

Report of the Joint Needs Assessment Committee

For the hiring of a Full-time Minister and a 0.5 Child and Youth Minister

to the

Strathmore United Church Congregation

Members of the JNAC

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DEFINING THE NEED AT STRATHMORE UNITED CHURCH

Current Situation

The Strathmore United Church community is experiencing a time of transition, challenge and opportunity. Reverend Murray Etty who has served the congregation since August 2001 is retiring at the end of February 2008. The members of the Strathmore United Church community have appreciated his inspirational leadership and dedicated ministry and his focus on promoting the active involvement of church members through discipleship and service.

In January 2005 a Church Council model was initiated as a new approach for providing leadership and empowering members of the church community. While the church council is responsible for the financial well-being and the overall operation of the church, the main function is to develop leadership and promote discipleship within the Church community.

The members of the Strathmore United Church congregation are actively involved in service work in the community. The biannual thrift sale which is held in the church and made possible by countless hours of volunteer work involving a significant number of members of the congregation and several volunteers from the community is an example of the strong commitment to help those in need and to serve the community. The church council has established a priority in its action plan on reaching out to the community and welcoming newcomers.

As well, it is recognized that the young people are an integral part of the congregation. A priority has been placed on inspiring young people to get more involved in church activities as well to empower them to take on meaningful projects related to their spiritual growth. The Church Council has taken action in building on the excellent work that has been done to promote the active involvement of children and youth in the church through creating a 0.5 time Child and Youth Minister Position.

PROFILES

1. Strathmore Pastoral Charge Profile

The congregation of the Strathmore United Church is one of limited ethnic diversity. It is representative of the population of Strathmore and its outlying area. The congregation consists of a strong core of seniors with the balance of the adherents being a good cross section of middle age and young families that have at least one working parent and some children and youth. In addition to a range of ages and life situations, there exists a rural/urban blend of families. The church services a broad area outside the Strathmore boundaries but the core group consists of about 96 families, twenty families of which represent the children and youth members of our congregation. There is an opportunity to significantly increase the number of members in the church community by attracting newcomers in this rapidly growing community.

The Mission Statement, adopted in November 2006, is applicable to the life of this congregation.

“Strathmore United Church exists as a welcoming community of faith, to equip people for Christian discipleship and to support each other in our faith journeys as we go into the world to make a difference for Christ.”

While the members of this congregation are strong community workers and are well versed in the issues within their community, there is an opportunity to encourage more members of the church community to share their gifts through discipleship. Everyone here enjoys a strong, meaningful Sunday worship. This includes upbeat music, a pertinent message in the sermon, and a foundationally strong Sunday School. People are experiencing a truly spiritual message that sustains them in their daily lives throughout the rest of the week. We are working on the Emerging Spirit initiative. Adult members have enjoyed a variety of Church Educational classes. The children and youth have shared their extraordinary gifts with the congregation at various times throughout the year with performances including a spectacular Christmas Pageant every year. The members of the congregation enjoy having children and youth actively involved in the life and work of the church and have placed a high priority on enhancing programs and activities for children and youth.

The members of the congregation in reflecting on the life and work of the Strathmore United Church community have identified the following **areas of strength**:

- The Friendliness of the People - The members of the congregation are seen as caring, friendly and welcoming. A priority is placed on having: greeters to welcome people to the worship service; coffee and visiting after church; soup and bun Sundays; potluck dinners and activities promoting socialization and service such as the UCW; the quilters group and study groups.

- A Focus on Meaningful Worship and Caring and Prayerful Fellowship -The church community appreciates the leadership, strength, commitment and spiritual teachings and the ability to relate biblical references to modern-day experiences. Study courses are terrific. As well, involving members of the congregation in sharing their gifts and being involved in active discipleship is highly valued.
- The Openness of the Church Community - Our church is always available to any religion and is open to diversity, inclusiveness and different perspectives. We have positive relations with other denominations and faiths. We never turn anyone away.
- Community Outreach and Caring for the Extended Community (locally, nationally and internationally) - At the local level the bi-annual thrift sale brings many members of the congregation and community together in faith and service and it is a wonderful aspect of Strathmore United Church. Congregation members are great supporters of community and are active in a variety of service organizations, volunteer groups and special initiatives such as the coordination of a breakfast program at the Storefront School. As well there is a deep concern for justice, peace and outreach as reflected in the very significant contribution which is made each year to the Mission and Service fund and the involvement in a variety of outreach initiatives such as the Foodgrains Bank.
- Pastoral Care - Members of the church community demonstrate caring for each other in many different ways including informal interactions and visits, hospital visits and prayer requests. As well, members of Strathmore United Church are actively involved in helping others through volunteer work.

