

Lent 2024

BRITANNIA UNITED CHURCH

THE  **Britannian**

985 Pinecrest Rd., Ottawa, ON K2B 6B4

Telephone: 613-828-6018

Web site, Facebook, and Twitter links:

<http://www.britanniaunitedchurch.ca/>

Peter Bain, Editor newsletter@brituc.ca

Leigh Bain, Assistant Editor

Editorial

The Britannian-ette

We have some important and urgent news for you, so you are getting a bonus newsletter early.

First, we have a summary of the work that has been going on to look at the options for the future of the church. Please give it a careful read. There is lots more work and discussion to come. On a lighter note, there are some great activities in the next couple of months, so be sure to keep the second half for your notes.

Don't worry, though – the usual Easter newsletter will be coming out soon.

Yours

Peter

Greetings Folks!

There is so much happening over the next couple of months, so please mark your calendars, share the following info with friends and family and know that you are most welcome!

In advance of our Annual General Meeting on March 24, we are asking you to consider where you are able to step up and help us be Britannia United Church.

With deep appreciation to Kelvin Stanke, Don Jackson and Mary Lou Farrell for their roles as chairpersons of Council, Property and Ministry and Personnel, respectively, their terms are up. We also have openings on Stewards, Pastoral Care, Mission and Service and Outreach. There is a description for each of the roles found in the booklet "What Can I Do?" found on the blue table in the foyer. Rev Jen and Kelvin are also happy to chat with you. Not sure about getting involved? You are welcome to "dip your toes into the water" so to speak with some of our short term projects. Do you have an idea for an event or program or see a need? Fabulous! Let us know and we will support you to make it happen.

I leave you with an excerpt from my reflection last Sunday about call and discipleship (Mark 1:16-20) "I am also asking you to consider the various openings for volunteers that we have and where you might be able to share your gifts and skills, even if it means stepping out of your comfort zone, because we need you - we cannot be Britannia United Church if we don't have your support for our various ministries. BUC is not a building - as we discussed in the theme time with the children, the church is not a building, it is the people. Our call and vision as followers of Jesus is not to bring people in so we can pay our bills, our call and vision is to go out and make the world a better place like Jesus and his followers did AND if one of the benefits of that is growing our church community, then hallelujah - there is strength in numbers and there will be more people working together to make the world a more just, whole and healthy place!

Discerning who and how God calls us to be and following Jesus' compassionate Way of peace with justice, radical inclusivity and love is literally what church is all about. The current call and vision statement of The United Church of Canada reads: Called by God, as disciples of Jesus, The United Church of Canada seeks to be a bold, connected, evolving church of diverse, courageous, hope-filled communities united in deep spirituality, inspiring worship, and daring justice.

Friends, the community of faith that focuses on courageously answering God's call, intentionally nurturing a relationship with the Divine, boldly following Jesus by working for peace with justice by meeting folks where they are at is the church that thrives, the church that builds, and the church that creates God's vision of kin-dom.

God is calling, faithfully, may we answer that call and trust that as we do so, we will never be alone for God goes before and after us, God goes with us and within us - Thanks be to God, Amen!"

In Loving Service,

Rev. Jen

Property Redevelopment Discernment Committee

The following is intended to provide the Congregation with an understanding of the progression of the work being carried out by the Property Redevelopment Discernment Committee.

Background

As many of us know, the City of Ottawa has undertaken a review of the lands surrounding the future Pinecrest and Queensview O-Train stations to guide future development that supports transit and improves connectivity with the surrounding neighbourhoods. It is also conducting a study on the Lincoln Fields Station area which aims to facilitate a more urbanized place that helps meet the City's intensification targets and strategically locate density in proximity to the future Lincoln Fields O-Train Station. In addition to these important development plans around Britannia United Church, the City has seen a significant increase in the demand for housing.

It was in this context that Kathy Vandergrift, Chair of the Queensway Terrace North Community Association made a presentation on April 16, 2023, to the Congregation of Britannia United Church. Queensway Terrace North is the neighbourhood bounded to the north by Carling Avenue, to the west by Pinecrest Road, to the south by the Queensway (Highway 417), and to the east by the Transitway.

Britannia United Church has been operating at a deficit for many years. Between 2010 and 2023, annual operating losses steadily increased, while yearly offerings declined. While the Church has navigated through these growing deficits over the last few years, it is becoming more challenging. Further, the demand on aging volunteers is ongoing and membership is declining. These issues are not unique to our Church.

Hence, the Church Council mandated a committee, composed of Kelvin Stanke, Chair of Council, Colleen Chambers, Treasurer, and Helen Hutcheson, Chair of Stewards, with Rev Jen Power as the ministry resource, to gather information, and explore redevelopment options to support the sustainable, ongoing ministry of the Church. This Committee has taken on the responsibility of presenting various options on what the future of our Church could look like and providing information to the Congregation to review and discern the options.

