2017 September 30

Squamish United Church and the Parish of St John the Divine, Squamish – Shared Worship Survey Results

30 surveys were received in total from the congregations near the end of the time spent together. Here are the responses to each question.

1. Did you find the 2 years spent together a positive experience?

Yes 27 No 2 Unclear 1

Comments:

- -I am very grateful for the generosity of the St. John's congregation. They are lovely people and have been so welcoming. I am saying that it was not a positive experience because, as a United Church person, I found the worship services unsatisfactory. It had been my understanding that there was going to be a United Church service once/month. That did not happen.
- -It has been positive in meeting new people but not the worship experience.
- 2. What do you love about your faith tradition, that is if you consider yourself a member of either denomination, Why are you Anglican or Why are you United?

Some stated their identity: 7 – United 11 – Anglican 3 – comfortable with both

Comments (faith tradition not stated):

- -We were very happy getting to know each other
- -Comfortable with either/both (3)
- -You can ask questions, you can move at your own pace, inclusiveness, lively music, friendly caring congregation
- -Progressive theology and emphasis on justice and mission
- -We like the freedom to draw upon the creeds and prayers of various faith traditions.
- -We believe in Jesus.
- -Inclusiveness
- -The freedom to attend Church or not!
- -1. I like weekly communion of the Anglican Church. 2. I find the United Church service is lighter and speaks to me in language or words I understand.

Anglican:

-Like weekly communion service (Anglican)

- -Love multiple readings, enjoy tradition of weekly communion (Anglican)
- -I love the traditional aspect of being Anglican
- -I am a cradle Anglican and it is what I feel most comfortable with.
- -I have always belonged to the Anglican Church (St. John's). It becomes part of your life and belonging to a larger family of caring.
- -I have been CofE/Anglican since childhood. Formal, b8ible-based worship of God and guidance for Godly living.
- -I am presently a member of St. John's but like many things about the United church: creative, varied liturgical elements (creeds, collects), and some of the music. I like the Anglican tradition of communion every Sunday and the eucharist/communion prayers and some of the music.
- -I am and always have been and always will be an Anglican. I come from a heritage of rectors and find the ritual meaningful and never old.

United:

- -The United Church speaks to my heart and soul, a feeling that I am home. The United Church has a little less pomp and ceremony.
- -I am United Church because family was; I like the liberal attitude.
- -"Grow where you are planted." Initially I was planted in the United Church. It is less formal than Anglican but the Anglican service, at least now, has relaxed and "transplanting" appears feasible.
- -I have been an active member of Squamish United for over 40 years. I don't see myself as United or Anglican. I am quite comfortable with the Anglican liturgy.
- -United liberal theology, not dogmatic.
- -I am United Church because of the liberal theology and the social justice focus. I love worship that is creative. I love the music of the United Church especially the modern hymns. I love worship with much more involvement of children; intergenerational services; chancel drama.
- -Differences are much smaller than our shared commonalities. I like the United Church contemporary music; I like the more flexible/ innovative United services.

More important: Same God, same "living the way" messages.

- -It is the history of my faith tradition that makes me more affiliated with the United Church. But developing an understanding for and an appreciation of a "greater being" is the real reason for supporting our church community. So, in that sense, I think I could be equally comfortable with either United or Anglican.
- -I am a United Church member for several reasons. I like the inclusiveness of our denomination. I like the style of liturgy that is fresh and new each week. I particularly like our music and have missed it this past two years.
- 3. What are the strengths each congregation could contribute?

