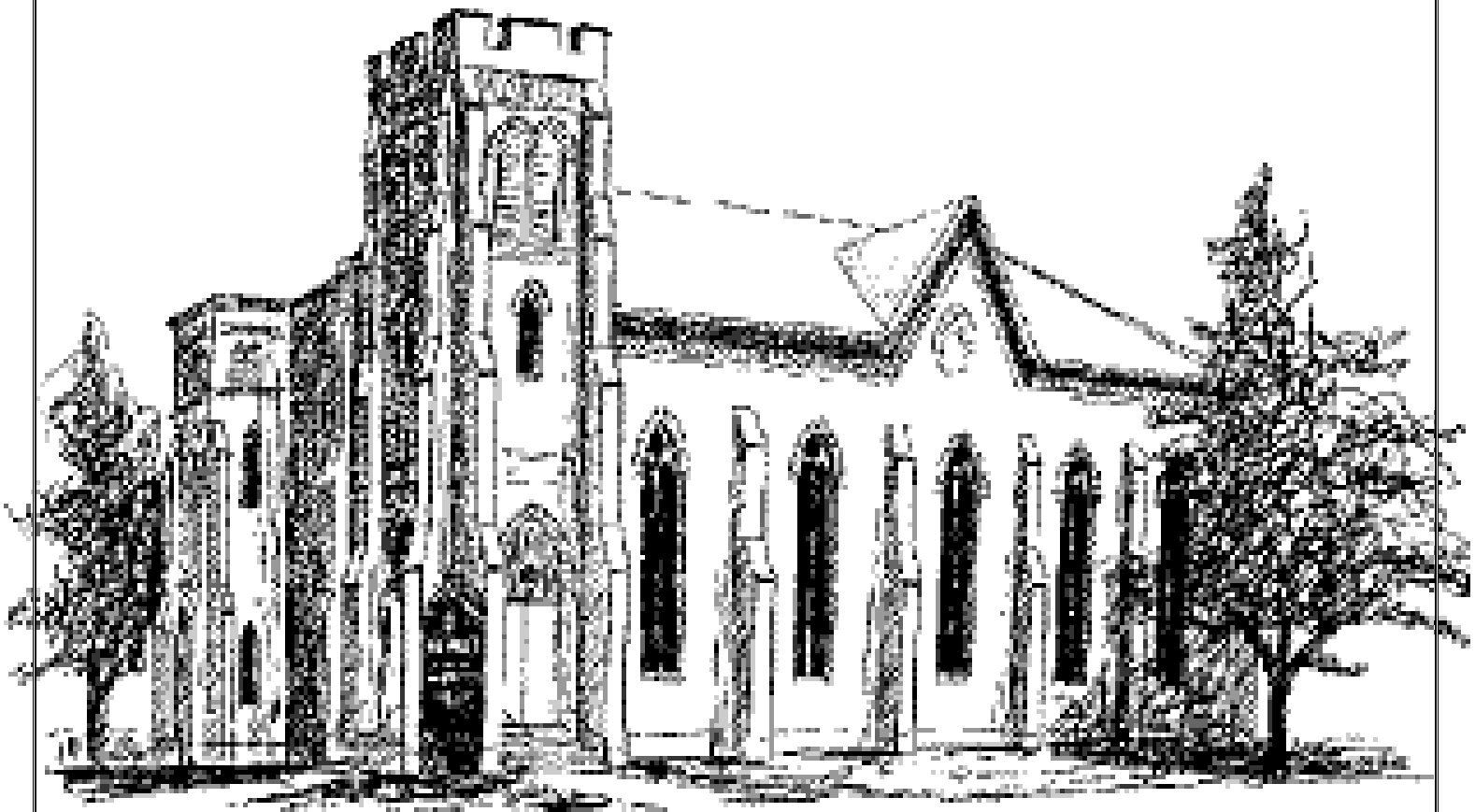


# **ST MARK'S UNITED CHURCH**



**JOINT NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2010**

## **Introduction**

We welcome you to explore with us the unique opportunities at St. Mark's United Church in Whitby, Ontario, a growing and vibrant community in the eastern portion of the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). We are a very busy congregation of God's people active in worship, with outreach into the community and world, a Health Ministry, music, and fellowship. With the help of God's grace, we are tackling many of the common challenges of the Church in the modern world with both hope and determination.

For many years St. Mark's United Church enjoyed the stability of long term ministerial staff. In 2007, we completed a search for a new team including an ordained minister to replace Rev. John Moses who, on the completion of a five-year term, accepted a call to return to his roots in the Maritimes. We were blessed with an applicant who brought new and imaginative concepts to the pulpit. Regretfully, that tenure was short-lived as Rev. Christa Eidsness needed to end her ministry at St. Mark's after only 15 months to reunite her family in Saskatchewan. This unexpected turn of events created the need for a joint needs assessment committee which was formed on September 13, 2009. The members of the JNAC are listed as Appendix I.

The methods used to gather information from the pastoral charge involved in-depth individual interviews with the outgoing minister (Rev. Christa Eidsness); Carole Beam, our Parish Nurse; Tori Hazlett, our Office Administrator; and Paul Gerhardt, our Custodian. Meetings were also held with most committees and groups (Appendix II) within the church as well as an individual survey of the broader congregation. The results of the in-depth survey (see Appendix III) were put into an analytical database and the results reviewed by the JNAC. We believe this report accurately reflects these results. The anonymous results of the survey and transcripts of comments are available for review.

## **Community Profile**

St. Mark's United Church is located at 201 Centre Street South in downtown Whitby, Ontario, two blocks from the main street and close to the main intersection, otherwise known as "the Four Corners" (the intersection of Highways 2 and 12). The Town of Whitby, with a population of 121,000 in 2009, is located in the Regional Municipality of Durham and is known as "the Heart of the Region". The town was incorporated in 1855. Additional information (beyond that outlined in this report) is available on the Internet at <http://town.whitby.on.ca>.