The members of the church community in reflecting on **areas of need** have identified the following:

- Attracting New Families (young and old) and Providing a Spiritual Home for Newcomers in Strathmore - We need to have a long-term vision in regard to the church's role in the community and to develop strategies for reaching out to newcomers and providing a spiritual home for the members of this rapidly growing community.
- Ministry to Children and Youth - In Strathmore United Church we value and appreciate the involvement of children and youth in the life and work of our church. The search for a 0.5 time Child and Youth Minister reflects the commitment of the congregation to build on existing programs and initiatives to increase and enhance the involvement of children and youth in church activities.
- Enhancing Pastoral Outreach Programs - We can be doing more as a congregation to support our minister who is primarily responsible for pastoral care by becoming involved in visiting, supporting those in need and caring for others through more formal participation in pastoral outreach programs.
- Introducing New Approaches to Worship and Fellowship - We need to explore different ways of practicing our faith while at the same time maintaining a balance between

modern and traditional worship. We can build on our excellent music program and consider the use of a variety of music genres, special events and outreach initiatives. We need to become known for something in addition to the thrift sale.

- Continued Spiritual and Personal Growth Leadership - We need to continue to support and teach about Christianity in our daily lives and to be a caring, friendly, sincere church community. We need to provide more opportunities for individuals to learn and grow in their faith and to take on leadership roles in sharing their gifts.

2. Strathmore and Area Community Profile

Strathmore, located 30 minutes east of the Calgary city limits is a growing, evolving community with a vibrant mix of people. This mix consists of farmers, local retailers, commuters and retired people. We are neighbors with several small communities and the Siksika Nation. Strathmore has grown rapidly in the past five years to a population of 11,000. Many of the big box stores have moved in and the culture of the town is changing somewhat. It does maintain some local flavor with the population having easy access to city amenities; see Town of Strathmore website: www.strathmore.ca

As of September 2007, Strathmore has four elementary schools (K-6), two junior highs, two new high schools, a virtual school, and a Storefront School. A Catholic School system was established in 2002. Post secondary education is available in Calgary at SAIT, Mount Royal College, the University of Calgary and other various colleges; see Golden Hills School Division website: www.ghsd75.com

The Calgary Health Region (CHR) oversees the health care programs and services in Strathmore and the surrounding area. We have a local 22 bed acute care hospital with 23 extended care beds. Homecare and Public Health are available through the CHR. It is anticipated that sod will be broken for a 160 bed long term care facility in the spring of 2008. Several doctors and dentists have practices in town. There are several apartment and condo complexes for the elderly. Wheatland Lodge, with occupancy for 96 people, serves those who may need some assisted living. Alberta Mental Health Services are also available locally through the CHR; see Calgary Health Region website: www.crha-health.ab.ca

Social services and supports are available through Wheatland Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) and Hearthstone Child and Family Services. Many other supports are available in the community, which include the Strathmore Crisis Shelter, AA, Citizens on Patrol, TOPS, and a variety of social clubs, service clubs and play groups; see Wheatland County website: www.wheatlandcounty.ca

Many recreational activities are available within the greater Strathmore District. The facilities include a twin arena, curling rink, golf courses, an indoor swimming pool, playgrounds, rodeo grounds, fitness centers and a library. Some of the activities include hockey, soccer, gymnastics, swimming, lacrosse, dance, music, curling, rodeo, Guides

and Scouts, baseball, slow-pitch and arts societies. Again one may wish to refer to the Town of Strathmore website for more details.

There are 11 churches in Strathmore. A local ministerial group services the needs of the Lodge, the hospital pastoral care, and numerous interdenominational activities; see Strathmore United Church website: www.suchurch.com

As Strathmore grows, we see a variety of challenges and opportunities. With our rapidly growing area, Strathmore United Church is in an ideal position to further extend the ministry into the community and invite new members to become involved. As a congregation, we must move forward and reach out to prospective members, while ministering to our current membership and sustaining the good things that are happening in our church. What an exciting challenge!

3. Resource Profile

Stewardship

We receive money through giving as indicated in the Annual Church Report. All of our money received comes from the offering plate, Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR) and in the mail. A special event to promote stewardship and solicit financial commitments and a commitment to share special gifts from the members of the church community was held in May 2007. Communication of our financial situation is kept through our newsletters and weekly bulletins. Our expenses are all separated on the attached Financial Statement.

Property

As a pastoral charge we possess a church building that is free of any debt. The building is considered to be in very good shape with a renovated entrance/gathering area and elevator for handicapped access, new roof, new furnaces and a recently painted basement. An appraisal on the church is currently in the process of being completed. In 2006 it was evaluated at \$1,040,000.00.