Comments:

- -It is good for us to carry on in our different faiths; we learned a lot together
- -Support for each other
- -Sharing financial obligations, each contribute energy, wonderful church building (Anglican), no need to search for supply ministers
- -Wide range of hymnology; discipline of regular readings of psalms and lectionary; active consideration of societal needs
- -Sacred traditions and liturgy Anglican; Outreach ministry United
- -Each could contribute numbers and change

- -United Church strengths: helping the needy, outcasts, etc. Nonjudgmental; Anglican strengths: rituals, the labyrinth. Both together: prayers
- -While neither parish has many children, it would be lovely to continue gatherings for our youth.
- -United Church brings more modern songs; combination with Anglicans gives more perspective.
- -Anglican service organizers are always prepared with readers and greeters. Services begin on time.
- -Fellowship, mission and service
- -We are stronger when the two churches join together in every area of church life.
- -Anglican represents a closer bible-based format with less modernization and fanciful interpretations. United brings warmth of good-living people with Christian example and endeavours.
- -Our strength is in numbers. I have enjoyed worshipping each week and with 45 or 50 people, sometimes more. And I have many friends in the Anglican Church as well.
- -Our strengths are in tradition from each, strength of numbers, talents, faith, friendship.
- -I'm not sure what strengths each congregation could contribute.
- -Anglican kindness, sincerity, acceptance; United willingness to risk, willingness to try the unfamiliar
- -I cannot identify specific strengths that each could contribute. The thing I like about joint worship is high numbers of congregants.
- -The two congregations together could contribute liberal theologies, variety in music and liturgical forms, varied mission and service both within and outside Squamish, two venues for worship and community service and two clergy (support and holiday relief, complementary ages/experience, male and female approaches).
- -United we stand!
- -There is more energy in a service when the congregation is larger. There's an opportunity for a larger choir; there are more volunteers for joint events. Finally there is more variety when two ministers share the sermons.
- -The United missions' talks are interesting. The Anglican structure and tradition appeal to me.
- 4. After Squamish United Church goes to CentrePoint, would you like to continue the relationship in some fashion?

Yes 30 No 0 Social only (no blended liturgy) 4

Comments:

-Really appreciated Nick's willingness to visit United Church members

- -Much as the ministers may not want to admit it, personalities do matter. If William Roberts were still the Anglican priest, I at least, would not be worshipping as regularly as I am now.
- -Monthly joint service alternating between churches, also joint worship for clergy vacation relief.
- -I would like us to continue to have social events together. Members of both congregations have become friends. We could have combined Christian Formation events.
- -Other ideas re: joint ministry: Ministerial teamwork: I loved watching Karen and Nick play off one another, sharing the workload, covering for and supporting each other. Each having the other to lean on/ work with/ co-create with...made both of them be better. I would hope that this teamwork and supporting/ covering for each other can continue. This teamwork helped both Reverends be more vibrant and "alive".
- -I would like to see us move to permanent joint ministry. When hiring new clergy for either church, therefore, I would like to see us seek candidates interested in at least periodic joint worship and ministries, have someone from the other church on the selection committee, and have a mentoring period where the outgoing Minister works with the incoming, who also works with the clergy and congregation from the other church.
- -At some point in the near future, because of financial obligations and dwindling numbers, I think both congregations are going to have to think seriously about worshipping in the same building. By that, I mean Anglicans and United church people can worship at different times on a Sunday in the same building with some blended services at other times. The facility that is no longer in use could be rented out for other purposes.
- -If we do anything it would be to share social events/ mission work. I would strongly object to any joint services. I believe we have Anglican supply persons to cover vacations, etc. I object to sermons which are politicized. To try to make the birth of Jesus relevant by mentioning the childbirth process was totally inappropriate. Likewise, the Beatitudes stand alone.

Please feel free to indicate below where joint ministry might take place and add any other ideas you might have.

People indicating interest in these areas:

Social Events 27 Spiritual Formation 24 Mission 17 Sunday Worship 20

Special Services 18 Clergy Relief 26 Pastoral 18 Men's Breakfast 19

New Activities 14

New Activity Suggestions: Healing Touch Fundraisers Choir Musicians Sunday School Messy Church Christian Formation

Comments:

- -Pot lucks are great but most do not participate even 4 times/year, let alone monthly.
- -I would like the Men's breakfast to be rescheduled to Sunday morning before service.
- -If we're sharing the same building, alternate services.
- 5. If you would like to see our congregations share worship at either location on a regular basis, how often and why?