## **Location**

Whitby is located on the shores of Lake Ontario and covers 147.3 square kilometres (56.87 square miles). The town is located in the heart of Durham Region and is approximately 48 kilometres (30 miles) east of Metropolitan Toronto. It is a short 45-minute, comfortable GO train ride to downtown Toronto. Whitby is one of the eastern station stops on the commuter rail service to Toronto (GO Transit's Lakeshore East line) and is located 10 minutes from the Oshawa VIA Rail station on the Montreal-to-Toronto rail corridor. Whitby is linked to Toronto and eastern Ontario by Highway 401. An extension to Highway 407 through Whitby's northern sections is currently in the planning stages. Whitby is central in the Durham Region Transit Service which provides integrated bus services from Pickering to Oshawa and is linked to the GO trains and buses with service to all of its destinations.

## **Economy**

Whitby's strong industrial base is comprised of a broad range of companies and plants in various industries, including plastics, packaging, pharmaceuticals, steel, recycling, telecommunications and automotive. While the local automotive industry has been hard hit in recent years, we are experiencing growth again and public rumours support further employment growth in this sector. Additionally, there is scheduled growth in the nuclear power plants on the eastern extremity of the Region which is destined to draw substantial economic benefits. Whitby's workforce is diversified and has access to world-class training at: the Durham College Skills Training Centre, Durham College, and the University of Ontario Institute of Technology. In 2006 there were 38,220 jobs in Whitby and 59,360 workers. Today 74.1% of workers living in Whitby work outside Whitby, and 29.2% of workers living in Whitby commute to other Durham places of work. The town has a 6.8% unemployment rate. The top five employment categories of people living in Whitby are;

- Business Finance and Administration
- Sales and Service
- Management
- Trades, Transport and Equipment operations and related services
- Social Services, Education, Government service and Religious

It also has the highest percentage of self-employed individuals of any community in Canada.

### **Average Household Income**

Whitby's average and average household income is greater than that of Ontario's. Also Whitby's median average and household average income is greater than the rest of Ontario's. Whitby's average household income is \$110,269.

### **Housing Price Range**

Whitby's housing prices ranges from \$200,000 to well over \$500,000. In 2008, the average price of a single-family detached residence was \$318,000. Average home prices grew 1.8% in 2009.

## **Population**

Whitby is situated within the Durham Region on the shore of Lake Ontario and is part of the Greater Toronto Area. The GTA has a population of almost 6 million people, or 40% of Ontario's population and a workforce of about 2.8 million people. Whitby's population growth is the highest in all the Region of Durham. The current population of 121,000 is expected to grow to 127,800 in 2011 and 156,900 in eleven years. The population is predominately English-speaking with about 2% identified as having a mother tongue other than English. Estimated data from Financial Markets Reports 2009 show 37% of Whitby's population was between the ages of 20 and 44 and 9% was over 65. In 2009 visible minorities made up 16% of the population vs 11.3% in 2001. Also in 2001, 62% of the population was married. Whitby's population includes the village of Brooklin and the hamlets of Myrtle Station and Ashburn. In 2006, the population of Brooklin was 15,350, up from 8,700 in 2001. Most of the growth is anticipated to be north of the downtown core and south of Highway 401, but will remain within an easy car drive or access by public transportation.

The town's high growth, especially among families with children, has prompted the town to increase its focus on youth activities. The challenge for St. Mark's is to attract these new people to our church and its services. A major hybrid residential/commercial development is in the planning stages for south Whitby. However, there is not a definite start date at this time. The Central Lake Ontario Conservation Areas in the region are substantial and well protected. Plans are being drawn up to increase their public access and usage. Environmental concerns are well represented with numerous local firms examining ways and means of becoming more environmentally sensitive and productive.

## **Education**

Whitby has excellent educational facilities. There are 23 public and eight Catholic elementary schools, six high schools, three Montessori Schools, Durham College Skills Training Centre and Trafalgar Castle School (a private girls' school) and numerous private colleges. Post-secondary facilities are available at the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (UOIT) and Durham College in neighbouring Oshawa, and at several university campuses in Toronto (including Emmanuel College). Out-of-area universities and colleges offer credit courses at various local facilities. Whitby has a first-rate public library system with a main library, and two branch libraries at Rossland Road and in Brooklin. A new significantly expanded main library, including a town square in Whitby opened one block away from St. Mark's in 2005. Whitby also boasts a higher average education level than that of the rest of Durham region and that of all of Ontario.

## **Health Service**

There are many medical clinics and nursing homes and Whitby has made a conscious effort to attract more doctors. Whitby is located sufficiently close to Toronto to allow residents easy access to that city's health care facilities, some of the best in the world. Whitby is a part of the Lakeridge Health Area, whose main facility is a ten-minute drive away in neighbouring Oshawa. It provides a full range of hospital services, including a major cancer treatment centre. Hospital services are also provided through the Rouge Valley Health System hospital in Ajax, a ten-minute drive to the west. Lakeridge Health Whitby (Hospital) closed in 2007 after a major fire, and there are conflicting proposals about whether to make the necessary upgrades or build a new hospital in north Whitby. Additional health care services are provided by the Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Services which has 325 beds. Whitby is also the future home of the Abilities Centre which will be located by Iroquois Park Recreation Centre in the southern part of the town. The Abilities Centre will be a world-class recreation, athletic and performing arts facility accessible to persons with special needs and specialized healthcare-related requirements. It will be a unique facility welcoming persons with special needs, however defined, along with their families and friends in the community.

## **Places of Worship**

There are at least 30 places of worship, including all of the principal Christian denominations, in Whitby. There are four United Churches – St Mark's, Westminster, Brooklin and Myrtle. Statistics Canada states that the area has one of the higher concentrations of individuals who choose the United Church as their affiliation. In 2009 our neighbour All Saints' Anglican Church suffered a significant fire destroying their Sanctuary. We provided office and meeting space for a month while they regained access to the intact Christian Education building. We are currently working on details to provide our Sanctuary space for their two Sunday Services. (8 am and noon)

