

Central Queens Pastoral Charge
United Church of Canada

Joint Needs Assessment Committee

Report



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Central Queens United Church
Hunter River, PEI

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JNAC REPORT 2018

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1. Community Profile

Introduction:

The Central Queens United Church is aptly named, located centrally in PEI's middle county of Queens, drawing and serving congregation members from all directions, north, south, east and west. Within the Community of Hunter River, its large building on spacious grounds is within walking distance of all the services and facilities listed below, which also draw citizens from an area with a circle radius of perhaps 15-minutes driving distance.

The nearby intersection of well-paved all-weather Highways 2 and 13 is also a commuting hub, connecting to and from Charlottetown in the east, the Cavendish resort area in the north, Kensington and Summerside in the west, and Crapaud, Borden and the Confederation Bridge in the south. To the residents of Hunter River, those same highways also provide outward access to the big box stores and grocery chains in Charlottetown, with its modern hospital, university, technical college, theatres, office blocks, Federal and Provincial government services, and every typical 'golden mile' business; and to the beaches and resort attractions on north and south shores.

Hunter River itself has always been a natural meeting place, and retains many signs of its history. Three valleys feed rivers into a large pond formed at one end by a dam for a wood mill. At the other end, a chain-pull ferry once carried horses and carriages across the main stream. The ferry is long gone, but the modern bridge that now serves cars, trucks and large RVs has sidewalks and railings allowing fresh generations of young anglers to try their luck.

Walk south and find a memorial park to the late much-loved resident Dr. Kent G. Ellis, the park located in place of the old railway station where Anne of Green Gables would have arrived, to be met by Matthew and taken north over the famous red clay roads. The park sits astride the old railway track, also long gone but converted into a well-groomed walking and cycling trail.

You need an automobile to go anywhere far from Hunter River, now that there's no train service. And the Charlottetown bus service doesn't reach here. But "We do have a Subway!" ...

... a fine Subway restaurant, with good fresh 'foot-longs', open evenings and weekends as well.

Uniqueness:

Every community on PEI justly claims a unique character. But where else has only about 350 residents and small tax revenues, while yet being able to list all of the following:

- The modern Central Queens Elementary School, with community school courses, gymnasium, playground equipment, and school playing fields.
- A separately located set of national-level competition soccer fields.
- An active Community Council.
- A Community Centre with space for community and senior citizen club meetings, yoga classes, and a library with well-stocked shelves of hard-cover and audio books for all ages, and frequent receipts of materials ordered from the entire PEI system.
- United and Presbyterian churches, each with its own cemetery, both offering regular services and Sunday schools.
- A post office that also redistributes mail to sub-offices.
- A modern Medical Centre with several practicing doctors and referral services.
- A modern PharmaChoice drug store with several fully qualified pharmacists, also containing a large convenience store stock.
- A modern dental clinic with several practicing dentists.
- An RBC/Royal Bank branch.
- A busy 'little theatre', named Harmony House, converted from the old Hunter River United Church building, with excellent stage and seating upstairs and restaurant and bar downstairs, attracting famous performers and full houses of appreciative patrons.
- Street lighting, and sidewalks on the main highway stretch.
- Cable television and high-speed internet.
- A retail Garden Centre, well-stocked from spring through fall.
- The office of the Member of Parliament for the constituency of Malpeque.
- A multi-pump Irving Circle K service station with large convenience store stock.
- A bakery with a café section.
- Another specialist bakery.
- A Provincial senior citizens residential apartment building.
- A private community care residential facility.
- A modern adult-friendly single-level apartment complex.
- Another modern multi-unit single-level apartment complex.
- A Lions Club.
- UCW, and several other community groups.
- A feed mill.
- An automobile service location with licensed mechanic.
- A custom cabinetry and wood-working shop.
- A garden furniture maker.
- Two trucking businesses.
- Horse breeding operations.
- A municipal sewage collection and treatment system.
- A Bell Aliant automatic exchange.
- A Maritime Electric transformer station.
- and eleven-inch trout in the pond!

