

# St James Carleton Place Planning Group Initial Report – June 20, 2018

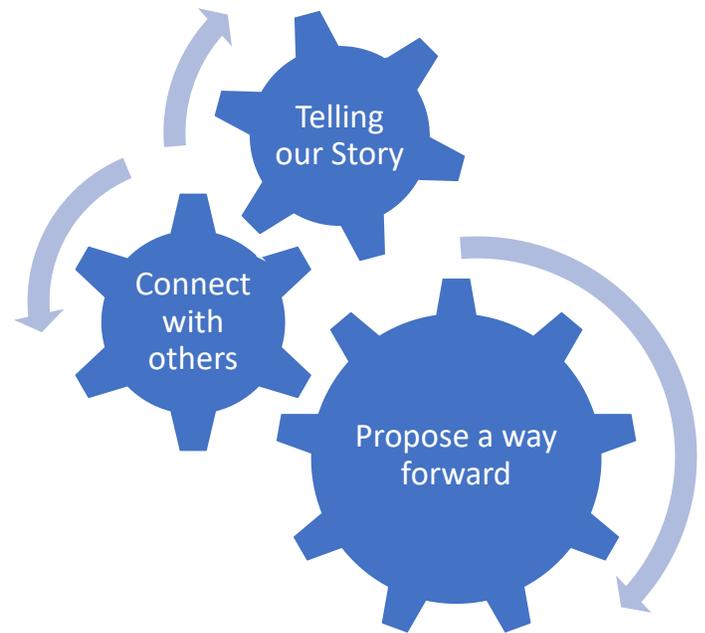
This spring saw the beginning of a new planning exercise at St James' Carleton Place. The process was initiated by St James' Church Council after Vestry. The group was asked to design and facilitate a process of consultation and discernment, which is now underway.

We believe that success will come from understanding our ministry as a blessing to be released, not a problem to be solved. Like Jesus said, *"The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow."* (Mark 4:26, 27)

Those seeds of God's future are in us and around us, and are already growing.

We designed a process that allows us to tell the story of who we are and what's going on in Carleton Place and district. Then we will seek to explore and make connections between who we are and what we know about others. Finally, the planning group will propose a way forward.

Then, it's over to Church Council and the whole community for discernment, and if the Spirit moves us, acceptance and implementation by the whole Church.



## The Story so far



Telling our Story began with a workshop on Saturday June 2, attended by 25 people representing the diversity of our church family. We explored our individual and collective experiences in the church and what we value the most.

Core Values named by participants (which form the word-picture above) seemed to flow into one another. We also worked on shared expressions of the Hopes in our community. The group gathered them into four clusters, which we have named below.

***Cluster One: Growing & Vibrant***

(growth in community; more membership (including younger); next generation; strong faith community; youth and young families)

***Cluster Two: Nurturing Relationships***

(effective communication; visibility?; touchstone for community)

***Cluster Three: Sustainability***

(win the lottery; pay off mortgage)

***Cluster Four: Loving Service***

(education regarding social needs and supports available; community involvement; outreach (outside of St James); outreach; focus in the wider community, i.e. breakfast for homeless, shelter for homeless, cooking school for young moms)

In all, the results of this workshop along with a similar exercise at the Church Council meeting in February are very closely aligned with the most recent mission statement developed at St James:

***“St James is vibrant, loving and welcoming. We value tradition and seek news ways to do God’s will...”***

Based on what we heard, we would add:

***“... serving the world God loves.”***

## **What’s next?**

Over the summer, the Planning Group with the help of others will be drafting survey reports on four topics on interest going forward.

1. Community Survey: what’s going on in local businesses, churches, demographics and trends in town and the surrounding district
2. Social Needs Survey: presenting issues (e.g. youth services, drugs and addiction, mental health, seniors), an update on housing and homelessness, possible resources and partners
3. Property & Finance Survey: any major property needs we’re aware of, refreshing the previous financial plan, real property assets
4. Ministry Review: a comprehensive review of the ministries and groups at St James’

We hope to have this ready for distribution in the fall. We have set a target date of Saturday, September 22 to present this report to the congregation. Mark that date on your calendars and stay tuned.

September, October & November will see us consulting further with the wider community and developing a proposal of action.

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