## **Recreation**

Whitby is situated on the shore of Lake Ontario and emphasis is being placed on beautifying the waterfront. The Waterfront Trail, stretching from Niagara to Trenton, is a paved walking, running, blading trail along most of the town's shoreline. Many in-town trails connect parks, schools and form a web (albeit not complete) across the town. Recreational facilities include a multi-million dollar major recreation complex with seven ice surfaces and two indoor pools, tennis courts and playing fields; two other ice arenas (one in Brooklin and another with a rink designed for figure-skating); four community centres; six golf courses and ninety parks. There are the three libraries, a seniors' centre and bowling green, squash courts (Oshawa), a municipal recreation centre, a curling club, fitness clubs, skate board park, indoor soccer facility, a marina and yacht club. The Station Gallery (visual arts), live theatre, conservation areas and winter ski facilities (both downhill and cross-country) complement a list which covers a wide variety of interests. Professional sports teams' home games – Maple Leafs, Blue Jays, Argonauts, Raptors, FC, and Rock – are available in nearby Toronto. Amateur sports teams, including the Oshawa Generals, Oshawa Legionnaires, Whitby Warriors and Brooklin Redmen, play locally. Whitby is becoming rated as a running area and will host races including a qualifier for the Boston Marathon. These complement the very wide variety of youth sports teams which play within the town boundaries, including hockey, baseball, lacrosse, soccer, figure-skating, and swimming (synchronized, speed, and endurance). Public ski facilities are located north and east of the town within a 20-minute drive.

## **Cultural Activities**

There are also many cultural activities to be enjoyed in Whitby. The 280-seat Courthouse Theatre provides an intimate atmosphere as the home of the Courthouse Players. The theatre is situated in the historic Centennial Building, which was Ontario County's original courthouse. Class Act Dinner Theatre, Oshawa Little Theatre, St. Mark's Players, and Durham Shoestring Performers provide quality local theatre experiences. There are a variety of musical groups in Whitby and the town is home to several music and dance studios. The County Town Singers have a long tradition in the community and the Ontario Symphony Orchestra performs from our neighbour city, Oshawa.

Summer music concerts, held at locations throughout the town including the parks, town square and the Station Gallery, are popular. A two-week theatrical extravaganza involving a cooperative of many of the Durham-based theatre groups in conjunction with local dining and lodging establishments is being planned for Spring 2010, directed by a member of our congregation. Because we live so close to Toronto, Whitby residents can also make regular use of an extensive variety of art galleries, museums, orchestras, opera, concerts and theatres there.

## **PASTORAL CHARGE PROFILE**

### **History**

The story of St. Mark's began in 1826 when the western side of the new Cobourg circuit was established with Whitby as its head. The circuit rider would arrive approximately every six weeks to attend to the needs of the new Methodist congregation. In 1854, the congregation built its first church on the northwest corner of Mary and Centre Streets. That original building is still in use today as a residence. The cornerstone of the present building, the Methodist Tabernacle, was laid on August 12, 1876.

In 1925, at the time of Church Union, the name was changed to Whitby United Church and then, in 1962, to St. Mark's United Church.

In 1955, the cornerstone for the new Christian Education Building was laid. This attached building tripled the space available to the congregation and today houses the Sunday School, church and minister's offices, as well as meeting space and a well-equipped kitchen.

In 1971, the small country congregation of Almonds United Church (1837-1971) amalgamated with St. Mark's. That property on Highway 2, on the west side of Whitby, remains an unused asset of St. Mark's.

In 1988, a second full-time ordained minister was added to the staff. This position continued until 2000. A part-time parish nurse was added in January 2001, and a half-time youth associate in September 2005. This model continued until 2009 when the youth associate left and the position was not refilled. Current ministerial staffing positions are a supply minister for the vacant position and the half-time parish nurse.

In October 2007 St Mark's became a "Welcoming" church. The Council passed a motion that the minister of St. Mark's United Church, at his/her discretion, be authorized to perform all wedding ceremonies, inside and outside of St. Mark's United Church as requested. The term "welcoming" refers to our physically and emotionally opening our doors to anyone who wishes to be part of our "*worshipping family living the love of Jesus Christ in our community and beyond*" and to accord everyone who comes to St. Mark's the same rights as we currently extend to all members and adherents.

## **Organization**

In 2001, St. Mark's adopted a streamlined governance structure, with committees reporting to a Council. The minister and the elected chairs of all committees, including Trustees and Ministry and Personnel, form the voting members of the Council. Any member of the congregation may attend a Council meeting. All committee chairs serve two-year terms, renewable once. Please see the attached Church Constitution (Appendix IV).

## **The Congregation**

We draw members from all over Whitby and, to a lesser extent, from other areas in Durham Region. The congregation is a cross-section of the economic and social structure of the community. Official church membership is approximately 330 active members and 140 active adherents with 299 households under pastoral care. St. Mark's has a very active volunteer base. Worship at St. Mark's is enhanced by the music of our three choirs and a praise band.

The following statistics were collected as part of the 2007 Joint Needs Assessment congregational survey. We do not believe that these numbers have changed much in the two years since then. The congregation is 55% female and primarily made up of married couples. While 31.2% of the congregation has reached an age of 65 or more, 23% is 18 years or less. As with many congregations, our smallest segment of the congregation are those individuals aged 19 to 30. Of those who completed that survey, approximately 72% live within five kilometres of the church, and 92% attend at least one service per month with 78% indicating that they attend three or more services per month. A large percentage of the congregation has a long association with the church.

## Membership Statistics

	2007	2008	2009
1. Number of households under pastoral care (Members + Adherents)	530	498	220 + 79 *
2. Total active membership (members + adherents)	595	555	330 + 140
3. Number of infant baptisms	27	25	24
4. Number of marriages	13	16	13
5. Number of funerals and memorial services	10	18	12
6. Members received by profession of faith: Under 18 Age 18 and over	0 0	0 2	7 2
7. Members received by: Certificate of Transfer Re-affirmation of faith	3 0	2 0	2 0
8. Members removed by death	14	9	7 (12 funerals in total)
9. Members removed by: Certificate of Transfer Other	2 0	11 0	3 0
10. Number of identifiable givers to local expenses: By regular offering envelopes By PAR	243 51	230 50	278 51
11. Average weekly Sunday service attendance (October - November)	206	211	181
12. Number registered in Sunday School	94	80	36 + 16 youth

\* In 2009 we purged our church roll to better reflect actual numbers.