Actions Taken

The Property Redevelopment Discernment Committee has taken a number of steps to begin gathering information on possible options:

- Contacted the City Counsellor, Theresa Kavanagh, and her staff, as well as a Senior Planner with the City of Ottawa.
- Met with Kindred Works, the development arm of the United Church of Canada, created in 2019 to repurpose its properties as a response to Canada's housing crisis.
- Requested that Kindred Works prepare a feasibility study. This was a high-level look at what was possible on the Britannia United Church property, with initial options for housing with a new church worship space. All discussions were exploratory.
- Reviewed the feasibility study with the Church Council which decided that the options and next steps should be presented to the Congregation for information and discussion.

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The Committee was given a mandate to hold a Congregational meeting and ultimately provide the Congregation with the opportunity to vote on an option for the future of the Church.

- Held Congregational meetings on December 3 and 10, 2023. Many comments, questions and concerns were noted.

Activities Underway

As its name implies, the Committee will continue its process of discernment. We are working together with the Congregation to determine whether the property should be redeveloped and what the possibilities for this redevelopment are. To assist with further research and the process of discernment, Leigh Bain joined the team in December 2023. Diane Houston has also been assisting the team with research.

Rev Jen is leading listening circles to take the temperature of the Congregation, listen to concerns and note questions.

The Committee is continuing to pursue its research by:

- Determining the fair market value of the Church's property based on current and proposed changes in zoning;
- Consulting with other churches, including other United Churches in the area, to discuss strategic options and sustainability;
- Consulting with other churches which have experience working with Kindred Works;
- Reviewing the proposed Letter of Agreement with Kindred Works;
- Monitoring developments with the City; and
- Narrowing, and clarifying redevelopment options.

Once all this research has been compiled, the Committee will share a document and engage in further discussion with the Congregation. Any decision concerning future redevelopment must be made by the Congregation.

A Possible Partnership with Kindred Works

Should the Congregation choose to partner with Kindred Works, the Property Redevelopment Discernment Committee and members of the Congregation would move to the next stage with them, which would permit Kindred Works to further analyze and develop a design that meets the needs of the Congregation. Kindred Works requires that the Congregation demonstrate their interest for further analysis by signing a Letter of Agreement. There is no monetary cost to Britannia United Church to moving to the next stage and it does not commit us to continuing to work with Kindred Works to redevelop the property.

The next stage involves Kindred Works, who would invest up to \$50,000, at their cost, in architectural, engineering, and other professional fees to facilitate work on a document to provide full details of what a potential redevelopment could look like. This document would provide details such as the revenue stream from the rental units to the Church, parking and property management details and much more to provide the Congregation with the information we are all seeking. It is expected and identified in the Letter of Agreement, that Britannia United Church would have full use of and autonomy in the space in a new development.

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After reviewing the document provided by Kindred Works, the Congregation would have the opportunity to vote a second time to move forward, or not to move forward, with the detailed redevelopment plan proposed by Kindred Works. If the Congregation decides NOT to move forward with the Kindred Works plan, the Church would be required to repay \$50,000 ONLY IF and WHEN the Church sells the property. The amount of \$50,000 would likely be a small percentage (~1%) compared to the proceeds of the sale of the property.

Discernment Decision

The Congregation needs to determine what the future of Britannia United Church looks like. We have an option to be part of a solution to the housing crisis, while at the same time, providing a sustainable revenue stream. We also have the option to sell the property and use the proceeds of the sale to relocate and contribute financially to the community in other ways. Another option is to amalgamate with a neighbouring United Church. These options would provide funds to operate the Church and allow a focus on ministry to the community versus just managing expenses. As a community of faith, the Congregation needs to determine the way forward for our Church and our collective wish to best meet the needs of the community.

The Property Redevelopment Discernment Committee trusts that God is guiding us each step of the way as we lead this process of discernment with our Congregation and how we can best follow in the way of Jesus.

Helen Hutcheson
Kelvin Stanke

Upcoming Events

Save the Dates in February and March

Sunday, Feb. 4

The first week of February marks the beginning of Black History (or African Heritage) Month. Officially recognized in Canada since 1996, this is a time to honour the contributions and struggles of peoples of African descent.

10:15 Sunday Worship
11:30 Listening Circle with Choir
1:00-4:00 Winter carnival at Frank Ryan Park

Friday Feb. 2 Friday Movies

No registration. Popcorn and juice available or bring your own food. Free will offering appreciated but not required.

1:00 Matinee: “Little Women” 2019 remake of the novel. Heartwarming fun on a cold day!

6:30 Sea Beast “When a young girl stows away on the ship of a legendary sea monster hunter, they launch into an epic journey and make history too!”

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Sunday Feb. 11

On this Sunday before Valentines Day, we consider the question “What does love look like?” Stay for potluck lunch followed by treats prepared by our children and youth and their families.

