

# Highlands United Church Legacy Project Update 4

## Buildings

Our buildings are a significant asset and we continue to explore the best path forward to ensure they support our work as a community of faith. Here are some highlights of our work in this area to date.

- Security and Access Management – as we look to welcome more users into our building, we do need to consider security for everyone and to control access within the church. We are planning to get a security assessment done to provide a plan of how best to manage this. Grants are available to support this and we are looking into the applications for this.
- Iconography and Rentals – in preparation of potential new tenants and users in the church, we have identified relocation plans for iconography outside the sanctuary. Pictures, memorials and other items that celebrate our faith will be relocated out of potential rental spaces and focused in a few areas of the church. A workbee to clear out potential rental spaces and relocate the iconography will be planned this fall.
- Manse – the focus is on separating the manse and church lots for ease of dealing with the buildings individually, and updating the land title for both the church and the manse. Discussions with the United Property Resource Corporation (UPRC) have suggested we hold off on its sale until we have further discussions with them about our overall strategy related to our buildings.

## Partnerships and Collaboration

Our continued success will rely on partnership and collaboration with other groups. Here are highlights of the work to date.

- Met with 15 United Church communities of faith at Northern Spirit Region gathering in June to discuss opportunities for communities of faith to work together and support each other. We agreed to further discussions with a number of congregations including McDougall/Garneau, Salisbury, and Pilgrim United Churches.
- Had discussions with the Highlands Community League about potential partnership. We need to focus on developing our own strategy and vision for the church first before we are able to fully discuss collaboration. They are focusing on work for their own new building.

## Church statistics

- United Church membership in Canada declined from 480,000 to 350,000 from 2011 to 2021. (Stats Canada, 2021)
- United Church worship attendance declined from 165,000 to 120,000 from 2011 to 2021. (Stats Canada, 2021)
- United Church churches are closing at a rate of more than one per week. (National Trust of Canada, 2019)
- One-third of Canada's faith buildings are expected to close within this decade. (Canadian Urban Institute, 2025)

## Legacy Project Update

### Stage 3 – Identifying Options

What we have completed this past few months:

- Attended Northern Spirit Region church gathering
- Manse property surveyed and subdivision application made to City
- Board approval for relocation plans for church iconography
- Initial discussions with McDougall/Garneau community of faith on potential collaboration

What we are working on:

- Developing Rental Strategy with United Property Resource Corporation (UPRC)
- Update of land title
- Exploring property management options
- Exploring security assessment grant application
- Relocation of church iconography
- Continued discussions with other communities of faith on potential partnerships and collaboration

### Legacy Team Members

Mervin Gallant, Ruth Spooner, Carol Bergum, Sandy Herity

### Legacy Project

- ① Taking a Legacy Path ✓
- ② Information Gathering ✓
- ③ Selecting Options ★
- ④ Establishing a Legacy Path