## Service

St. Mark's has a very active congregation, providing services both for the benefit of the faith community and in outreach to the wider world. As St. Mark's is located in Whitby's downtown, a balance of services is provided to appeal to and fulfil the needs of various local demographic groups. This is evidenced by the following extensive list of services:

## **Spiritual Formation**

- Sunday morning worship (10 am- 11 am)
- Sunday School (*see below for more information*)
- Vacation Bible School
- Pastoral counselling and visitation, including that performed by lay people (*see below for more information*)
- United Church Women (*see below for more information*)
- Chancel Choir, Mixed Blessings, St. Mark's Singers, and 'Rising' Praise Band (*see below for more information*)
- Youth Club for teens (*see below for more information*)
- Black Light Puppet Ministry (*presently inactive*)
- Adult Bible study groups (*see below for more information*)
- Prayer Chain
- Marriage Preparation Workshops (*see below for more information*)
- Youth/Adult Confirmation classes
- Well-attended coffee time after worship service

## **Outreach**

- Mission & Service Fund
- World Development & Relief gifts
- Food collection for local food banks
- Health and Wellness Committee (*see below for more information*)
- Therapeutic Touch and Meditation
- Labyrinth
- Support for Local Charities
- Christmas Hamper Project
- Practical help for new immigrants (providing household goods)
- Audio Ministry service for shut-ins
- Chapel service at Fairview Lodge (nursing home) every six weeks with Communion if it falls on the first Sunday of the month; Communion for shut-ins
- UCW Visitation Program (Including Ontario Shores Centre for Mental Health Services)
- Providing space for the Dunbarton-Fairport Footprints program for autistic children
- Hosting the Community Care Christmas Dinner for Meals on Wheels clients and volunteers
- Christmas Day dinner for those alone in the congregation and community
- Wednesday noon-hour meditation opportunities during the summer
- St. Mark's Players (*see below for information*)
- St. Mark's Men's Club
- St Mark's website - <http://stmarkswhitby.ca/>
- Support to All Saints' Anglican Church – facilities and fundraiser

## **Human Resources**

A church the size of St. Mark's benefits from many active committees which support, complement and aid the ministerial staff. The following is a brief summary of the work of some of the committees and groups listed above.

### **Worship and Music Committee**

An active Worship Committee aids the minister and music staff in the creation of the Sunday worship services. This committee provides cooperative input to the minister and can aid in the implementation of new directions of worship and helps coordinate the church's various choirs, special services, etc.

### **Christian Education Committee**

St. Mark's Christian Education committee is extremely active and comprehensive with its devoted leaders and numerous volunteers. It is responsible for a wide variety of well-attended programs such as Sunday School, Youth Group, Bible Study, Marriage Preparation, Youth Club, Confirmation and Black Light Ministry. In addition to these, this committee holds such fellowship and outreach events as an Advent Potluck, Easter Egg Hunt, Chili Lunches, Youth parties and Jesus' Birthday Party, to name a few. Although these programs have been in place for many years and are developed, administered and self-funded by the group, they do need guidance and support from ministerial staff.

### **Youth Group**

St. Mark's Youth Group is comprised of our students in grades 7 to 12. They are committed to being active in the church. This group has two very energetic leaders who facilitate fellowship on a regular basis and provide constant support. The Youth Group is responsible for Youth Club, White Gift Sunday, Chili Lunches, Black Light Puppetry, and outreach and fundraising initiatives for the community and beyond. They are actively involved in providing assistance with Sunday School and Bible Camp activities. They also need ministerial support and guidance.

### **Sunday School**

St. Mark's Sunday School uses a rotational method to promote Bible literacy and an understanding of Christian life (no external curriculum is purchased). Students from Jr. Kindergarten through Grade 6 learn varying aspects of the same lesson/Bible story in a four to five week via different delivery techniques including drama, games, cooking, arts and crafts, and computers. A separate program is offered for those in Grades 7 and 8. Youth from Grade 9 through Grade 12 participate in youth activities and programs in the Youth Lounge. Music is also a weekly part of Sunday School.

### **Pastoral Care Committee**

The Pastoral Care Committee visits congregation members both in-home and at area hospitals, providing valuable input to both the minister and parish nurse regarding individual members and any follow-up that might be required from ministry staff. They also bring the elements of communion and perform the communion services in homes. In addition to visitation of shut-ins or members and adherents in times of crisis, all members and adherents of the congregation have the opportunity for lay-person visitation as every household is visited once every three years (approx. 1/3 of the congregation is visited each year).

### **United Church Women**

Our vibrant and active UCW units provide numerous services to our congregation, including visitation, hospital sing-songs and a quilting group. They also have interesting speakers and inspiring worship at their meetings, and cater many receptions for funerals and other events within the congregation as a practical and caring service. The UCW organizes events annually such as the fall Bazaar, the spring Auction, the Stew Supper and a Quilt Show. Proceeds from all fund raising (over \$30,000 in 2009) are used to benefit groups and projects within St. Mark's and at the Presbytery, Conference, and National levels of the United Church.

### **Chancel Choir, Mixed Blessings, St. Mark's Singers, & Rising**

These musical groups provide primarily vocal music, accompanied by organ, piano or other instruments, for the regular Sunday worship services. Both the Chancel Choir and Mixed Blessings are adult choirs, while the St. Mark's Singers are children between six and ten years of age. The Chancel Choir has recently grown from sixteen members to twenty-three and seems to be strengthening weekly. Mixed Blessings also provides outreach with periodic concerts at other United Churches and seniors' residences. The Praise Band, Rising, comprised of both teens and adults, provides contemporary praise music during Sunday services and other events during the year. In 2006, the congregation purchased many new instruments for the Praise Band for use during these services.

### **Youth Club for Teens**

The Youth Club follows the theme of Fun, Faith, Fellowship and Food to provide diverse activities to expand Bible knowledge and increase friendships among our youth in grades 7 through 12. This program has evolved from a weekly Breakfast Club to a monthly Friday/Saturday gathering. This activity requires new energy to strengthen its purpose.

### **Black Light Puppet Ministry**

From the early 1990s, the Black Light Puppet Ministry has performed several black light puppet shows across south central Ontario, primarily at other United Churches. The performers are members of the Youth Club, supplemented by adults who maintain their youthful spirit. It is currently inactive as a search for new leadership continues.

