

# **HOPE AND A FUTURE**

## **A Visioning Session**

for

Highland Hills Pastoral Charge

August 18, 2016

Rev. Bob Root, Kawartha Highlands Presbytery.

*The attached pages are informal notes taken during discussions at the visioning session on August 18, 2016. The notes record many of the thoughts expressed during a fast-paced discovery 'brain-storming' session, but they are not formal minutes of the meeting.*

## **WHAT DOES THE CHURCH MEAN TO YOU?**

- The United Church is great!
- A place of belonging.
- Warmth and fellowship.
- A second home.
- Strength and hope in difficult times.
- A place to express our best selves.
- Work for the betterment of humankind around the world.
- Constant loving support.
- Extended family.
- Freedom of worship.
- People with whom to share the journey to God.
- Open minded expression of faith.
- Make a joyful sound.
- Celebrate life's occasions.
- Music!
- Caring people.
- External food.
- Prayers of others.

## **WHAT ARE YOUR DEEP HUNGERS FOR THE CHURCH?**

- I am grateful to be able to FREELY SHARE my thoughts with all of my church family (Maple Lake, Zion, Minden).
- I appreciate the spirit of agreement among the people here.
- Mutual longing for service, belonging, and fellowship.
- I appreciate our open discussions with each other and find we all have such similar thoughts.
- There were interesting ideas for fulfilling some “deep hunger” in the community such as mentoring and the need for transportation.
- The remarkably similar ideas from everyone and the like-minded thoughts was very noticeable. Appreciation for all the positive energy in groups and the entire gathering.
- The spirit was with us during the opening service.
- Very informative – glad to have been a part of this wonderful time together.
- We need to do more to impact our community and help our local needy – as well as supporting missionary work and charities.
- Changing our 3 churches into a community of people working to help one another, and others in the community and outside the church.
- Thanks for everyone’s willingness to be honest about their thoughts and have total respect for others’ comments.
- We can really make a difference if we keep this positive, friendly, hopeful feeling.
- I could not believe we are all on the same page – direction for the church basically.
- A sense of belonging, transportation, acceptance, opportunities.
- Laundry facilities are needed for those who can’t afford their own.
- Job search clubs for the youth.
- Changing FROM what is the problem you are having? TO what is going well for you?
- Impressed that this combined congregation feels that all our energies need to be changed to the outside world.
- I appreciate all the friends I’ve made tonight and for people speaking out when they shared before. God was in charge.
- Thank you for the beautiful evening.
- Appreciation for a process that allowed us to talk together on a deeper level and build our church community.
- I appreciate the atmosphere of trust and acceptance. I appreciate the overall agreement that outreaches what we are about.
- Listening, seniors that are alone, pizza program for kids after church.
- Hope that we can keep up the momentum to move forward to become one United Congregation.
- The opportunity to see that we all want the same things.
- I appreciate the time, effort, and wisdom you shared Bob!!
- We really are all ONE!! Keep listening is the KEY!!
- I have a very positive feeling about our future and I hope to be a part of it.

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- How are we going to engage our congregation and, more importantly, the community, about our positive message about peace, love, spirituality, environment, and life-lessons ?
- How do we leave a legacy for future generations?
- How do we change in a positive way so we have a single identity?
- How do we also include the circle ecumenical churches in our oneness?
- How can the church be more visible in the community?
- What is needed in the community that is missing?
- How can we get more kids into the church?(Activities, games etc.)
- How can we create a vibrant congregation that will serve the needs of the members and the community?
- We need music/choir/instruments/singing, activities for all ages.
- How do we determine the spiritual and physical needs of our community and beyond?
- How can I live my life to be a more engaged person?
- How can my church become more visible by my actions?
- How can we be brave enough to take a risk of caring?
- Poverty (Hidden)
- Lack of employment (seasonal)
- Aging population, relating to loneliness.
- Lack of resources for young people, low cost or free programs for children. Lack of opportunity for them.
- How do we bring 3 personalities into one? (The churches).
- How can we do this in a way that all of the three churches will be accepted and welcomed?
- How do we stay focused on knowing that we are one church?
- “What is the problem?”
- How do we listen deeply to the needs of the community so that we can put our faith into action?
- What do we need to do to draw the circle wider?
- Different activities.

## **VISIONING SESSION**

HELD AT MINDEN UNITED CHURCH

AUGUST 18<sup>TH</sup>. 2016

### **ATTENDANCE**

#### **MAPLE LAKE**

Allan & Beverly Upton

Albert & Judy Carpenter

Deloris Bailey

Ray Campbell

Don & Christena Berry

John & Thea Patterson

#### **MINDEN**

Gerry & Ollie Rome

Lois Deacon

Debbie Sherwin

Brian Austin

Bas & Myrtle Bouthoorn

Mary Trepanier

Maxine Snell

Pat Bradburn

Marilyn Burrows

Bea Berry

Irene Alexander

Don & Nancy Ballantyne

Keith & Diane Welborn

Pat Thornett

Sue Sisson

Irma Walker

Eric Casper

Milt Sheppard

**ZION**

Erskine & Gail Flook

Paul Rutledge

Joyce Wiltshire

Barbara Walford-Davis

Ross & Mary Jane McMullen

Doreen French

Elinor Hamilton

Ted & Glenna Koehler

Michelle Wolfe-Miscio

Andy & Charlene Cooper

Walter & Barbara Braker

Ron & Nerina Clark

Fred & Joan Chapple

Joy Davey & Lawrence Stibbard