

Transition Team Communication # 7

The Transition Team is working with Rev. Wayne Beamer and is currently focused on the Governance Goal. We have decided to structure this communication using an FAQ (Frequently Asked Questions) format. We have heard these questions from people in the congregation. If your question was missed, please reach out.

Transition Team (TT) and Intentional Interim Ministry (IIM)

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. Why does SAUC have a Transition Team (TT) and not just a search committee?

A. When Rev. Katherine resigned, the council (called the board at the time), committees and congregation were surprised and unprepared. Resources were available from Shining Waters Region of the United Church and the council asked for their support. After much discussion, the Intentional Interim Ministry (IIM) process was decided as the appropriate path forward. The Search Committee will be reactivated once the Transition Team (TT) discerns that SAUC is ready to start the search process. A member of the TT will be part of the Search Committee.

Q. Why is it taking so long?

A. The IIM process involves selecting a Transition Team to lead a community of faith through a process of self-study, discernment, and visioning to rekindle our call to mission. This is not a quick process.

Five focal points (or learning areas) guide this process, along with the specific Intentional Interim goals set for SAUC.

Five IIM Focal Points:

- Examining our Heritage
- Leadership Development
- Clarifying Our Mission (Discerning our Identity and Purpose)
- Making Connections (in our Community and with the United Church of Canada)
- Discerning Our Future



SAUC Goals:

We set goals based on the areas of concern identified by the council and the region. We are working to find new ways to work through conflict more openly and establish processes for supporting each other through challenges and change.

Our goals are:

- Examine **Church governance and board constitution** to streamline council and committees and embed succession planning
- Research and provide **social justice and inter-cultural training** and conversation opportunities to congregation and staff
- Look for ways to improve **communication, transparency, and trust** between staff, council and congregation
- Investigate process for **managing disagreement** (including possibly training a group in conflict management strategies).
- Use St. Andrew's vision to guide the goals of all church groups. Identify which church and community groups (neighbours) we are not currently serving. Identify ways we are being called by God to **serve and/or partner with them**.
- Reach out to the congregation through surveys and small group discussions to **get feedback about what the congregation wants** for our church (worship, music, areas of focus).

Approved: *St. Andrew's Council - August 18, 2021*

Q. Why do we have an Intentional Interim Minister from so far away (Alberta)?

A. There were no Intentional Interim Ministers in Ontario available, and as we were worshipping online, the region suggested that the virtual worship situation made it possible to consider a minister from another province. Rev. Shannon Mang, who has extensive IIM experience, was initially contracted for 6 months, and at the end of that time, when there was still no locally available interim ministers, the transition team decided that based on the relationships that had been established, and the work that had begun, it was in SAUC's best interest to continue to have Rev. Shannon as our IIM throughout the process. Rev. Tim Dayfoot was contracted as a part-time Retired Supply minister to work with Rev. Shannon to lead worship services as we returned to in-person/hybrid services and to provide local pastoral care.

Q. What is the difference between an Intentional Interim Minister and a regular "Called" Minister?

A. An Intentional Interim Minister is asked to come and serve with congregations by congregation's themselves or by their Region of the United Church of Canada. There are many different circumstances where they are requested to come and "walk with" congregations for 18 months- 3 years (St. Andrew's reasoning can be found in the first Question in this FAQ communication).

Here are some other scenarios that lead congregations to request the Intentional Interim Ministry process:

- the departure of a long-tenured minister or the death of a minister
- inadequate finances, and possibility of closure
- when serious conflict, disagreements and tension have damaged a congregation
- serious trauma from a natural disaster or from a breach of professional boundaries
- major changes in the demographics of the community
- helping two or more congregations amalgamate
- the desire of a community of faith to rediscover its identity and mission or to move in a new direction in its ministry

Regularly called ministers might have skills and gifts to help congregations navigate these times of transition for congregations, but most have gifts for more stable times in a congregation's life. Intentional Interim Ministers have been trained and continue to train to help congregations move successfully through challenging transitions.

Q. Why is the Transition Team having zoom rooms, surveys and phone interviews with congregation members?

A. We are trying to gain input and learn from a variety of experiences. We are finding a variety of ways to involve the congregation and share the intentional interim process. We are hoping that everyone who calls St. Andrew's United "home" will be willing to be part of this Intentional Interim journey.

Q. Why are we being asked personal questions – like about what aspects of Christianity resonate with us (Theological Banquet)?

A. The Theological Banquet tool was shared as one way to reflect on which church activities we each prioritize and help us understand why others may have different priorities. It can also help congregants see where their skills may be able to serve the church. Participation is never mandatory, but encouraged. No tool will feel helpful to all people. Responses do not have to be given publicly by those who prefer to share privately, and everyone may choose what parts of the process they want to engage with.

Q. When will this process be done and a full-time Minister appointed?

A. The search committee that was in place in early 2021 will be reconvened soon, with a goal to call a new minister in early 2023. We expect that the intentional interim period will come to an end in February/March of 2023 making this an average length intentional interim period of 2 years.

Q. What will the congregation gain from this process?

A. There have been many changes at St. Andrew's over the past several years. It is important that a solid path forward be explored, agreed on and implemented. This takes time but is necessary to ensure a viable vision for the future is achievable.

Q. How can I provide input?

A. Many of you have already provided input to one of the surveys or during TT Break Out sessions. Please continue to participate in the congregational Interim Ministry events and feel free to contact any of the TT Members, Rev. Shannon or Rev. Tim with any questions, concerns or comments – at any time.

Q. What if I just want to worship and don't want to provide input?

A. We respect everyone's choices, but hope that many will participate to better allow SAUC to serve the full congregation as we move towards calling a new minister.

Q. What is governance?

A. Governance is one of the goals that the TT is focused on at this time (Spring 2022). Governance can be thought of as "the way in which we order our lives together". It involves all aspects of relationships, some of which include:

- financial and asset management
- personnel relations
- decision-making processes
- lines of communication and authority
- stewardship

Rev. Wayne Beamer is an Intentional Interim Minister who is serving as a Governance consultant supporting our TT specifically with this goal.

A governance corner has been started in the weekly Orders of Service. You can check there to learn more.

If you have a question that isn't answered above, please reach out to a member of the team or send your question to the SAUC church email and it will get passed onto the TT.