

**FSA Ad Hoc Planning Committee – Planning for the Future –Next Steps
Report to the FSA Council, George Jolink, Chair**

December 8, 2017

REQUEST: Support and approval of the FSA council to future planning as outlined below by the Ad Hoc Planning Committee

Introduction

Over the last year and a half FSA’s Ad Hoc Planning Committee, in collaboration with the FSA congregation has been actively engaged in developing a strategy to guide FSA into the future. The emerging consensus statement below was a key deliverable in this process to date.

In the future FSA will be known and recognized as being a church and community meeting place that reaches out by offering a wide range of programs and services that attract different groups and members of the community – through programs offered both inside and outside the church facility – in partnership with other groups and organizations, as appropriate.

These programs and services individually and collectively will be designed to:

- *Nurture spiritual growth and development through worship [**Faith**];*
- *Work in service to others and build community through social action and partnerships [**Service**]; and,*
- *Celebrate life through music and the arts [**Arts**].*

As a follow-up implementation planning has begun to take place.

The first step was to work with the United Church’s New Initiatives Manager Carla Leon, who guided us through a Community Round Table process focussed on music and the arts. A Community Round Table brings together members of the community to give advice and suggestions – with the expectation that new partnerships will be formed and new initiatives undertaken. A number of suggestions came out of this meeting. Two initiatives will be actively explored: the opportunity to host shows at FSA that would feature specific artistic works – textiles for example; and, the opportunity to host informal gatherings of

the arts community at FSA to encourage networking and collaboration. These will be planned with the leadership of Terry Head, Nancy Johnson, Kathryn Patton and Merran Neville.

Proposed Next Steps

The plan is to replicate this same approach – namely using the Community Round Table process – to engage members of FSA and the broader community in the topics of Service and Faith. This will take place in the winter and spring of 2018.

As with the Community Round Table on Music and the Arts, it is expected that these two additional round tables will generate new partnerships and specific initiatives to move FSA into the future as an engaged, vibrant community of faith.

In addition, in November 2017, we had the opportunity to apply to the City of London and complete for a neighbourhood improvement grant. Our proposal focussed on making the front outside area of FSA a welcoming public space for reflection and gathering. We were successful and a grant of \$30,000 has been awarded to FSA to undertake and implement this project in 2018. Under the leadership of Barrie Evans, a small task group will be formed to give leadership and direction to this project. Contact has been made with Andrew Wilson, Coordinator/Professor of the Bachelor of Environmental Design and Planning at Fanshawe College and steps are being taken to work with Andrew and senior students of this program on the design phase of the project.

Acting on this initiative will be a visible and tangible way of letting the members of FSA and its immediate neighbourhood know that we are open and welcoming in many different ways, including making our physical outside space an inviting, open park.

Translating ideas into Action

It is expected that each of these areas of activity will require human and other resources well beyond the Ad Hoc Planning Committee to support and enable on-going implementation. It is therefore proposed that specific task groups be formed to bring focussed leadership and direction to each of these areas. The Ad Hoc Planning committee will continue to provide overall leadership.

Conclusion

The specific proposals that will come out of the Community Round Tables will enable FSA to engage with the FSA congregation, the FSA neighbourhood and the broader community in new and exciting ways.

This is but the beginning of a journey that will see new, creative and innovative initiatives, even those not yet envisioned, formulated, planned and implemented.

The future is now – let us begin!

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Elson, Chair