Volunteers

We have many volunteer positions and they are filled by very faithful people, although the committees are always in need of fresh faces. Some of the programs we enjoy are coffee after church, choir, once-a-month soup and bun lunches, Bible study, U.C.W., youth group, suppers, senior's breakfast, thrift sale twice a year, greeters and ushers, etc. Hopefully we will be able to bring in new people to fill some of these positions both as leaders and participants.

Honoraria

As a pastoral charge, we offer honoraria to individuals for the positions that we could not expect people to fill as volunteers. This includes the Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and the Music Team. The Secretary and the Caretaker are paid a salary. Without their work and support we would not be able to run our church.

4. Position Profile for the Minister

Desired Outcomes of Ministerial Leadership

- The building up of vibrant Christian Community so that folks of all ages and stages feel that they belong and have a role to play in the life and work of the congregation. This may be accomplished through the promotion of the following:
 1. Gifts discernment and lay ministry initiatives both within and beyond the congregation.
 2. Intergenerational activities.
 3. Spiritual growth initiatives for individuals and groups
 4. A program for the welcoming and integration of newcomers. (i.e. Emerging Spirit)
 5. Effective communication strategies both within and beyond the congregation.
 6. Lay involvement in worship leadership and pastoral care.
- Working with Church Council to encourage lay leadership and to help leaders get the training and support they need to carry out effective ministries.
- Working with the Worship team to provide challenging and uplifting worship, which would include a variety of music resources, and effective use of PowerPoint.

Worship Duties and Responsibilities

- One Sunday morning worship service (monthly communion)
- Christmas services
- Ecumenical Good Friday Service
- Services at Wheatland Lodge and Extended Care are conducted by members of the ministerial association on a rotating basis.

Meetings

- Church Council meetings (once a month - 10 per year)
- Worship Team - approximately eight times a year
- Other team meetings
- Ongoing consultation with the secretary who works 3 mornings/week (12 hours)

Other Required Duties

(2006 statistics)

- Baptisms / Confirmations - (9)
- Funerals - (13)
- Weddings - (3)
- Membership Transfer – (0)
- Involvement in Foothills Presbytery

Community Opportunities

- Interagency - social service agencies, RCMP etc meet once a month
- Strathmore and Area Ministerial Association

Lines of Accountability

- Directly to the Ministry and Personnel Team up through to the Church Council, Pastoral Charge and Foothills Presbytery.

Desirable Qualities and Skills for the Position

- An individual with strong and effective people skills, a sense of humor, enthusiasm and the ability to relate well with all ages.
- An individual with strong communication skills; a good speaker who can provide inspirational sermons and facilitate meaningful worship.
- A compassionate, understanding individual who will listen to all ages and express a genuine concern for all people.
- An individual with strong leadership skills, good organizational skills and the ability to facilitate the growth of the church community, at the same time recognizing the importance of maintaining personal wellbeing.
- An individual with a strong foundation of faith and spirituality, who sees the ministry as a calling, has a deep understanding of biblical resources and the guiding principles of the United Church of Canada and an individual who is able to relate the scriptures to day-to-day living and to inspire others in their faith journey.
- A vital interest in music of all kinds as a key means of enlivening worship.

The United Church of Canada Duty of Care

The following are required:

- A police check
- A child welfare check – through the Alberta Child & Family Services

5. Terms Profile for the Minister

Salary and Housing

- Salary is based on the General Council grid plus an amount beyond the grid guidelines based on qualifications and experience that is mutually agreeable between the successful applicant and the Church Council.
- A housing allowance of \$1000.00 per month will be paid.

Expenses and Allowance

- Travel expenses are reimbursed at a rate of 36 cents per kilometer for work-related travel (logged) other than home to work travel.
- Moving expenses are negotiable.
- Basic telephone service to the person's home is paid.
- Financial support for study and life long learning and book allowance (\$1200 and three weeks or 21 days).

Benefits provided by the Pastoral Charge

- Minister's office and secretary's office are in the church.
- Secretary works three mornings a week to a maximum of 12 hours.
- Pension and group insurance.
- Payroll compliance with government programs (CPP, E.I., etc).

Working Conditions

- Full time work is assumed to be 40 hours per week. This can be broken down into time units of three per day (morning, afternoon and evening) times five days equals 15 units. Then the candidate contracts to work so many time units to make a 40 hour week.
- Minimum holiday time is one month in every July 1st to June 30th period.
- Salary continuance is required for six months of disability.
- Maternity, parental, compassionate, and bereavement leave.

