

## Suggestions from Profile Committee

1. Seek a supply minister who would be with us for a year or a year and a half, 3/4 time. We are not going to have new permanent minister by September. One responder suggests:

“The most apparent option as far as meeting this challenge is to work with the *Canadian Shield Regional Council* to see what they can do to assist us in hiring a supply minister – no less than 3/4 time – to continue to provide the Sunday worship and other responsibilities (as the 3/4 time position permits) with a primary goal of building the congregation numbers.”

2. Engage in serious discussions with the other churches in the city about ways that we can work together on the issues of clergy supply and financial stress, aging members and aging buildings. (It does not look financially viable at the moment to hire a full-time permanent minister, especially when moving costs are factored in.)

3. Embark on a reaffirmation and renewal of our affirming status, with every effort made to bring all members into the discussion. The fracture line in our congregation needs to be dealt with. One responder says:

“I also feel like a hypocrite when I do attend Church as I have great difficulty accepting the focus on a particular way of life of some.”

Another responder says: “Our congregation needs to be involved in dealing with the issues that are our reality. One reality is that we voted to become an affirming church. I am proud of the fact that we did this . If there are concerns about this then those concerns need to be aired within congregational meetings. We need to go back to the beginning and ask the question–What does it mean to be an affirming church?If the affirming issue is honestly and thoroughly discussed and there are still people who do not accept the need to make all of our congregants feel safe and welcome then it is my view that these people need to make a decision to leave or stay. Our church needs to stand for something!”

4. Pastoral care and reconnecting the community’s members with each other is a first priority. We cannot call a permanent minister until we are fully a community.

5. When and if we do feel able to embark on a search for a full-time permanent minister, we might emphasize the appeal of North Bay as a mid-size city full of natural beauty and many lakes, and the possibility of first helping to define, and then helping to offer, a significant ministry here.

(These are suggestions only, and perhaps go beyond the mandate of this committee. However, it is difficult to ignore the wisdom that surfaced during the consultation. From one responder, for instance: “At some point gather and say FAREWELL,CELEBRATE, ACKNOWLEDGE, LET GO OF, COMPLETE GRIEVING to ALL that was, has been. Clear it out. Then begin again: NEW, FRESH, DIFFERENT. Experiment. Be Open. Pray.”)