



TO: FSA Congregation

FROM: First-St. Andrew's Ad Hoc Planning Committee

RE: **Summary Report of the Community Round Table on Music and the Arts – please read and respond!**

DATE: October 25, 2017

Attached to this memo is a summary report based on the Community Round Table on Music and the Arts held at First-St. Andrew's on October 4, 2017.

Planning for this event has been the focus of the Ad Hoc Planning Committees work for the last few months. By reading the summary report you should get a good understanding of the event itself and the planned follow-up work being considered.

We believe there is an important role for FSA to play that will engage the music and arts community and in that regard four opportunities have been put forward. We welcome your comments and feedback on these suggestions and anything else.

Correspondence can be sent to stephenelson2@gmail.com or put in my mailbox in the Atrium of the church on or before November 12th, 2017.

Sincerely,

Steve

Steve Elson, Chair
Ad Hoc Planning Committee



First-St. Andrew's Community Round Table on Music and the Arts

Summary Report



**Date of the Round Table
Wednesday, October 4th 2017**

Acknowledgements

Many people worked hard to make this Community Round Table on Music and the Arts a success.

- A special thanks to the FSA staff who set up the room (Tim Miedema) and put all the agenda packages together (Kathryn Skelly) as well as many other behind-the-scenes work
- Special thanks to Joyce Payne for putting all the food and refreshments together
- Many, many thanks to Carla Leon for coming from the United Church of Canada office in Toronto to help guide us through the morning as facilitator
- Many thanks to the Ad Hoc Planning Committee members for reaching out to members of the music and arts community in London and helping to ensure we had a good turnout
- A sincere and heartfelt thanks to everyone who took two plus hours out of their day on October 4, 2017 to participate in this new (ad)venture on the part of FSA – everyone participated actively to make this a rich experience for everyone involved

Introduction

This report is intended to be a brief synopsis of a Community Round Table on Music and the Arts held at First-St. Andrew's United Church on Wednesday, October 4, 2017.

The Round Table was organized by FSA's Ad Hoc Planning Committee and the goal was to bring together a broad cross-section of artists in London to give the Committee feedback on what is currently happening in music and the arts in London – its current state; what is needed or lacking; and, how FSA might contribute to enhancing music and the arts, in collaboration with others – especially the broader music and arts community.

The context for this event was the work the Committee has done to define the future direction of FSA.

This is best captured in the following statement (printed in the fall edition of *Tidings*, pp.16-17)

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**].*

Source: <http://www.fsaunited.com/Tidingsarchive/27-3-2017.pdf>

The Community Round Table was based on an approach that is being actively promoted and supported by the United Church of Canada's EDGE. EDGE is a team of people at the United Church who help congregations like ours who are looking to explore and act on new ways of realizing our future. The focus of a Community Round Table is to invite the community members into our space, find out what is needed and from there define how we want to move forward. For more information visit: <http://www.united-church.ca/edge-network-ministry-development>

The Round Table was a resounding success. Although only half of the people we invited were available to attend (about 25 of 50), all but two of the people who said they would come attended. Many who could not attend expressed interest in what we were doing and want to

stay connected. As an example, here is an e-mail we received. This note was in response to sharing brief biographies of the people who had accepted our invitation.

What a wonderful list of amazing people. Thank you for keeping me in the loop and thank you so much for asking me to be part of this. I think I mentioned before, I am so sorry I cannot attend as I teach all day. I am very interested in hearing what your committee is doing so please let me know of the happenings and if I can do anything here on the front lines at school!

You're great! All the best with this truly innovative project to promote the arts in London.

Sincerely,

*David Weaver
Beal Music
Beal Singers
Beal Musical Theatre
The London Singers & Orchestra*

The agenda for the morning is attached to this report. Most importantly most of the time – over an hour - was spent with participants talking with each other in small groups. A Planning Committee member was at each table, and in addition a number of other FSA members were present because of their involvement in music and the arts in London.

As noted in the agenda each group was asked to consider the following four questions. As an aside, the agenda was circulated in advance so participants would know what to expect.

- What's happening in the music and arts community in London?
- What's needed or missing?
- What role do you imagine FSA could/should play?
- How might your organization be involved?

Summary of the Morning

Based on notes taken at each table and the plenary session at which each group reported back, the following summary has been put together.

