking?
Seems that the decision was already made before all this began;
We need your report with rationale?
Can there be two campuses as part of one parish?
What happens if AS goes it alone?
Why isn't there a timetable?
Why so long?
What about process to create property committee with reps from each parish since sale of properties might be cumbersome?
Heritage Trust. Who administers it?
Need reasons for St. John's
Why was local Covenant ignored on "new" church?
Process seems suspect;
How to access St. John's? Wheel chair/ walker?
What happened to the idea of two parishes?
What criteria falls into one vs two parishes?
How will you determine the format of one church?
What happens to:

- the closed churches?
- Heritage Trust Fund?

What happens if All Saints' declines amalgamation to one Church?
Are the Parishes going to talk to each other?
No explanation given;
Why was local Commission's recommendation shelved?
No feedback/e-mail/letter;
Phone calls/emails not answered;
What was the reasoning for St. John's given the following concerns:

- Parking/access?

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- Congregation size?
- Size and quality of choir at AS?
- Christmas services;?

What happened if AS says “no thank you”?

What is the other option(s) if the new build is cancelled?

What support do we have if we do amalgamate (into one church building)?

What if we don't choose to amalgamate into one church (building)?

Give us examples of success failures of parishes amalgamating in Diocese of Toronto.

Show us the “financial plan” on a combined basis of parishes;

What are the resources available to build a new Faith Community?

What is your plan for the building of All Saints'?

If some churches are abandoned and sold, where will the money go?

Is this final or do we have a choice?

If we choose not to participate what are the ramifications?

Our group was unanimous on this. Rather than any question(s), we just want to tell our Bishop

“We want to keep All Saints' as a Church !!”

Could we get a copy of the “report”

What led to the decision to go against choice by Ptbo Covenant?

What will happen to money from the sale of properties, trusts, etc.?

What will the process be for the selling of the respective properties?

Will there be a change in clerical(ordained?) staff with going from 5 to 1?

Timeline closure/amalgamation?

What, if any, consideration has been given to parishioners who take public transit?