

St. Aidan's United Church
Exploring Amalgamation
Cadboro Bay United Church

September 25, 2019 | Vol. 1 Issue 2

Hello again,

This is the second issue of a newsletter we are preparing to provide the participants of the congregation with information about the amalgamation conversation with Cadboro Bay UC. Please read this. Please come and be part of the conversation. We need and want your voice as we make this momentous decision in the life of St. Aidan's United Church.

But information alone is not enough. I know many of you care deeply about this church. When you sit in worship you see, not only the people you currently sit with, but also the memories of friends no longer here who sit with you. And for a moment you are back in the day... when Helen Mogenson lit up the room with her friendliness ... when Ed and Audrey Prokosch and Heather and Bill Nichols sat beside you... when Ted Boulden led the choir with his unique music... all these memories of people now gone accompany us every Sunday. And it is hard to think of leaving the space.

We think of all the sacrifices we have made to keep the building in great repair – sacrifices of time, energy and land. But there was the excitement of building up a great facility and feeling St. Aidan's would go on forever.

We have adjusted so creatively – we had an abundance of space, energy, vision and creativity. Oh, the good times we have had in building up St. Aidan's – the building and the congregation, the thrift shop and bazaar, our social justice and affirming work. We were the first Affirming congregation in Victoria – now there are many.

Where has the time gone? How did we get to where we are now? The community outside changed from being allies and supporters of mainline Christian churches to critics and sometimes adversaries – especially when we block their driveways with our overflow parking problems. Victoria became the most secular city in the north west region known as Cascadia. We can feel it. Our children, now grown, developed different Sunday activities and now young families often keep Sunday reserved for family only time.

Now the view of the horizon seems so much closer for our beautiful church. Oh, we have a few great years left, but we'll soon be faced with the questions of who will take over from us – and how much will we have to change even if a new generation and new faces join us.

We battle with our nostalgia and our realism – what do we need to do to secure a future for our beautiful church – for our open minded and open-hearted understanding of Jesus call?

This is not an easy time, but it is a real time. And we are the stewards of God's church now and we are being called to step up and decide on the future we want. With God's love supporting us and reminding us that we are never alone, we live in God's world, we can do this.

God bless all of us as we remember, as we grieve and as we seek the future of St. Aidan's United Church.

Love, Cheryl

Exploring Amalgamation

Timeline, Events & Important Dates

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Timeline & Events

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Timeline

In **September** we.....

1. Set the date for the Amalgamation Vote: Sunday, November 24, 2019.
2. Set the threshold for a positive vote to be 60%.
3. Decided to vote by secret ballot.
4. Publicized no voting by proxy.
5. Set criteria for those eligible to vote as Active Adherents.
6. Publicized first draft of Membership and Active Adherents list. **Please check lists to make sure your name is included.**
7. Had a lunch and conversation with CBUC.
8. Launched this years' theme "Finding our Way".
9. Established steering committee of 2 chairs, 2 councils, 2 treasurers, 2 ministers, 2 members from Pragmatic Working Group.
10. Put up 2 information bulletin boards in Great Hall.

In **October** we **WILL**.....

1. Establish the voters list at the October congregational meeting.
2. Give notice of the wording of the Amalgamation vote question.
3. Make a Social Enterprise announcement.
4. Host a joint congregational Stewardship connection for the annual operating budget.
5. Hire a consultant to lead the process in visioning.
6. Hold a 4-hour workshop on Vision & Purpose.

Important Dates

September 29
Lunch and conversation with CBUC

October 27
Congregational Meeting
Final Voting Lists

November 24
Amalgamation Vote

Exploring Amalgamation

Voting Criteria & Options

Voting Criteria

Here are some details decided by the Joint Councils:

- Threshold for a successful vote will be 60% or more in favor
- Vote will be secret ballot
- Voting by both congregations will happen on the same day and time, and both will be informed of the others decision at that same meeting.
- Voting by proxy is not allowed. Only those attending and eligible to vote will be counted
- A member from the Pacific Mountain Regional Council will be in attendance to monitor
- Those eligible to vote are as follows:
 - All those who are on the Pastoral Charge list as full members
 - All those who are active Adherents defined by meeting at least 2 of the following
 - Support the congregation financially
 - Attend worship regularly (once a month or more)
 - Participate in study groups or committees, or have a leadership role in the congregation
 - Currently under the pastoral care of the church



Options

Voting Options

1. Remaining a neighbourhood congregation and try to manage the decline in our energy, finances as well as the increase in our age demographics. We will slowly move from a medium sized church (over 100 worshippers on a Sunday) to a small membership church (less than 100 worshippers on a Sunday). We will seek new sources of ministry and growth in the congregation through the new initiatives we are exploring and the redevelopment of our financial sustainability. Currently we have 5- 8 years of sustainability without substantial changes.
2. Finding Our Way with a New Vision – St. Aidan’s and Cadboro Bay churches amalgamate which will mean:
 - a. We will be a community of about 200-300 people with at least 2 styles of worship – back to what St. Aidan’s was 15 -20 years ago.
 - b. We will be a church with all ages present: a vibrant children’s, youth, young adult, family, adult, senior adult programs
 - c. We will gather in small groups to give and receive spiritual friendship, growth and support
 - d. We will have 2-4 Social Enterprises (values based, for-profit businesses) up and running and providing a new economic pillar in our financial base as well as an outlet for reaching out. These will take 5-7 years to develop their potential revenue stream.
 - e. Congregational members will continue to financially support the merged congregations and will reduce slowly as the demographics continue to evolve.
 - f. We will have the capacity to respond to new initiatives because we won’t be stretched so thin.