With these assets, it's no wonder Hunter River is known by everyone as a desirable residential, retirement and Charlottetown dormitory community.

With its small tax base, there are no full-time municipal employees. Hunter River hires services as needed for such matters as sewage treatment facility maintenance, but otherwise depends largely on community-minded volunteers for its many collective activities. And in that respect – community service – it's not unique at all. Hunter River represents the best characteristics of the Prince Edward Island way of life.

The larger community area:

The businesses and services within the boundaries of Hunter River are considered convenient also for residents of St. Patrick, Rennie's Road, Fredericton, Hazel Grove, Glen Valley, Hartsville, Hampshire, North Wiltshire, Hopedale, Darlington, Brookfield, Greenvale, and Bungay, as well as Wheatley River.

On any given day walking between the convenience stores, pharmacy, post office and bank, a large proportion of people greeting each other will be from outside the municipal borders. But they'll still regard themselves as living in the same community area, because they're members of the same congregation, and of its choir or cemetery committee; members of the Women's Institute or the Home & School association, or the Senior Citizens Club; fellow volunteers with the fire department in neighbouring New Glasgow which serves much of central Queens County, or the emergency measures team in Hunter River; or the Lions Club or Freemasons Lodge or both. They know each other because they meet often, in many overlapping relationships. They are friends, neighbours and colleagues.

They share common concerns with what happens in and around Hunter River. They attend social, educational, business and political functions here. They play ball on the school baseball diamond, or kick one on the league-standard soccer fields up Rennie's Road. They join teams to raise funds, and to serve 'community' suppers – eat-in, take-out, or deliver. The Central Queens United Church has become well-known even far beyond the communities listed above, for its twice-yearly Roast Beef Suppers (three seatings, usually filled) and annual Dinner Theatre events (three nights in a row, often sold out a year in advance).

The popularity of some of our functions is partly related to our geographic position in the centre of the Island, but also – it bears repeating – to our enabling ethic of volunteerism. And the numbers who mobilize to prepare and serve those excellent meals, or act in those dinner theatre productions, ably represent the extraordinarily vibrant life of the Church and its larger community.

2. Pastoral Charge Profile

Who are we?

The present successful Central Queens United Church marked its 10th anniversary in 2017 with genuine celebration. We had emerged and developed from 4 separate and increasingly frustrated local congregations, through the long trials of amalgamation and the financing and construction of a single new building, into a single vibrant worship and spiritual service centre alive with numerous volunteers and activities, feeling positive and enthusiastic about our future.

We are a success story.

Once, we were 4 churches, known together as the Hunter River Pastoral Charge, with locations in Hampshire, North Wilshire, Wheatley River and Hunter River. As the smaller units faltered, we refocussed in 2004 on coming together in one congregation based in the old Hunter River building. The amalgamation made good sense, but not the small building (since made over into Harmony House, a popular music venue).

Our journey of transition had started ten years earlier, with the foresight of Rev. Austin Jagoe. Assessing our problems, he had seen that for us to thrive as a congregation we needed to bring the 4 separate groups together, working under one roof. But where?

A difficult struggle ensued, for the separate local congregations to come to terms with the idea of giving up their own church locations and refocussing on one elsewhere. Rev. Jagoe ('Reverend Austin') led us in this journey, and although it was not easy, and at times divisive, we did succeed in 2004. The initial single-service location was the Hunter River church, but the experience there proved the need for a much larger facility. But again, where?

The process of choosing location and site began. Rev. Austin Jagoe moved on, and Rev. Barbara Wagner ('Reverend Barb') answered our call. She and her husband, Anglican Priest Rev. Charles Wagner, became part of our church family. An effective team themselves, their love and devotion were what was needed to help unite the majority of the members from the 4 geographically separate congregations into one more vibrant unit, with optimism and commitment to the future.

How we came to locate and build the new physical structure is a story in itself. Several possible properties were assessed, with attention to all points of the former Charge. One emerged as perhaps best, part of an 8-acre parcel donated a quarter-century earlier by a Hunter River United Church parishioner to the PEI Government's Housing Authority for development of what became the LePage Memorial Court subsidized-housing apartment project, which actually came to occupy only 2 acres of that parcel. An option was taken on the remaining 6 acres, including access to the highway, although at a steep price.