6. Position Profile for the Child and Youth Minister

Summary Statement

The incumbent will coordinate the church school and youth programs for the younger generation that associates itself with the Strathmore United Church.

Introductory Comment

Ordained ministers are ordered for a vocation of "word, sacrament, and pastoral care" through academic training and internship.

Diaconal ministers are ordered for a vocation of "education, service, and pastoral care" through integrated specialized training. These two streams are not mutually exclusive as talents and abilities are specific to the individual not the training.

For this position it is suggested that the skills a candidate possesses are more important than whether the person is ordained or diaconal trained. The crucial issue is to match the needs of the congregation with the abilities of the candidate.

The Church Council has taken action in building on the excellent work that has been done to promote the active involvement of children and youth in the church through creating this 0.5 time Child and Youth Minister Position. Consideration will also be given to the possibility, should it arise, of having a spousal team to fill the two positions.

Time Allocation for this Position

Full time work is assumed to be 40 hours per week, therefore, 0.5 F.T.E. works out to 20 hours per week. The hours can be allocated in any logical way as long as the job is accomplished.

Lines of Accountability

The incumbent will report to the Ministry and Personnel committee of the church and through to the Church Council, Pastoral Charge and the Foothills Presbytery.

Duties and Responsibilities

- Co-ordinate and evaluate meaningful experiences for children and youth. Some of these areas could include:
 - Sunday School programming
 - Children and youth music
 - Children's involvement in worship
 - Special Sundays such as Christmas Pageant, Mother's Day, Thanksgiving etc.
- Communication should occur regularly as to what is happening, or about to happen. Examples may include:
 - Bulletin announcements.
 - Verbal announcements at the beginning of the Sunday worship
 - Submitting newsletter items
 - Periodic communication with parents
 - Occasional student presentations during Sunday church service
- Parents need to know ahead of time when children will be singing in worship, and involved in special service preparations.
- With the assistance of the Christian Education Committee and other members of the congregation recruit Sunday School teachers when necessary.
- Evaluate and order United Church curricula and learning resources.
- Encourage and make available ongoing teacher and volunteer education programs.
- Report in person, or provide a written report on child and youth activities to the Church Council, at least four times a year.
- Consider preparing and sharing resources with other United Churches.
- Yearly Church School report for the annual church report in January.
- With the help of the greeters and ushers, make contact with new families to welcome them and inform them of Church School activities
- Develop a yearly plan.

Desirable Qualities and Skills for the Position

- Background in working with young people; care and concern for children and youth as persons.
- A concern and interest in helping children and youth discover and grow towards a meaningful and purposeful life and faith.
- Ability to team with the staff and congregation.
- Ability to nurture and enable others to act.
- Flexibility to address the diverse needs of children and youth.
- Willingness to coordinate.
- Ability to organize and facilitate.
- Ability to live out their theology and spirituality.
- A sense of humor.
- Musical interests.
- Familiar with basic technology.
- Motivator, energizer, bring new approaches.
- Willingness to be part of a larger community, for example work with other churches on a Vacation Bible School.
- Have knowledge and a working understanding and basic theology of the United Church of Canada.

The United Church of Canada Duty of Care

The following are required:

- A police check
- A child welfare check – through the Alberta Child & Family Services

7. Terms Profile for the Child and Youth Minister

Salary and Housing

- Salary paid according to the General Council salary grid times 0.5 OR to be negotiated based upon related experience in this kind of work.
- Housing Allowance is 0.5 times the housing allowance that is paid to the Minister.

Expenses and allowance

- Travel expenses are reimbursed at 36 cents per kilometer for work-related activities (logged) other than from home to work.
- Moving expenses - negotiable
- Basic telephone service – a portion of the basic monthly telephone charge is paid.
- Financial support for study and life long learning and books - \$600.

Benefits provided by the Pastoral Charge

- Minister's office and secretary's office in the church.
- Secretary works 3 mornings a week, to a maximum of 12 hours.
- Pension and group insurance - as per the General Council salary guidelines
- Payroll compliance with government programs (CPP, E.I., etc).
- Dental and health benefits - as per the General Council guidelines.
- Office space and secretarial help to be negotiated. Someone may wish to volunteer for the latter or the incumbent may wish to do his or her own.

Working Conditions

- Minimum holiday time is one month in every July 1st to June 30th period.
- Life Long Learning & book allowance-negotiable (\$600).
- Salary continuance is required for six months of disability.
- Maternity, parental, compassionate, and bereavement leaves.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As a result of our present minister retiring effective on February 29, 2008 we now have a vacancy to fill for a fulltime Order of Ministry.

In the spring of 2007 the pastoral charge budgeted for a 0.4 FTE Child and Youth Minister, which has been revised to a new 0.5 FTE position.