10:15 Worship
11:30 Valentines Tea

Monday Feb. 12 and Tuesday 25

10:00 - 12:30 Cooking Connection

Come learn a recipe or two, have a meal, enjoy conversation and take a meal home for your freezer too. Registration required. Fee \$20. Sign up with Kate in the office: 613-828-6018
office@brituc.ca

Feb. 9, Feb. 23, and March 29

10:30-11:30 Motion to Music

Dance is not only an excellent form of exercise, but it also helps people explore the potential of their own movement and artistry. Come join us on the last Friday of the month for a Motion to Music Workshop for seniors! No experience required. This is a free program and all are welcome! Registration required. Sign up with Kate in the office: 613-828-6018
office@brituc.ca

Wednesday Feb 14 Beginning of Lent

Lenten Devotions – daily email. Enhance your spiritual practice with a daily reading and prayer. Register your email address with Kate

Lenten Study / Discussion

Wednesdays 10:00 AM-12:00 noon Feb. 1, Feb. 21, Feb. 28, March 6, (no gathering on March 13), March 20, March 27, in Person at BUC, on Zoom beginning Feb. 21.

As neighbours, seekers, and followers of Jesus' Way, we are happy to announce that Britannia and Kitchissippi United Churches are offering a shared Lenten Study / Discussion series on Wednesday mornings from 10:00 - 12:00 at Britannia United Church. All are welcome! No previous Bible study experience is needed, simply bring an open mind and open heart.

Registration is helpful so that we can print the appropriate number of devotion booklets. We understand that you may not be able to attend every gathering, please come as you are able.

Feb. 14 Ash Wednesday Dinner and Worship

Kitchissippi United Church

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6:00 Pancakes, bacon, fruit, & bev.
7:00 Worship (online and in person)

In partnership with Kitchissippi and Trinity United Churches, all are welcome to begin the season of Lent with Ash Wednesday dinner and worship. Worship begins at 7:00 and is offered both in person and on-line. Please find the link on our website on Feb. 14 or on Kitchissippi's YouTube page. While registration is not required, for food preparation it is helpful to have an idea of numbers. Please let Kate or Rev. Jen know if you will be attending.

Thursday Feb 15. 1:00 Preventing Fraud & Staying Safe

Presented by Ottawa Police- Learn how to spot and prevent fraud. Sign up with Kate in the church office 613-828-6018 or office@brituc.ca

Feb. 18 Lent 1

Lent - what is this season for? Wilderness walking and spiritual practices.

10:15 Worship
11:30 Listening Circle with Outreach & Welcoming

Feb. 25 Lent 2

At the end of Black History Month, we welcome Peter Flegel, our neighbour and the Anti-Racism Secretariat for Government of Canada, who will help us consider Jesus's understanding of the greatest commandment "You shall love the Lord your God with all that you are and love your neighbour as you love yourself".

10:15 Worship
11:30 Listening Circle with Council

Wednesday Feb. 28 First Aid for Seniors 1:30 PM

Specifically geared toward seniors: keep yourself and others safe by learning some first aid basics. Sign up with Kate in the church office 613-828-6018 office@brituc.ca

Wednesday Feb 28 Zoom Listening Circle 7:00

For those who worship online only (please attend a listening circle in person if at all possible) Sign up with Kate in the church office 613-828-6018 or office@brituc.ca

March 1 Friday Movies

No registration. Popcorn and juice available or bring your own food. Free will offering appreciated but not required.

1:00 Matinee TBD (check our website or facebook or the poster in the foyer closer to the date)
6:30 Wish (Disney - was in theatres Nov 2023)

March 3 Lent 3

Listening for everyone who has not yet had the opportunity to attend.

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10:15 Worship

11:30 Making space in our days, minds and hearts for God leads to transformation

March 10th Lent 4

Friday, March 8 is International Women's Day. We give thanks to the Christian Women in Palestine who prepared our resources for worship today and to the women in our congregation who are sharing them with us!

10:15 Worship

March 17 Lent 5

Join us for a slice of pie and an opportunity to learn!

10:15 Worship

Thursday, March 14 is National PIE (Public. Intentional. Explicit.) Day. These are the standards we hold ourselves and our welcome to when we become affirming, welcoming, or inclusive communities. March 17 is a chance to serve some pie and roll out the PIE by celebrating the full inclusion of LGBTQIA+ and Two Spirit people in faith communities and beyond across Canada with our Outreach and Welcoming Team!

March 24th Palm Sunday!

“Called by God, as disciples of Jesus, The United Church of Canada seeks to be a bold, connected, evolving church of diverse, courageous, hope-filled communities united in deep spirituality, inspiring worship, and daring justice.”

10:15 Worship

11:30 Pot Luck and Annual General meeting

March 31 Easter Sunday!

Come, celebrate the Risen Christ within our worship, words, work and community!

10:15 Worship

For more information or to register for events, contact the church office at Office
613-828-6018 office@brituc.ca

Many Thanks to Maggie Taylor for sharing the Change.org petition regarding family doctors with us! If you would like to read this petition and sign, please copy and paste the following address in your web browser.

Remove Ontario Ministry of Health's Existing/Ongoing Patient-Physician Relationship Rules!
<https://www.change.org/p/remove-ontario-ministry-of-health-s-existing-ongoing-patient-physician-relationship-rules>