But a committee chaired by church adherent George Mason, with members Melvin Ling and Grant Rackham, succeeded in arguing the case for the Government to donate that 6-acre lot 'back to' our church (from one of whose members it had received it as a gift), for only token costs instead. That success made location choice and building construction cost considerably easier. We held a faith service on that site in September 2006, and began construction.

By coincidence, the PEI Department of Highways at the same time began reconstruction of the previously steep hill section of Highway 2 eastwards out of Hunter River, and needed to dispose of excess shale and fill. We were pleased to provide them with a solution; our building and parking lot construction site. Church member Trevor Campbell's company provided the machinery and manpower for spreading and compacting the incoming material.

BernMar Construction Ltd acted as project manager and general contractor, and Burgoyne Construction undertook the siding. Those professionals, plus 32 other congregation volunteers contributing large amounts of 'sweat equity', added to many generous financial donations and a manageable mortgage, resulted in our first service being held in Central Queens United Church in April 2007. A very well-attended official opening service took place in September 2007, and our history since then has been a rewarding one of growth and optimism.

The awesome amount of volunteerism has also resulted in sold-out dinner theatres (all actors congregation members), twice-annual multi-seating roast-beef dinners (all cooks and servers members), Valentine's Day suppers, Ladies Evenings, and a variety of other events such as concerts and children's sleep-overs. Two UCW groups are active.

Our Sunday School enrollment for students up to Grade 12 has grown to over 65, its activities led by two coordinators and an enthusiastic group of teachers, who deliver a program that is educational and fun, and who maintain continuous contact with parents. It also includes outings to the Upper Room in Charlottetown to help prepare meals for the needy, other outings to the Rosewood Manor community care facility in Hunter River, and a highly popular weekend at Camp Abegweit (attended also by adults).

We are blessed with talented musicians and singers, organists, soloists and a Central Queens Musical Friends group including guitars, percussion and keyboard. Visiting soloists add to the beauty of our services. The choir, under the long-term guidance of Cindy Easter and recent addition of organist Kirk Neville, has also been blessed at the organ by Christine Belanger, Anne Andrews, Lori Ellis, Nancy Rackham, and several special guests. Choir groups and other congregation leaders also conduct religious services several times a year at Rosewood Manor.

We have become a single active, loving congregation, blessed by God and the generous contributions of many individuals with their variety of talents, to be able to come together and grow as a church family with a strong sense of community. We are confident that He will continue to grant us what we need to serve our member families and the greater community of Central Queens, walking together into a bright future.

3. Resources Profile

A high level of volunteerism from an active, engaged and enthusiastic congregation is arguably the greatest asset of Central Queens United Church. The diversity of their talents, and their ability to work together in harmony, are also extraordinary.

We have made good use of the team approach, with capable captains, to divide into quarters regular ongoing activities and provision of contributions in kind (food, kitchen work, time).

The 7,800-sq.ft. church structure is situated on six acres of property in the Community of Hunter River, placed well back from the highway but connected to it by a broad paved driveway. The property also includes a wide band of open land containing a well-packed unpaved driveway which connects from the church parking lot down to the combined Central Queens and old Hunter River Church cemeteries.

Constructed in 2007, the church building is a modern complex serving a multi-generational congregation as well as various community groups and outside organizations that use the space for various activities and events.

The one-level structure includes:

- a sanctuary with seating for 150, with a full-width dividing wall which opens up to a back hall that can in effect expand the sanctuary to accommodate another 100 seats,
- the hall furnished with moveable tables and chairs for after-service refreshments and other activities,
- a well-equipped commercial kitchen,
- 4 multi-purpose rooms adjacent to the hall, used for Sunday School and other activities,
- a Minister' study,
- an administration office,
- a large well-furnished sitting room variously used as a choir practice room, pre-wedding/funeral 'parlour', 'crying room', and retreat for parents with fussy children, also equipped with a service sound system and a large sanctuary viewing window,
- two large public washrooms,
- and a large paved parking lot.