### **Adult Bible Study Groups**

One Bible Study group, led by the minister, meets regularly from 9:45 to 11:30 on Thursday mornings. They have recently begun a study of Paul's letter to the Ephesians after having completed an in-depth study of the Book of Acts. There are also two groups led by the Parish Nurse who have recently begun the two-year Bethel Bible Study program.

### **Marriage Preparation Workshops**

Individuals who are planning to be married at St. Mark's attend this weekend workshop, which is facilitated by married couples of St. Mark's. The goal is to prepare young couples for the lifestyle changes that will happen once they are married.

### **Health and Wellness Committee**

The Health and Wellness Committee, under the leadership of the Parish Nurse, brings a new dimension to St. Mark's that expands and lends support to our congregation as a whole. They work in cooperation with the pastoral care work of the minister, and their activities are crucial in light of a generally ageing population. They work to educate the congregation about the connection between faith and health. Programs of interest are presented three times a year with the most recent being presentations on arthritis, prostate health, diabetes, living wills and a CPR course. The very popular Therapeutic Touch group offers treatments in a clinic setting in the Sanctuary on the first Tuesday of each month in addition to their monthly practice group. As well, members of St. Mark's made a portable Labyrinth which is available the first Tuesday of each month for walking. Meditation is held weekly and there have been two ten-week sessions of Yoga which will continue through 2010. A Footprints program started on Saturday mornings in September 2009 using St. Mark's site as a satellite respite program for families of children with Autism Spectrum disorders. The program started with five children twice a month, and beginning in March 2010 will expand to a weekly program which will include, on alternate weeks, four children who are currently on a waiting list. The committee also advocates for the Parish Nurse and provides support for her work.

### **St. Mark's Players**

The St. Mark's Players were formed in 2002 by members of the congregation who wanted to produce plays and musicals at least once a year. Profits are contributed to both church operations and targeted charities. Original plays have included *Scrooge's Tale*, *Dial 'M' for Music*, *Where's the Minister?*, and *The First Miracle*. The most recent, *The Piper*, was a musical of Christmas redemption based on the story of the Pied Piper of Hamelin. The script, music and lyrics were developed by members of the congregation. Proceeds contributed over \$7,300 to the 2009 "Defeat the Deficit" initiative.

### **Administration Committee**

The Administration Committee sets up schedules for offering counters and for coffee-time responsibilities, finds people to sit on committees, monitors and acknowledges volunteers, runs the annual *Class Act* fundraiser, and helps coordinate loose ends. They identify, for both members and staff, those individuals or groups who have the mandate for specific responsibilities and tasks.

### **Executive Committee of Council**

The executive committee of Council is well on the way to establishing a strategic plan for St. Mark's. One of the results of this initiative was the formation of the Marketing Committee. There is an informal meeting of this group most Wednesday mornings for an hour over coffee. Previous ministers have participated and enjoyed this very informal and open discussion ranging from church issues updates to community happenings to world issues. Rev. Christa saw this as an important and very valuable aspect of her time at St. Mark's.

### **Marketing Committee**

Although relatively new, the Marketing Committee helps promote and profile the many strong qualities of St. Mark's and assists in expanding our reach and attracting new members. They will assist in supporting the direction the ministerial staff will lead St. Mark's in the future. They will help staff and council by providing Strategic Plan information regarding the congregation's wishes, and determining reasons that parishioners drift away.

### **Strategic Plan Committee**

The Executive Committee of Council has undertaken the task of drafting a Strategic Plan for St. Mark's. An interactive workshop has been held, results tabulated and initial ideas developed. There is more ongoing work however ministerial direction and support is most desirable.

### **Other Outreach Sharing and Caring**

Our facilities are used by a wide variety of support and children's groups. We welcome several groups, ranging from the Parkinson's Support Group to Scouts Canada, as well as other community groups. We recently provided office and meeting space for a month to All Saints' Anglican Church following their disastrous fire.

Two members of the St. Mark's congregation were certificated in April 2007 by Oshawa Presbytery as Licensed Lay Worship Leaders. They are used, when requested, for Sunday Supply at various United Churches in the area, including at St. Mark's.

St. Mark's also has one member who was received by the Oshawa Presbytery in April 2007 as a Candidate for Ordained Ministry within the United Church of Canada. She was ordained in May, 2009 by the Bay of Quinte Conference and currently serves part-time at a church in Oshawa.

### **Mission and Service Fund Gifts**

Funds from Congregational givings to the M&S fund	\$28,356
United Church Women	\$ <u>9,500</u>
Total	\$37,856

In 2010 St. Mark's contribution will be supported by a \$3,500 allocation from the rental proceeds of the Church House.

### **Trustees**

The Trustees supervise the maintenance and security of all of St. Mark's assets and approve all work contracts and insurance. They administer funds held in trust and attend to all arrangements with Blaisdale Montessori School. This school rents the building which was the original manse and now provides a reliable and steady source of income for St. Mark's. Since a number of major capital projects have been completed, there are no urgent needs in this area.

## **RESOURCES PROFILE**

St. Mark's current mission statement captures the Congregation's shared goals and beliefs.

*St Mark's is a worshipping family  
Living the love of Jesus Christ in our community and beyond.*

Our Guiding Principles are to:

- Create a welcoming and caring atmosphere
- Demonstrate and practice responsible stewardship of time, talent, and treasure
- Foster a healthy church family and community
- Provide a safe suitable environment for our programs
- Reach out into the community and the world with caring, sharing, and joy
- Support lifelong spiritual growth

### **Staffing**

Other than the position of full time ordained Minister, the current staffing at St. Mark's United Church includes:

- One half-time Parish Nurse – see attached profile
- Proposal for one quarter-time Sunday School Superintendent and one quarter-time Coordinator of Youth and Family Activities (currently under review)
- One full-time Office Administrator
- One full-time Custodian
- One part-time Organist and Chancel choir director
- Volunteer Superintendents of Sunday School, Youth Club, and Nursery
- Volunteer Music Director of St. Mark's Singers, Sunday School, and Mixed Blessings
- Volunteer Accompanist for St. Mark's Singers, Sunday School, and Mixed Blessings

### **Property Description**

The church building was built in 1876 as the "Whitby Methodist Tabernacle". The Sanctuary has a seating capacity of more than 500 people. It is currently painted a soft blue and is adorned with large, beautiful stained-glass windows. All the wood in the Sanctuary is a mellowed oak. At one time, the Sanctuary was the largest meeting place between Kingston and Toronto. The Sanctuary was constructed following the Methodist practice, with the dais located in the center and the pews located in a semi-circle facing it.

