

Antler River Watershed; Horseshoe Falls; Western Ontario Waterways Regional Councils

Community of Faith: Living Faith Story Worksheet

PURPOSE: To provide information about the Community of Faith's understanding of their ministry and mission.

Who uses it: Communities of Faith in gathering their profile information for ChurchHub.

Community of Faith: Maple Grove United Church

Regional Council: Horseshoe Falls

Date: November 3, 2019

Motivating Vision: "Where the Spirit Soars, and the Heart Finds a Home"

Core Values:

1. Inspiration (in worship and music)
2. Welcoming Community
3. Caring
4. Outreach
5. Spiritual Centering



Current Ministry and Mission:

Maple Grove United is currently winding out the second half of a two-year Intentional Interim ministry after the retirement of the previous minister who served the congregation for 31 years.

Our congregation continues to sustain a climate of supportive caring community, values worship and music that is inspiring while also nurturing and nudging us in our lives of faith, and offers a variety of opportunities for service within the congregation as well as outreach into the local community and world beyond us. We are presently discerning what it means to live out and grow the Core Values we have named during this interim time and have determined to focus our efforts in Mission and Outreach on issues of Poverty (including advancing food security and hands-on participation in our local Neighbourhood Care Network) and Environmental/Climate Change concerns. There is room and interest to explore some third focus on the needs of Seniors and/or Youth. We have been very active in refugee assistance extending our efforts to help not only our own family but other groups in their efforts. It

appears that we will be winding down our active engagement in direct refugee assistance but continuing to provide support and advice to other congregations as needed. A part-time staff person offers ministry pastoral care, occasional pulpit supply, and faith formation (Sunday School co-ordination; Messy Church; Interfaith Peace Camp, Adult study opportunities). The current incumbent is planning on retiring no later than May 2020 and at that time the position will be reassessed.

There are a number of congregants who participate in and value faith deepening opportunities such as Bible Study and reflection groups; a Centering Prayer group; and lecture/learning events on a variety of topics (these we seek to make open to the broader community as well). Our congregation is host to a weekly spiritual meditation group, several athletic training groups, a cub and scout pack, and a weekly daycare and Montessori school operation. There are a number of occasional offerings during the year such as a Chinese New Years' celebration festival (two days mid-winter) and a five-week Grief Support group (usually in late fall). We have recently agreed to become a short term emergency hub for Oakville.

As the result of a previous Edge consultation (2016) we have been exploring some experiments in worship and offering opportunities for leadership development. We have developed some expertise with modern technology -- website, Facebook and Instagram, weekly e-news, slide projection during services -- and realize this is an area we might like to expand and do better.

Here is some additional general and historical background that is also part of our story:

Maple Grove United Church is a church in Southeast Oakville approximately 60 years old. We sit in a very stable older neighbourhood which is enjoying an influx of ethnic Chinese. We share one border with the oldest Oakville secondary school, Oakville Trafalgar High School.

Its membership numbers are stable with inflows and outflows approximately equal. Its operational fundraising is steady, so declining on a real dollar basis but it is still paying all its bills. It has been able to raise capital funds and has only a very small amount of debt. The fiscal challenge is very real if not yet a crisis. There is no apparent factionalism within the Congregation.

The Church has a number of staff beyond the religious leaders including a secretary, Music Director, and an organist. We are blessed with volunteers to do many other administrative tasks such as bookkeeping, tracking stewardship, and of course chairing operational committees.

The service has an active musical component which is highly valued by the Congregation. The services are fairly traditional if infused with a relative air of informality.