It is recommended that:

1. The position of an order of ministry person be requested through Foothills Presbytery.
2. The 0.5 FTE position of a Child and Youth Minister be requested through Foothills Presbytery. This is a new position in the Strathmore Pastoral Charge.
3. In the process of searching for individuals to fill these positions it is recommended by Strathmore Church Council that the Joint Search Committee (JSC) be allowed flexibility in filling both positions by balancing the desired qualities and skills with those presented by the candidates.

APPENDIX I

Strathmore United Church Survey

Search For A New Minister
December 2007

The Joint Needs Assessment Committee (JNAC) needs your input to assist with the process of seeking out a new minister. **Please complete this short survey and drop it in the offering plate or return it to the church office.** All responses are kept confidential.

THE DEADLINE FOR COMPLETION IS SUNDAY, JANUARY 6, 2008. The findings will be available by the end of January.

If you would rather complete the survey on-line, please go to:
www.suchurch.com

1. What do you believe are the TOP 3 STRENGTHS of the Strathmore United Church community?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

2. What do you believe are the TOP 3 NEEDS we should address as a church community?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

3. What do you feel are the 3 MOST IMPORTANT QUALITIES we should be seeking in a new minister?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

4. Do you have any other comments to provide to the JNAC as we work through the process of seeking out a new minister?

Thank you for participating in the survey.

APPENDIX II

Other Comments Received From the Congregational Survey

- We need a set of goals regarding future directions for Strathmore United Church and to establish clear expectations in regard to the leadership role of the minister.
- I hope we do not become so set in getting new young people to join us that the “old guard” is neglected as that is where the money comes from to support the others.
- I have found it enlightening to have a leader that goes beyond the sugar-coated kiddie versions of the Bible. Realities of the day and current events always make the lessons and reading that much more relevant. I also find a good mix of the traditional and new innovative services/songs, etc. add to the church service.
- If we don't find a minister who is agreeable to a youth program running during the week, we will be forced to change churches. We should also go back to having some people from the church calling others 2 or 3 times during the year like what was done a few years ago. Maybe we should have some kind of activity every other month or so to attract the wider community to the church.
- It's very important to visit the people in hospital or confined to home. We have lost a few people over the last 2 or 3 years due to a lack of visitation.
- We need someone who will continue to provide spiritual renewal through sermons and continuing education.
- I have been in this church for almost 8 years and I still like to go to church whenever we can. I look forward to meeting new youth and that's the only way I can meet people except for youth group on Thursday afternoons [offered at another church]. I like to go to the activities organized through the church.
- Musical ability would be nice. A family man with a family also committed to the church and its workings would be a benefit.
- It would be important for this person to be able to relate to all age groups, particularly the young people. We need a combination, but I doubt that we will be able to find one. In the end, we will likely have to have a part time youth minister.
- I really think the crisis in our church is the need for leadership of our younger members of the congregation. Someone who has ideas of ways to inspire others to get involved is needed. We need a minister with a desire and the ability to connect with and lead all ages. Obviously, he/she would need assistance, but it would be great to have someone who has ideas and a willingness to reach the younger generation and inspire all ages to get involved.

- As we search for a new minister, we should also be researching other successful churches which are attracting people to their Sunday services (eg. Hope Covenant or other Calgary churches). What's their secret? Why do we struggle to bring in families, youth and young couples? Is it the leader? Is it the programming? I think we owe it to our new minister to provide as much information as possible to help the new individual understand the Christian community landscape in Strathmore.
- Similar qualities to Murray would be recommended but difficult to find. Don't be afraid to look at candidates who may have some non-traditional views.
- We need to recognize that no individual will possess all of the attributes of our ideal minister. We also need to take ownership for creating a church community of faith and not leave it all up to the Minister.
- We need to find ways to draw in the "fringe" people who aren't sure where and how to be involved: family/youth initiatives i.e. couples bible study with potluck and babysitting.
- We need to encourage people to take more of a role in the service so that the new minister could have more time for other important issues that come up. This would eliminate the need to hire a part-time minister.
- Often members of the United Church are leaders in their community, consequently their church is a place to recharge their 'batteries' and gather inner strength to take forward in the coming week.
- Basically in a new minister we need to find someone who can take the initiative started here to become more modern as a church and to grow our church by attracting a new generation of members without alienating our existing members.
- The qualities that make a great Minister are all of the qualities our current minister has. If we could think about hiring a ministry team in order to address the needs of our Church school and youth programs, that would be a bonus.

APPENDIX III

ANNUAL REPORT (2006) AND Financial Statement (2006)