In 2006, the Sanctuary underwent a significant renovation. The choir loft and dais were rebuilt and expanded to accommodate a variety of uses (alternate worship, concerts, plays, etc.). A digital organ was installed and a baby grand piano was purchased. A new sound and multimedia system was installed. Two projection screens provide the congregation with announcements, the scripture readings, and words of the hymns. The ability to show active video presentations provides the opportunity to utilize most current media (PowerPoint, active video etc.) in worship services.

The communion table is centrally located on the raised semicircular platform and is flanked by a clear acrylic lectern and the baptismal font. Behind the communion table is a digital organ, baby grand piano, Praise Band instruments and seating for the Chancel Choir. The visible pipes from the old organ have been retained for aesthetic purposes.

A large church hall was added to the original building in 1955 and includes:

Main level: A large, well-equipped kitchen, a formal parlour, four offices (used by the minister, parish nurse, the organist and the office administrator), a large central meeting hall, two smaller meeting rooms, archives, choir rooms, and two washrooms, one of which is wheelchair accessible.

Lower level: Sunday School classrooms, a nursery with mini-kitchen, one office (for use by a Youth worker), a large central meeting/games room, and two washrooms, one of which is wheelchair accessible.

The Sanctuary and church hall are wheelchair accessible with the use of ramps and an elevator that connects all levels. The church owns an adjacent building, originally used as the manse, which is currently leased to a local Montessori School. This building is commonly referred to as 'The Church House'. A Youth Lounge in the lower hall was added in 2005 to provide a place dedicated to youth activities, where interaction can occur in a teen-appropriate setting.

### Maintenance

The church is in excellent repair but requires regular on-going attention, as does every 130-year-old building. Within the past three years we have:

- replaced the roof
- rewired a significant portion of the church to current standards
- added substantial new fire detection equipment which meets or exceeds current fire marshal requirements
- installed beautiful new exterior doors to the Sanctuary, which were a gift,
- retooled the current heating plant to extend its expected life time for about 15 more years,
- repaired and re-pointed a major portion of exterior brick, a project which will be finished in Spring 2010,
- replaced window sills on the east side; west side will be replaced in Spring 2010.

Net rental income of \$30,000 per year from the Church House has covered these and is expected to cover future capital maintenance projects. In the early years of the rental arrangement, funds were used to make major repairs to the exterior of the Church House; projects such as a new roof, windows and brick pointing are all behind us and the structure is sound. (Tenant is responsible for and has completed major interior improvements.)

Future church projects requiring funding which will come from rental income include:

- Completing the brick work project started in 2009 and halted because of weather
- Replacing the sills of the Sanctuary windows on the west side
- Insulating, caulking, and painting all Sanctuary window frames
- Renovating and painting the kitchen

- Repairing and repaving parking lot
- Replacing old wiring in Sanctuary attic

Volunteers design and maintain the flower gardens. Our custodian keeps the lawns looking neat in summer, and the paths shoveled and salted in winter. Small repairs are completed by capable and gifted volunteers.

### **Capital**

The church has a number of GICs held for specific groups and/or purposes, and has arranged for a \$50,000 line of credit to assist with day-to-day expenses as needed. Some of the GICs are held in support of the operating loan. To fund the \$331,000 renovation of the Sanctuary, the church borrowed funds from the Oshawa Presbytery. This loan was retired well within the agreed term which resulted in a total refund of interest paid. (See annual report for Investment details.)

## Financial Resources

The following is a summary of St. Mark's financial position:

	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
<b>Receipts</b>					
Offerings	254,198	285,255	245,529	247,986	246,831
Weddings & building use	11,823	8,814	6,451	6,485	4,582
Fundraising	0	1,615	0	5,639	43,217
Investment interest	14,261	0	14,339	10,928	10,988
Other	21,408	23,967	7,077	39,794	35,482
Total Receipts	301,690	319,651	273,529	310,832	341,100
<b>Disbursements</b>					
Payroll	184,136	200,010	166,214	213,019	189,335
Buildings	80,295	65,905	58,799	91,552	54,444
Office & General	18,260	17,980	20,032	14,314	8,800
Other	32,257	31,622	28,912	32,696	46,914
Total Disbursements	314,947	315,517	273,957	351,581	299,493
<b>Net</b>	(13,257)	4,134	(428)	(40,749)	41,608
Accumulated Balance (Deficit)		(16,072)	(16,500)	(57,249)	(15,641)

The foregoing does not include donations to the Building Fund of \$18,617 in 2009, the Sanctuary renovation, or the Church House rental income (net of utilities and taxes) of \$30,000 in 2009. It does reflect a special "Defeat the Deficit" initiative which raised \$41,213 in 2009. This program is ongoing in 2010 and includes a highly successful gift card program which nets in excess of \$6,000 per year. PAR givings represent about 27% of Offerings. (See Annual Report for 2010 budget.)

The Congregation has realized some of the benefits of tough decisions made in the last years. These decisions were made to address many successive years where total disbursements exceeded income. They included reducing the Ministerial staff from two to one ordained Minister and selling the manse, investing the proceeds of the sale so that the interest could be applied to the Minister's housing allowance, in accordance with United Church regulations. At the same time these decisions were being made, major essential repairs were required to the church buildings' masonry and roofs – repairs that were financed by a loan from the Presbytery Church Extension Council and subsequently repaid in full.

One of the results of the Congregation's tough decisions and the significant additional debt incurred to complete these essential building repairs was increased congregational awareness of the church's financial condition and greater willingness to contribute to ensure the on-going operation of the church. This was evidenced by the Congregation's willingness to increase contributions to repay the loan from Presbytery in three years, and to fund a \$45,000 unplanned capital expenditure to repair the underground water and sewer pipes in the summer of 2004. Since 2001, the Congregation also increased its contributions to fund the salary and other expenses associated with the hiring of the Parish Nurse and the Youth Associate. These decisions were made to fulfill a previously identified need to increase the amount of pastoral care and provide increased focus on youth activities.

