**Antler River Watershed; Horseshoe Falls; Western Ontario Waterways**

**Regional Councils**

**Community of Faith: Living Faith Story Worksheet**

**PURPOSE**: To provide information about the Community of Faith’s understanding of their ministry and mission.

**Who uses it**: Communities of Faith in gathering their profile information for ChurchHub.

Community of Faith: FIRST UNITED CHURCH – St. Thomas, Ontario

Regional Council: ANTLER RIVER WATERSHED

Date: May 26, 2019

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| **Mission Statement:** | **Seeking to be a welcoming community of Christian Faith, proclaiming and celebrating the Love of God in Jesus Christ through the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.** |
| **Values:** | 1. Inclusive, welcoming community of Christian faith
2. Nurturing healthy and supportive relationships
3. Community and Fellowship
 |
| **Summary of your community of faith** | **Our vision is to be a vibrant community of faith, engaging all with a focus on youth and young families in ministry and reaching out to the world with the love of God in Christ.** |
| **Priority** | **Ministry Category** | **Definition of Current Ministry** *(How would you describe your ministry? What is important to you?)* |
| 9 | Administration | We have a full-time office administrator and the minister’s office is equipped with a laptop and high-speed internet. The building is also equipped and secured with video cameras. We support staff with equipment upgrades and updates as reasonably requested. |
| 5 | Community Outreach & Social Justice | As a congregation, we endeavor to live out our faith by supporting some of the needs in our community through Caring Cupboard, Secret Santa gifts, Grace Café, and other organizations that help the less fortunate. We have in the past also acted out our faith by sponsoring and supporting a Syrian Refugee family. Throughout the year we have a variety of events that bring our church community together and raise money for various needs. We encourage our youth to assist with reaching out into our community. |
| 6 | Continuing Education  | We encourage and support education opportunities for our ministry personnel. We also host and promote various learning opportunities and workshops for all members of the congregation through regular retreats.  |
| 7 | Denomination & Communities | We currently have limited partnerships with other churches in our community, but we seek to expand our relationships with other churches and organizations in this community. In 2020, we are hosting Union Church as they celebrate 200 years as a congregation and host the Moderator. We support and participate in Regional Council activities. We also partner with and support Pearce Williams Christian Camp. |
| 3 | Faith Formation & Christian Education | We share our faith with children through our growing Church School, which is currently run by several volunteer teachers, and reach out to our youth with two youth groups that meet regularly with guidance and supervision from two volunteers. We hold regular Bible studies and host Vacation Bible School each summer. We are currently offering a video series on parenting. |
| 2 | Leadership | As we go through a period of transition, we have many lay people within the church who have stepped up to lead our Board, our Sunday School and special fundraising events within the church.  The church needs a leader(s) who can work with the board and various committees to make sure we have the proper programs and resources to meet the needs of the congregation. Drawing on the talents of our lay members is essential to help our congregants engage in the church.  We may hire additional support to help grow and support our ministry to youth and children.  We value leadership who works responsively, listening and responding to the needs of the congregation.  Strong leadership will also provide effective and timely communication to our community of faith. |
| 4 | Pastoral Care | As we currently have one full time Minister, much of the Pastoral Care falls on him. We have an aging population, and this can be a demanding part of the ministry, as ministry to our seniors is essential. Having a minister who lives in and is engaged with the community is important. We see the importance of engaging others to support and assist with Pastoral Care within our community of faith. Strong interpersonal and relationship skills have proven to be very valuable attributes. |
| 8 | Self-care | We encourage good self care for all staff and volunteers. A healthy work/life balance is important. |
| 1 | Worship | The Sunday morning worship experience is of utmost importance to the members at First United Church. We come to hear the Word of God preached in an uplifting and Scripturally grounded manner that we are able relate to and apply in our lives today. We seek a welcoming, meaningful and inclusive worship experience through a variety of musical methods, including choir, soloists, keyboard, guitar, drums and pipe organ, which is arranged by our part-time music director. We look for creative ways to make worship more meaningful and relevant, with the congregation leaving worship feeling inspired. |

Do you have any goals for the next year that might enhance your current ministry or begin something new? ? [ ]  No [x]  Yes *If yes, please list or append.*

* Seeking to expand our child and youth programming with the individuals who are leading youth groups and church school
* Hosting Union United Church in 2020 as they celebrate 200 years as a community of faith, which will include a visit from the moderator
* Continue to develop new leaders from within the congregation to help share in our ministry