Yes 16 Never 4

Holidays only: 1 1/month 7 2/month 5 Every service 4

Comments:

- -2 Sundays per month in each church; if there is a fifth Sunday, worship in the United Church
- -Twice per month, variety in preaching style
- -We need to keep in touch as we will need to join forces eventually
- -Once Squamish has recognized that the United Church has reopened, who not use more flexible space to develop a joint Messy Church Friday worship at CentrePoint and use more worshipful space at St. John's for joint Sunday service?
- -It is a jigsaw puzzle to put together. How about rotating every 2 or 3 months to start?
- -Special occasions such as Christmas, Easter, potlucks, prayers. For fellowship with fellow Christians.
- -Perhaps once per month alternating locations. If we do some of the above list, it will keep us more connected.
- -I think that if the two congregations split, both will be diminished and will collapse that much more quickly.
- -(I would like us to share worship) As often as possible.

- -We should worship together once a month to maintain contact and friends made during the time spent worshipping together.
- -Once a month.
- -Perhaps once every six weeks or so nice for all of us to be together continue to learn from one another about other prayers, hymns, worship to use.
- -Probably once a month. It would need to be a set time so that members of either congregation would not arrive at the wrong church on the scheduled Sunday.
- -I would like us to worship jointly once/month at alternating locations, so that we can keep in touch and working some joint enterprises e.g., church sales and helping refugees.
- -I would like to see us share worship all the time; first and third Sundays at the Anglican sanctuary, second and fourth at the United Church, fifth Sunday location by coin toss.
- -I would like us to worship jointly as often as possible, rather than two very small congregations in two locations.
- -Many friendships have been made. It would be nice to meet monthly (blended liturgy as today).
- -I am not in favour of regular shared worship. I think it would be helpful for minister's holiday relief but that would be all.
- -I think of the "CentrePoint Campus" and the "St. John's Campus". Flexibility e.g. when one Minister is away, or for a study series led by one or other Minister, have those services or that study group or that special celebration at whichever campus is "right".
- -I would like to see our congregations share worship during Ministerial holiday relief (or any other time when the Minster has church duties away from the pastoral charge.)
- -Not a concern
- -I would like to preserve the individual flavours of the United and Anglican traditions. I would welcome two shared services a month: one where the Anglicans are invited to our church with our type of service and music, and one service a month where we are invited to the Anglican Church to share in their style of worship.
- 6. After Squamish United Church goes to CentrePoint, would you like to see your church continue sharing:

Bulletin items 15 Weekly insert 14 Prayers (names/format) 15

Weekly email 15 Blended liturgy as today 14yes; 4 no, 1 yes but for shared worship only Comments:

- -Weekly email needs more news in it
- -There is a long list of people in the weekly prayers, many I do not know. Many have been on the list for two years. Do they still want to be there?
- -Blended liturgy would be difficult in the long term because of the hymn books.
- -Blended liturgy at monthly joint service only.

- -I really did not like the prayers of the people as they happened over the last two years. I don't believe in a God that I have to ask for "mercy".
- -I did not think that the liturgy was "blended". I am aware that some resources from the United Church were used but the structure of the services was Anglican.
- -Sharing prayers of the people names and format is not so important to me. I'm in favour of having blended liturgy as we have it today in shared services, but not in independent services.
- -I would ultimately like to see our two churches be in joint ministry every day of every week, but hope that we can worship together at least once/month at alternating locations for the near term.
- -Attending church services does not occupy a large portion of my interest. However, as noticed, I will help our when called upon to do so.
- I think it has been a positive gesture for the two congregations to observe their religious practices under the same roof. Sharing expenses these past 2 years has certainly helped the balance sheets of the Anglican church.
- -I would like to see the occasional traditional service.
- -No blended liturgy.
- -We should share worship on a regular basis. Better to be together and support each other than to struggle separately.

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