The Congregation's improved financial condition allowed for a program to address years of deferred repairs and maintenance. This is substantially completed now. Although the church is in relatively good repair for a building of its age, major unplanned repairs are always causes for concern. A building fund is maintained and managed to ensure there are resources for unexpected expenses.

The Congregation, as with most other churches, is continually balancing its financial resources with the needs of the community.

## Survey Results

The 2009 JNAC survey of the congregation identified their priorities as:

- Sunday worship service
- Cooperative team of staff and lay leaders
- Bible-based sermons tied to today's world
- Sunday School and youth programs

The congregation sees our strengths as:

- Music
- Sunday worship
- Church School for children
- Traditional service
- Christian development
- St. Mark's-Community interaction

The survey also identified areas for future development

- Increasing our awareness of our connections with other faiths
- Integration of new members
- Integration with wider community
- Outreach - international projects
- Outreach - national projects (for example, economic and social justice)
- Help council reduce polarization of leadership

The top six reasons members came to St. Mark's:

- Meaningful service
- Music
- Friendly people - diverse age groups
- Strong youth potential
- Large number of activities for all age groups
- United Church Women

Challenges to be overcome within St. Mark's United Church:

- Assistance in establishing a Strategic Plan
- Working with Council to address some personality and power issues
- Growing and resourcing youth ministry

The congregation feels God is calling us to:

- Reach out to the community
- Value our youth
- Be a caring and loving society
- Reach out to embrace new challenges globally and locally
- Grow our congregation through strong Sunday morning services and youth programs
- Learn from each other how to live more meaningful lives and then to show the rest of the world we can be better people

## **Reasons to consider St. Mark's for your next calling:**

Congregation hungry for Ministerial guidance  
Established and effective Parish Nurse  
Established, growing and appreciative congregation  
Capacity for growth  
Strong community homes of faith  
Many dedicated volunteers  
Age diversity in congregation  
Congregation where the seniors are mostly progressive thinkers  
Physical plant in good condition  
Financial strength  
Growth in revenue can essentially be allocated to provide additional youth ministerial resources  
A Minister's manual exists to ease entry into a new church  
Supportive and strong team  
Identified need for more youth programming  
Potential staffing support for youth programming  
Strong Council team  
Strong community reputation  
Strong committee support  
Strong and growing Music program  
Strong social relationships  
Mix of new and well-established members  
Cultural community activities  
Program in Whitby to enhance the downtown core  
Opportunity to be "the" church in Whitby with a vision!  
Established fundraising programs  
Strong administrative support  
Recent congregational photo directory  
Analytical database of congregational feelings on many matters  
Wednesday morning coffee meetings  
Can you imagine a better place to live and work?

**ST. MARK'S UNITED CHURCH**  
**WHITBY, ONTARIO**

**POSITION DESCRIPTION**

**POSITION TITLE** Ordained Minister

**POSITION SUMMARY**

The Ordained Minister works within the large multi-generational congregation of St. Mark's United Church and is accountable to its Church Council and Oshawa Presbytery.

**KEY RESPONSIBILITIES**

**1. Worship – 40% of time**

- a) Assist the Worship Committee with the creation and development of worship and sacrament schedules.
- b) Research, prepare, and deliver sermons; write liturgies for worship services.
- c) Provide direction to the laity in leading services.
- d) In accordance with the guidelines provided by the Church Council, lead other worship events such as funerals, weddings, seniors' communion, UCW services, chapel services in hospitals and residences for the elderly.
- e) Develop and support alternative worship styles.
- f) Involve organist and choir directors in selection of music for services.
- g) Provide "Chapel Services" every 6 or 7 weeks at Fairview Lodge Long Term Care Facility

**2. Christian Education – 20%**

- a) Assist the Christian Education Committee, Parish Nurse, and leaders of youth to develop and implement a variety of programs that foster growth in Christian faith among various groups in the congregation. This can include adult membership, youth confirmation, Marriage Preparation, Bible study, Baptism preparation, parenting courses, Religion in Life courses and grief counseling.
- b) Be involved in Christian education activities within Sunday School programs and for other youth group and family functions.

**3. Pastoral Care – 15%**

- a) In cooperation with the Parish Nurse, carry out regular hospital and nursing home visitations to members and adherents of the Congregation.
- b) In cooperation with the Parish Nurse, make home visitations to shut-ins.
- c) In cooperation with the Parish Nurse, assist in developing and providing on-going support of the lay pastoral visitation program.
- d) Provide counseling, spiritual guidance and emotional support for the Congregation.
- e) Work with Parish Nurse and Pastoral Visiting Team to ensure that all congregation members and adherents receive pastoral care as required.

**4. Administrative – 15%**

- a) Participate in meetings of the Church Council.
- b) Participate, as needed, in committees and working groups of the Church Council.
- c) Respond to general and specific requests for information and assistance.
- d) Following the terms of the United Church Manual, be the Chair of Trustees or appoint a designate to do so.
- e) Lead regular meetings of all paid staff and of the ministry team.

**\* 5. Continuing Education – 5%**

- a) Participate in training programs that support current and future needs of the Congregation, as approved by the Ministry and Personnel Committee.
- b) Provide feedback from such training programs to congregational group(s).

**\* 6. Beyond the Congregation – 5%**

- a) Attend monthly Presbytery meetings and serve on various Presbytery Committees and task forces, as required.
- b) Attend Whitby Ministerial Association meetings and serve on its various committees and task forces, as required.
- c) Be a visible presence in the local community.

\* In compliance with the United Church of Canada standards

**PHYSICAL DEMANDS AND WORKING CONDITIONS**

The ordained minister works primarily in a general office environment with minimum risk to personal health and safety. There is some travel involved for pastoral care.

