

St Aidans and Cadboro Bay United Church Amalgamation Project

Strategic Plan 2020-2023

April 2020

Introduction

St. Aidans and Cadboro Bay/Gordon Head United Church congregations recognize that to continue to flourish and fulfill our mission we must evolve to a new model of church that remains relevant and effective in the 21st century. We also recognize that we are stronger together, and that we need our combined strengths and assets to achieve our goals.

We are committed to becoming a regional community of faith and resource centre for a progressive Christian voice. We are also committed to moving from being neighbourhood churches to a regional church that can support both the combined congregations as well as being a resource for progressive Christianity across the region. To this end, we are working to create a culture of congregational unity where we can benefit from our combined strengths and assets. We know that amalgamation of our congregations will take intentional effort and commitment and that our success will depend on how well we do this collaborative work and build trust with one another.

Therefore, we are committed to co-creating this new regional church, one that will transcend current United Church practices of ministry and staffing. We will do this not only by coming together, but also by developing a new model that integrates learnings gleaned across denominational lines and other non-profits. Our vision is to create a dynamic, inclusive and responsive centre where everyone is welcome. Our plan is to build in diverse income streams, strategies that make a difference in individual lives and the lives of communities, opportunities to connect through diverse offerings, and platforms that take seriously the changing context of our world and its needs.

We will have the commitment, vision, staff, and resources to implement the founding principles of the United Church of Canada - that of being a United and Uniting community of faith that makes a difference.

Our Context

Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities
<p>Theologically progressive</p> <p>We articulate and live into a progressive Christian theology through our language, our programs and how we worship - 'open minds, open hearts, open doors.</p>	<p>Increasing secular world</p> <p>We live in an increasingly secular world where Christianity is linked to a more conservative and reactionary element that seek to polarize rather than unite communities. How do we give voice to an alternative vision?</p>	<p>Build a bridge to others</p> <p>We can build on our progressive mission and be a resource to others, and actively work to cross the divide and connect with other spiritual and non-religious people.</p>
<p>Community partnerships</p> <p>We have a history of a variety of community partners over many years. We have an opportunity to learn from these relationships to support our new vision.</p>	<p>Economic, social & ecological crisis</p> <p>The current economic, social and ecological crisis requires us to radically shift how we think and live in order to preserve our world for future generations. This will require us to work together across many diverse groups.</p>	<p>Collaborative social justice</p> <p>By seeking out and working with others we have an opportunity to create transformative change in our community and be seen as a responsive, nimble and connected place that is relevant to people's lives.</p>
<p>Commitment to inclusion</p> <p>We have a history of commitment to inclusion and we understand the importance of being a safe, welcoming and inclusive place for all people.</p>	<p>Lack of cultural diversity</p> <p>While communities surrounding our church have become increasingly diverse, the same diversity has not been represented within our church.</p>	<p>Interculturalism and Reconciliation</p> <p>We have the opportunity to build on the seeds we have planted around being an age friendly and affirming community, and create an inclusive community for all people.</p>

Our Strategic Direction

Our role is: To be an agent of transformation and a fresh expression of progressive Christian faith.

We accomplish this by: Being a compassionate, cohesive and engaged community of faith and resource centre for a progressive Christian voice.

Our core values as inspired by the teachings of Jesus and affirmed by this community:

Progressiveness	Aligning ourselves with a progressive Christian theology and voice that embraces diversity and emphasizes social justice. Working for transformative change through innovation and being responsive to changing needs.
Integrity	'Walking the talk' in everything we do. Being a safe and welcoming place for all that is accessible to people with differing abilities. Embraces diverse communities, affirms LGBTQ2S+ people, building relationships with Indigenous peoples and communities, and protecting the integrity of our earth.
Connectedness	Building strong connections and shared values with all generations by fostering meaningful relationships, working in partnership with others, combating social isolation, and building community around shared passions and interests. We recognize that engaging children, youth and young adults will take special initiatives.

Our strategic priority areas:

- Engagement and participation
- Collaborations and partnerships
- Social justice and right relationship with earth
- Financial diversity and church sustainability

Our Goals and Strategies for 2020 to 2023

STRATEGIC AREA 1: Engagement and Participation	
<p>Goal 1.1 Opportunities for ‘church’ in different places, formats and platforms.</p>	<p><i>Strategy 1.1.1</i> Involve people in spiritual growth exploration in order to provide formats for spiritual practice that look beyond and are not limited to Sundays.</p> <p><i>Strategy 1.1.2</i> Enhance regional church presence through the development of small group ministries.</p> <p><i>Strategy 1.1.3</i> Experiment with new ways of worship inside and outside the church.</p> <p><i>Strategy 1.1.4</i> Create rituals that help people in life transitions.</p>
<p>Goal 1.2 A resource centre that is a welcoming, accessible and safe space for all.</p>	<p><i>Strategy 1.2.1</i> Work to ensure accessibility (building, community life, programs, and language) for people with differing abilities, demographic and cultural groups and economic situations.</p> <p><i>Strategy 1.2.2</i> Build opportunities to address social isolation through social, educational and spiritual practices.</p> <p><i>Strategy 1.2.3</i> Be an affirming space for people of all gender identities and sexual orientations.</p> <p><i>Strategy 1.2.4</i> Provide opportunities for people to gather in a third space / community hub.</p>
<p>Goal 1.3 Educational and social opportunities and resources that connect with diverse individuals, expand our understanding, and support engagement.</p>	<p><i>Strategy 1.3.1</i> Provide intentional educational opportunities that engage with diverse cultures and people from a variety of groups and perspectives.</p> <p><i>Strategy 1.3.2</i> Offer programs that invite people to grow in their spiritual discernment.</p>