General Comments

- This kind of open forum that brings different sectors of the arts community together is helpful and informative

- There is already an open web site to find out what is happening in the arts scene - <https://www.londonmusicoffice.com/events/all-events> - a number of people present did not know this web site existed – others did and used it
- There is an opportunity for collaboration and information sharing within and across sectors of the arts community through a forum like this – facilitates networking – could share upcoming plans before they are fixed
- Value of the arts is not widely publicized – London is very much a sports-based city – yet there is a lot going on in the arts, a lot of talent and a lot of diversity
- There is not a common vision for the arts – leads to groups, organizations going in conflicting directions sometimes – groups can become self-serving
- Advocacy and access to the arts is an important issue to be addressed
- Need to advocate for all children to have access to learning music and engaging in the arts
- There are important parts of the community that are not reflected at this meeting – many people who are new to Canada come here with a rich musical and arts heritage; indigenous peoples are not part of this meeting. Use music and the arts to celebrate our diversity
- Need to connect arts with marginalized persons, poor and low income individuals, families
- There is an opportunity to reach out to different groups – e.g. intergenerational choir with people living with Alzheimer's
- There is a need for rehearsal space for many groups, some groups need performance space too (some do require specialized space)
- In general, this Round Table provided FSA with a greater awareness and understanding of the arts in London, what is going on and outstanding needs

Opportunities for First-St. Andrew's (FSA) to respond

1. FSA could partner with a number of arts organizations to host a forum like this one on a regular basis – once every six months was suggested at the Round table. The City of London's Culture Office and the London Arts Council are two umbrella organizations that have a broad understanding and involvement with a cross-section of arts groups across the city and would therefore be logical places to begin a conversation about a collaboration of this nature. Development of a community arts calendar could be discussed at a forum like this.
2. FSA has space that could be used by groups for rehearsal purposes – it might require renovation of space as well as the creation of equipment storage space. This is something that could be undertaken by FSA – but there is also the opportunity to do this in partnership with other places of worship in the downtown area. This initiative would need to include a conversation about space costs that would need to be covered.

3. There are many opportunities to apply arts themes to the spiritual mandate of FSA. At the Round Table the theme of Spirituality and the Arts was mentioned as was sacred dance, arts and healing. It was mentioned that a special arts theme during Holy Week could be initiated.
4. There are opportunities to reach out to marginalized groups and to bring the arts to these populations, where they live. FSA could work in partnership with others to support this happening.

Conclusion

This Community Round Table was the first step on the part of FSA to reach out to a defined community and listen to what they had to say about the current state and needs, how FSA might play a role and to learn about opportunities for collaboration and partnership development.

The people who attended were engaged and enthusiastic about the forum FSA provided. Many of the people who could not attend expressed interest in being kept up-to-date and regretted not being able to attend.

Rich conversations took place at each of the small tables that were set up (six in total with about six people at each one). In addition to learning a lot about the current state of music and the arts in London and how FSA might contribute, the Round Table provided a networking opportunity for participants and new connections were made.

The feedback received provides FSA with the information it needs to reflect on what was said and to define a future based on the input received.

Recommendations

It is recommended that:

1. This summary report – in draft form - be forwarded to the FSA Council for information
2. This summary report be distributed to the Community Round Table participants as well as invited participants who could not attend for additional feedback and commentary
3. That the final report be widely distributed to the FSA congregation and posted to the FSA web site
4. A Music and the Arts Committee be formed to give leadership, direction and action to the recommendations coming out of this Community Round Table
 - a. It is further recommended that this committee include both FSA members and non-FSA members - with a view to developing collaborate and partnership opportunities with the music and arts community in London

Immediate Next Steps

1. Forward draft summary report to FSA Council for information
2. Circulate draft summary report to all Community Round Table participants and people invited who could not attend – and invite comments
3. Circulate the final report to FSA Council and the FSA congregation and post to the FSA Web Site – and invite comments

SUPPORT MATERIALS (attached)

1. Meeting Agenda
2. Letter of Welcome to Participants (part of the meeting package)
3. General history of FSA and our current state
4. List of Participants
5. FSA Short/Long Term Ad Hoc Planning Committee members



Welcome to First-St. Andrew's Community Round table on Music and the Arts
Wednesday, October 4th 2017
10:00 am to 12 noon
(coffee and refreshments @ 9:30 am)

Location: northeast corner of Waterloo and Queen's Ave., London

Parking: 2 hour paid parking on the street – limited parking is available at the back of the church

Meeting Room: Chapel – on the main floor – enter through the Atrium door on the south side of the church – follow the signs!

Part One (30 minutes)

1. **Welcome to First-St. Andrew's (FSA) – Rev. Michelle Down**
2. **Overview of the Community Round table – Carla Leon, facilitator**
3. **Why this round table is happening – it's focus and purpose – Carla Leon**
4. **Overview of First-St. Andrew's – general history and current state – Steve Elson**
5. **Overview of Music and the Arts at FSA – Terry Head**
6. **Any questions, comments?**

Part Two (45- 60 minutes)

7. **Small group discussion, brainstorming**
8. **Questions to be addressed: From your perspective ...**
 - What's happening in the music and arts community in London?
 - What's needed or missing?
 - What role do you imagine FSA could/should play?
 - How might your organization be involved?

Part Three (30 minutes)

9. **Reporting back from the small groups**
10. **General thoughts about future opportunities**

11. General summary of the morning and Next Steps

12. Thanks to participants and closing – Rev. Michelle Down



Welcome to our first Round Table Discussion with you the members of the London community arts scene. First-St. Andrew's is in the process of some Short Term/Long Term Planning, and are exploring our vision of Faith, Service and the Arts. We want to explore how we can be more connected with, and supportive of the arts community here in London, and so we are excited to open up conversation with you today.

