

Re-Imagining FSA
an emerging consensus

A progress report
of the Ad Hoc Planning Committee

May 16, 2017

Summary

Introduction

FSA's Ad Hoc Planning Committee has undertaken an engagement process with the congregation of FSA to help define what the future could be in light of important and deep changes taking place within and outside the church¹. These changes are not unique to FSA but as a congregation FSA has a responsibility and opportunity to respond proactively and creatively.

Five different future scenarios were developed by the committee and members of the congregation were invited in several different ways, to provide their comments. This culminated in a planning meeting held on May 3, 2017 in Proudfoot Hall attended by about 60 people. The outcome of this meeting as well as other input received suggests that scenarios #1 and #2 were not supported – but that FSA needs to change and generally scenarios #3, #4 and #5 – individually and together – were supported.

The comments received to date on all five scenarios as well as other comments are provided as background information to this report.

Defining the future of FSA needs to include a vision of what FSA could become. People need to see themselves and others as part of a future that is dynamic and vibrant; one that works in service to others and builds community through social action and partnerships; one that nurtures spiritual growth and development; and, one that celebrates life through music and the arts.

FSA has a rich history but its future has yet to be written. While the future is partly defined by circumstances beyond the control of FSA, it will also be defined by actions FSA takes to create its future as it sees and wants it to be.

An emerging consensus

Based on the feedback received the Planning Committee thinks there is an emerging consensus regarding the future of FSA.

In the future FSA could evolve to become recognized as being a church and community meeting place that reaches out to offer a wide range of programs and services that attract different groups and members of the community - programs offered both inside and outside the church facility in collaboration with other groups and organizations. These programs and services could be designed to: work in service to others and build community through social action and partnerships; nurture spiritual growth and development; and, celebrate life through music and the arts.

To explain this further, some suggested actions that might be taken to develop this emerging consensus are outlined below. ***These are examples only.***

Evaluate our physical space

- Evaluate the use of FSA as a physical space and identify opportunities to redevelop the existing site to make the best use of the physical space that is available and thereby make it more appropriate for both current and future uses.

¹ Please go to the FSA website for references to this information. <http://www.fsaunited.com/committee-planning14.html>

- Include an assessment of potential rental space in order to generate additional income for FSA
- Include consideration of ways to increase the visibility, recognition and exposure to FSA as a building of historical and architectural interest and significance
- FSA could host an annual open house specifically welcoming downtown neighbourhood residents

Assess congregational and community needs

- Assess congregational and community needs with an initial focus on engaging with and attracting young families to FSA.
 - Establish a young person/young family focussed worship service on a day and time that would be most suitable for them
 - A needs assessment and response process could become an on-going activity on the part of FSA, with leadership coming from a Community Outreach and Partnership Committee

Proactively reach out to the community

- Actively reach out and engage with community groups and organizations that share interests with FSA. This partnership development and collaboration could take many forms so it would need to be focussed and align with the vision and mission of FSA.
 - This undertaking could begin with profiling and highlighting current partnerships and collaborations and indicating that we are open to doing more in this area.

Expand FSA's music program

- FSA's music program provides the opportunity for FSA to enhance its reputation as a centre of excellence in music and expand the arts in general. The range of music could be expanded to include new forms that would attract new audiences to FSA, through both worship and other venues.

Expand FSA's marketing and communications presence

- These programs and services require renewed attention to external marketing and communications, especially in the newer domains of social media – a key communications platform to young persons and families. More and better communications.

Next Steps

The intent is to determine whether the emerging vision as described is widely supported. If it is then the Planning Committee will be in a position to continue its work by organizing the implementation planning phase of this process.

Draft Future Planning Timetable (tentative and subject to change)

May – June 2017 – congregational feedback

Summer 2017 – implementation planning initiated

September 2017 – town hall meeting to complete the consultation process

October – December 2017 – detailed implementation planning

January – April 2018 – Final Report of the Planning Committee – tabled, reviewed and endorsed

Any comments concerning this report may be directed to Steve Elson, Chair, Ad Hoc Planning Committee at stephenelson2@gmail.com You can also go on-line to respond

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/SPTHBWS>