<p>Goal 1.4 Engagement with children, youth and young adults in diverse ways in all aspects of congregational life and spiritual nurture</p>	<p><i>Strategy 1.4.1</i> To use the lens of considering the impact on these demographics in decision we make, staff we hire, programs we invest in and goals we set. To minister “with” children, youth and young adults not just to them.</p> <p><i>Strategy 1.4.2</i> Build on existing children, youth, young adult and family ministry programing.</p> <p><i>Strategy 1.4.3</i> Expand our circle of connection to University of Victoria, Camosun College and Royal Roads University, to provide spiritual companionship and nurture and intercultural connections.</p> <p><i>Strategy 1.4.4</i> Incorporate both multigenerational and intergenerational programming.</p>
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STRATEGIC AREA 2: Collaborations and Partnership

<p>Goal 2.1 A reconciliation process with local Indigenous nations, organizations and individuals.</p>	<p><i>Strategy 2.1.1</i> Continue to work on self-education activities and explore ways to de-colonize our words and actions.</p> <p><i>Strategy 2.1.2</i> Work with Indigenous communities to identify ways to engage and work together on shared projects/programs.</p> <p><i>Strategy 2.1.3</i> Partner with Indigenous leaders and elders to respectfully learn from their traditions and spiritual practices.</p> <p><i>Strategy 2.1.4</i> Actively participate with Indigenous nations, organizations and individuals to support the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the 94 calls of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.</p>
<p>Goal 2.2 Engagement with newcomer organizations and immigrant communities to better meet their diverse needs.</p>	<p><i>Strategy 2.2.1</i> Engage with other faith communities doing this work to see where are community goals and values align.</p> <p><i>Strategy 2.2.2</i> Develop a cross-cultural lens and partner with ethno-cultural communities to realize our goal of being inclusive and diverse.</p> <p><i>Strategy 2.2.3</i> Continue to sponsor and help settle refugees.</p>
<p>Goal 2.3 Partnerships and collaborations that are based on shared values and alignment with our mission.</p>	<p><i>Strategy 2.3.1</i> Create partnerships with organizations that are synergistic in programming and are mutual and reciprocal.</p> <p><i>Strategy 2.3.2</i> Generate income from shared and/or dedicated space use that is part of our diverse sustainable financial foundation that strengthens our larger mission.</p>
<p>Goal 2.4 Strategically engage with and support social purposes through the creation of a community hub/third space</p>	<p><i>Strategy 2.4.1</i> Explore social enterprises that have the characteristics of being a safe gathering place for diverse community.</p> <p><i>Strategy 2.4.2</i> Explore and generate digital platforms that could become third space for folks in the 21st century.</p> <p><i>Cont.</i></p>

Strategy 2.4.3

Partner with other groups to provide space for them in support of their projects or initiatives that aim to bring people together in progressive action.

Strategy 2.4.4

Use physical and/or virtual space in support of being an ally and provide affirmative action incentive to communities in need.

STRATEGIC AREA 3: Social Justice and Right Relationship with Earth

<p>Goal 3.1 Support priority ecological issues locally, nationally and internationally.</p>	<p><i>Strategy 3.1.1</i> Connect with Victoria’s ecological community as a way of ensuring engagement in local issues.</p> <p><i>Strategy 3.1.2</i> Align and participate with other environmental groups to support priority national and international issues.</p>
<p>Goal 3.2 Build a stronger presence with key community organizations, businesses, governments and groups working on local issues.</p>	<p><i>Strategy 3.2.1</i> Work on local social justice issues such as housing and homelessness, food security, mental health and addictions, by connecting with and supporting others.</p> <p><i>Strategy 3.2.2</i> Initiate efforts to address social gaps and advocate for change with local authorities and others.</p>
<p>Goal 3.3 Connect to global struggles for socio-ecological justice and peace.</p>	<p><i>Strategy 3.3.1</i> Use our work with refugees as an opportunity to learn more about global struggles for justice and peace.</p> <p><i>Strategy 3.3.2</i> Support local, provincial and national organizations working on global struggles in order to understand their underlying causes, and their impacts on the earth and on humanity.</p>

STRATEGIC AREA 4: Financial Diversity and Church Sustainability

<p>Goal 4.1 Diversified sources of revenue and income.</p>	<p><i>Strategy 4.1.1</i> Establish social enterprises that will bring sustainable revenue streams for the future.</p> <p><i>Strategy 4.1.2</i> Continue to innovate and regenerate social enterprises and revenue streams.</p> <p><i>Strategy 4.1.3</i> Build the internal capacity (staff and knowledge) to optimize alternative funding opportunities including donations, legacy giving/bequests and grants.</p>
<p>Goal 4.2 Optimized income generation and living into our values.</p>	<p><i>Strategy 4.2.1</i> Create strategic partnerships with other organizations that create synergy in programming and generate income from shared space.</p>
<p>Goal 4.3 Effective governance, congregation and staffing structure.</p>	<p><i>Strategy 4.3.1</i> Develop a system of governance that is flexible, collaborative and decisive in decision-making and leadership.</p> <p><i>Strategy 4.3.2</i> Allocate the appropriate time and resources into building a coherent, cohesive and amalgamated congregation.</p> <p><i>Strategy 4.3.3</i> Create a diverse and adaptive staffing model that is able to support the development and delivery of innovative spiritual programs.</p>
<p>Goal 4.4 Sustainable environmental practices across all church and community activities.</p>	<p><i>Strategy 4.4.1</i> Incorporate alternative energy and energy efficient practices in the building redesign and future plans.</p> <p><i>Strategy 4.4.2</i> Design for alternative transportation, including car-pooling, bike racks, electric plug ins, etc.</p> <p><i>Strategy 4.4.3</i> Reduce consumption, cut back on waste and recycle where possible.</p>