We do not have any predetermined outcomes, but we do want to dream together, vision for the future, and create relationships with you all. What are the ways that we can be supportive of the work that you are doing, and are there ways that we can partner together?

As First-St. Andrew's dreams of its future, we pray that we can find all kinds of opportunities for collaboration, exploration, and fun together.

Thanks for attending today, and showing your interest in the development of new partnerships.

If you have any ideas, suggestions, questions beyond today, then we hope that you will get in touch with us, and come round for a cup of coffee and some conversation. We hope that today is the start of something new, and that it will grow into something beautiful for the future.

Many Blessings of Gratitude;

Michelle Down
Minister of Worship and Congregational Life

Stephen Elson
Chair, FSA Planning Tea

General History of FSA and our current state

The congregation of what is currently First-St. Andrew's dates back to 1832 and a church has been on this site since 1843. First-St. Andrew's United Church has existed using its current name since 1938. This year we are celebrating our 185th anniversary – all of which is to say we're old and have a deep and rich history.

Over time, our life as a church mirrors that of many others. When church attendance and involvement was an expected and regular part of family and community life we were growing and active. Sunday schools were full and churches were the preferred, and the expected place for baptisms, weddings, funerals and other life passages to say nothing of also being social centres.

This is no longer the case, for us and for many others.

To quote:

Rates of participation by Canadians in the United Church of Canada as shown by Membership, Baptisms, Weddings, and Funerals have all shown steady decline since at least the mid-1960's with the exception of a temporary increase from 1980-1990 as the Baby Boom Generation returned with their children.

In general we are not only a neighbourhood church; we draw people from throughout the city based on their personal history or preference. Ours is a faith community based on shared interest rather than geography. Our music programs are an important part of our attraction.

Our current state can be described as follows:

- Our active members are engaged and participate actively in church life in its many forms
- However, overall our numbers are declining and aging
- We have a building that is actively used by ourselves and others but like any building we need to make on-going investments to keep it functioning. We also know that we need to make changes so it can help meet future needs.

- We are not sitting back and letting our future “happen to us” – we are working to be proactive so we can define our future in positive, creative and innovative terms. A prime example is the recent statement we have developed which states:

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**].*

We know that we need to change and not only do things differently but do different things.

We are committed to working with others and we want to enter into partnership and collaborate with others to co-create our future as a faith community – knowing that our future may look very different from our past and our present.

List of Participants

Carol Beynon	Music educator & administrator, internationally renowned choral conductor
Clark Bryan	Concert pianist, music teacher, founder and artistic director, Aeolian Hall
Cory Crossman	Music Industry Development Officer, City of London
Rod Culham	Teacher, director and conductor in drama and music
Lisa Gardi	Principal of St. Mary School Choir and Orchestra School in London
Ardath Finnbogason-Hill*	Fiber artist and painter
Sonja Gustafson*	Classical and jazz vocalist
Terry Head*	Music director, pianist, organist
Marion Johnson	Playwright/producer, Woodfield Productions
George Jolink*	Dramatic and musical stage performer, director
Nancy Johnson*	Film and video production and producer
Sharon Jones*	Teacher and mentor, Suzuki Method
Bob and Lynda Kennedy*	Music teachers and performers
Victoria Meredith	Professor of choral music, Western University
Rebekah Morrison-Wize	Development Officer, London Arts Council
Brian Nelles	Music and culture consultant
Dennis Pellarin	Volunteer leadership in the arts: producer, fund raising, financial planning, marketing
James Reaney	Journalist, former London Free Press reporter
Glenda Robinson*	Actor, founder of London International Children's Festival, (retired) teacher of English and Drama at the secondary level and Drama Consultant for the London Board of Education
Barb Sarma	Dance performer, choreographer, educator, adjudicator/judge
Maurice Stubbs	Intuitive Painter, Curator of the McIntosh Gallery at Western University (retired)
Jennifer Swan	Artistic Director of Performance Architects/Swan Studio Dance and Children's Dance Project (CDP)
Andrew Tribe	Artistic Director of the Original Kids Theatre Company

Megan Watson Artistic Associate, Grand Theatre

* *Member of First-St. Andrews*

Carla Leon United Church New Initiatives Manager – Round Table Facilitator

Betsy Exley Faith Formation, Youth and Young Adults Minister for London Conference, United Church of Canada

Bob Vosper First-St. Andrew's member

FSA Short/Long Term Ad Hoc Planning Committee members

Rev. Michelle Down*

Steve Elson*

Barrie Evans

Kerry Hill*

Don Jones*

Michael Mandich*

Kathryn Patton*

Bob Slater

Bob Swartman*

Additional members recruited to assist with the Music and the Arts Community Round Table

Terry Head*

Merran Neville

* present at the Community Round Table on Music and the Arts