All parts of the building are wheel-chair accessible, including the pulpit/choir area.

The sanctuary has two organs, a large screen for text and video display to the congregation, and a smaller one seen by the choir, plus a sound/projection system with an in-sanctuary control desk.

The staff includes a caretaker/cleaner, a secretary, an organist, and a volunteer choir director.

Seats in the sanctuary are detachable and removable to allow the space to be used for various other purposes.

The church property is well maintained with manicured lawns, shrubs and flower beds. Both lawn-cutting and snow removal services are contracted out.

Approximately 200 families attend the Church, and now about 70 children and youth are registered in our Sunday School program. We also offer a monthly youth group for students in grades 7 to 12.

The annual operating budget for Central Queens United Church is approximately \$140,000, plus \$22,000 for further mortgage reduction.

It is worthy to note that 50% of the total debt financing for construction of the new church, and expansions since, has already been paid down, and the remainder continues to reduce.

4. Position Profile

Specific Responsibilities:

Encourage Youth

- Support and encourage Sunday School and Youth development activities and special events. Our youth are an important group in our church now, and represent the future of our Church, but need a sense of purpose.
- Help find ways to increase Sunday School involvement in Sunday worship, music and song
- Help find ways for parents and congregation to promote youth group 'graduates', one by one, to become active members of the adult congregation

Pastoral Care

- Regular visits to provide pastoral care in homes, hospitals, nursing homes and seniors residences
- Counsel parishioners who are in bereavement through loss of a loved one
- While emphasizing confidentiality, provide initial counselling to individuals and families experiencing challenges, and consult with or refer them to other assistance professionals

Worship

- Plan the general direction and the overall format and content of inspirational worship
- Encourage lay participation in various aspects of the service
- Work with Worship Committee
- Encourage leaders and participants in music and song
- Prepare and conduct sacraments and special events
- Prepare and conduct weddings, funerals, baptisms and confirmations
- Lead Bible study and other small group study

Share Leadership

- Central Queens United Church has enjoyed remarkable success in many ways with leadership and guidance from the minister and depth of participation by numerous volunteers and leaders of service aspects and special events. Co-leadership by and with the Minister is highly valued.

Professional Development

- Meet with the Ministry and Personnel Committee to discuss professional development opportunities

Administration

- Share responsibility for administration of the pastoral charge with the Secretary and project leaders
- Participate in meetings with committee and group leaders where required or requested
- Represent the congregation in the courts of the wider Church

5. Skills Profile

Key skills and attributes:

- Genuine calling to Christian ministry
- Skills and knowledge to convey an effective spiritual message
- Effective oratorical, sermon and prayer skills to hold congregation attention and interest, speaking clearly so all can hear and understand
- Mature, compassionate personality
- Friendly and empathetic; caring and not judgemental
- Good listening and communication skills
- Interest in working with people of all ages, young and old
- Supportive of initiatives to provide formal aid to refugees and overseas projects, and involvements with Food Bank, Upper Room, and Good Samaritan Fund
- Strong but not overly dominant leadership qualities, respecting the talents of others and able to manage dominant personalities within the congregation to enable a harmonious environment
- Optimistic and enthusiastic
- Creative, innovative, energetic spirit for active involvement
- Ability to give personal counselling with assured confidentiality

6. Terms Profile

For Ordained Minister full-time position:

Salary and Allowances: Based on the current United Church of Canada Salary and Allowances Schedule

Study Leave: Three weeks (21 days) within each Pastoral Year (July 1 to June 30)

Continuing Education & Learning Resources Allowance: Per current United Church of Canada Salary and Allowances Schedule

Vacation: One month within each Pastoral Year

Telephone: Paid (excluding personal long-distance calls)

Moving Expenses: Paid (based on reasonable estimates and receipts)

Pension and Group Insurance: Payments as assessed

Adequate administrative assistance: Twelve hours per week

Travel Expense Reimbursement: Based on minimum General Council rate

FROM 4



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