**SKILLS REQUIRED**

- a) Excellent communication and social skills for interaction with all age groups.
- b) The ability to preach in a way that teaches, while relating to issues affecting the congregation.
- c) The ability to create sermons that are Biblically-based and relevant to today's world.
- d) The leadership skills needed to co-ordinate and positively facilitate teamwork amongst St. Mark's staff and volunteers.
- e) Self-directed and positive work habits; the ability to set priorities within a wide range of competing professional demands.
- f) Ability to mentor the ministry team and congregation, as required.
- g) The leadership skills, energy, and enthusiasm to work in a creative manner with a large and diverse congregation.
- h) The level of technological skill needed to word process, use PowerPoint and email, do web research, and operate a basic sound system.
- i) Ability to motivate and energize the congregation to participate more in the life and work of the Church.

## **OTHER REQUIREMENTS**

- a) Be an Ordained Minister of the United Church.
- b) Show a sense of humour
- c) Be creative
- d) Be friendly and approachable and have a positive attitude.
- e) Be able to work with all age groups in the congregation and, especially, to be supportive of the youth and their programs and activities.
- f) Have positive physical, mental, and spiritual health for the demands of worship, pastoral care, and administrative support, knowing that the work schedule necessitates flexible hours and is often beyond the control of the ordained minister due to such unplanned situations as a death within the congregation or personal crisis of a member. The demands placed on the ordained minister can also place stresses on the ordained minister's family and personal life.
- g) Have an appreciation for music as it contributes to the worship experience.
- h) Have a good working knowledge of United Church structures and protocols.
- i) Be flexible in style of worship

## **Terms of Employment**

### **Salary**

The salary for this position is negotiable and is based upon the United Church of Canada's schedule laid out in the current *Minimum Salary and Allowances for Ministry Personnel* document and upon the years of specifically related experience.

### **Housing Allowance**

The housing allowance is determined by Oshawa Presbytery and will be paid monthly.

### **Travel Expense Reimbursement**

Travel expenses will be reimbursed at the current rate laid out in the *Minimum Salary and Allowances* document. A log of vehicle usage must be submitted, if or when requested by the Ministry and Personnel Committee. If actual distance travelled annually exceeds the reimbursement paid, the extra distance will also be reimbursed at the current rate. Any travel amount paid in excess of actual distance travelled in the year is considered income and should be reported accordingly.

### **Other Benefits**

- an office and full-time secretarial support are provided
- Reasonable moving expenses will be paid according to United Church guidelines
- Basic telephone and Internet service to the minister's home will be provided
- Book and study allowance are provided, based on United Church guidelines
- UCC pension contributions based on salary plus housing allowance, based on United Church guidelines
- UCC group insurance and EAP, based on United Church guidelines
- Other payroll deductions in compliance with government regulation (CPP, EI, Income tax)
- Other benefits as established by the United Church (Maternity, Paternity, Bereavement, and Compassionate Leave, etc) are available as required
- Sabbatical Leave of three months, after five years of continuous service, in consultation with Council and in accordance with United Church guidelines.

### **Expectations for Work and Vacation Schedules**

Regular hours of full-time work are 40 hours per week with adjustments for civil compliance with statutory holidays. Vacation time follows United Church guidelines within the pastoral year (July 1 to June 30) and is normally taken in either July or August. Requests for vacation scheduling are approved by the Ministry and Personnel Committee. Study Leave, as outlined in the United Church Manual, is available and also requires consultation with and approval by Ministry and Personnel.

### **Conclusion**

We offer this report and the recommendations contained here for the consideration of the St. Mark's congregation and Oshawa Presbytery.

### **Recommendations**

1. To request Oshawa Presbytery to declare a vacancy and establish a Search Committee.
2. Due to changes in United Church DLM/CDM policy our Youth Associate Position must be redefined. Therefore, our recommendation is to:
  - a. Create a position of one quarter-time Sunday Superintendent to be paid up to 10 hours per week.
  - b. Create a position of one quarter-time Co-ordinator of Youth and Family Activities to be paid up to 10 hours per week.
3. To complete the work of the Strategic Planning Group only after the new minister has had time for informed input.
4. To request that the JNAC be disbanded.

**Appendix I**  
**JNAC 2009 Committee Members**

Susan Hawley  
Carolyn Johnston  
Clare Kidd  
Silvana McCrum      Secretary  
Megan McDonald  
Peter Miller          Chair  
Rod Pentz

Rev. Larry Doyle      Presbytery Rep.      Faith United Church  
Barb Griffen          Presbytery Rep.      Port Perry United Church  
Rev. Rob Selby        Presbytery Rep.      Claremont United Church

**Appendix II**  
**Committees and Groups JNAC members met with for input into this report:**

- Administration Committee
- Bible Study Group
- Chancel Choir
- Christian Education Committee
- Communications Committee
- Facilities Management Committee
- Health and Wellness Committee
- Ministry and Personnel Committee
- Mixed Blessings (choir) leadership
- Pastoral Care Committee
- Rising (Praise Band) leadership
- Stewardship Committee
- Trustees
- UCW leadership
- Worship and Music Committee
- Youth group

**Appendix III**  
Survey Document  
Will be supplied to applicants – not included here to save space and paper

**Appendix IV**  
Constitution  
Available on request not included here to save space and paper

## **Appendix V**

### **Rev. Christa Eidsness' Testimonial**

Due to family circumstances, my tenure at St. Mark's was very brief, but in that time I came to love and respect the people of this congregation. There is a core of deeply dedicated volunteers who help make the life of this church function and my sense is that they are willing to give their hearts and trust to a minister who will love them as they are and encourage them to continue to deepen their faith as individuals and as a community.

Over the past few years St. Mark's has been through a tremendous amount of staff transition as they have tried to call a staff team that is a good fit with the congregation and each other. This is not an easy task, but they persevere and continue to work tirelessly to find the leadership they desire and need. The current staff is dedicated to helping St. Mark's flourish and are well-loved by the congregation.

One of the highlights of my time with St. Mark's was the weekly breakfast meeting for church leadership. This small, dedicated group helped me get to know the congregation in a short period of time and offered feedback on what was happening.

Every church has its issues and St. Mark's is no exception. However, within St. Mark's there is a willingness to try new things while also being cognizant of where they have come from as a congregation. There is great potential at St. Mark's to be a lively and growing congregation and in the current search they are hoping to find someone who will help them reach that potential and then move beyond it.

Christa Eidsness

Minister, St. Mark's United Church August 2008 - October 2009