

Crossroads Pastoral Charge

Community of Faith Profile, Minister Search 2024

*Crossroads: **Rooted In Faith** **Fostering Teamwork** **Extending Hospitality***

**Submission to Bermuda-Nova Scotia
Council**

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Crossroads Community Profile

Crossroads Pastoral Charge consists of **St James United** and **Trinity United** Churches, serving two of the many distinct but interrelated communities of the [Halifax Regional Municipality \(HRM\)](#). St James is located on the Prospect Road, serving the communities of Goodwood, Hatchet Lake, Brookside, Whites Lake, Bayside, Terence Bay, Lower Prospect, and Prospect. Trinity United is situated off St. Margaret's Bay Road, serving the communities of Beechville, Lakeside, and Timberlea (BLT) as well as Hubley, Five Islands Lake, and Tantallon. Downtown Halifax is about a 20–30-minute commute from both points.

The BLT area can trace its history back to the original land grants made to settlers in the late 1700's. Many of the first arrivals to the community of Beechville were refugees who escaped slavery from the southern American colonies. Lakeside and Timberlea were communities based upon logging and residential areas for workers in Halifax. Many of the communities along the Prospect Road were once thriving fishing communities. Today, the Crossroads Pastoral Charge area is a thriving suburban bedroom community with a growing population.

Education, Health Care, and Services

Both the BLT and Prospect Road communities have elementary and junior high schools in the area. Students from Prospect Road attend Halifax West High School in Clayton Park. Students from St. Margarets Bay Road attend Bay View High School in Upper Tantallon. The Halifax region includes several universities and community colleges.

There are medical clinics in Timberlea and Hatchet Lake and dental offices in Timberlea and in Shad Bay. The area also has pharmacies, a physiotherapy clinic, and several massage therapists. It is a short commute to numerous health care services in the Halifax area, which includes the newly opened [Bayers Lake Community Outpatient Centre](#). Emergency health care is provided by the [QEII Health Sciences Centre](#) and the [IWK Health Centre for Women and Children](#).

Other services include convenience stores, gas stations, a post office, fire services, hairdressers, car repair shops, daycare centres, motels, and (of course!) Tim Hortons. In the last few years Timberlea has added a Sobeys, a McDonald's, and soon a curling rink. [Bayers Lake Business Park](#), one of the largest shopping areas in Atlantic Canada, is also located within the Charge area.

Beechville, Lakeside, and most of Timberlea (BLT) are serviced by water and sewer. The Prospect Road communities rely on on-site septic systems and wells.

HRM is governed by a Mayor and 16 Councilors.

Cultural, Social, and Recreational Activities

The BLT and Prospect Road communities each have a recreation centre which offer many programs and services for all ages. Timberlea's recreation centre has now closed as we eagerly await the opening in 2025 of the new recreation centre. The immediate area offers many types of recreation including boating, swimming, soccer, and walking trails, (some being part of the [Trans Canada Trail](#)), several golf courses and nearby municipal facilities such as the [St. Margaret's Arena & Community Centre](#), and the [Canada Winter Games Centre](#). The Halifax Region offers many cultural, musical, and social events. The [Halifax Exhibition Centre](#), also located in the area, annually hosts many trade shows and the Atlantic Agricultural Fall Fair.

Economic Base

There are three business parks in the area -- Beechville Industrial Park, Bayers Lake Business Park, and Ragged Lake Business Park -- and two waste management plants, all of which provide employment. Many residents work in either [downtown Halifax](#) or [Dartmouth](#), including in Burnside Industrial Park. There are many small businesses throughout the BLT and Prospect areas.

Crossroads Pastoral Charge Profile

Vision Statement

Crossroads Pastoral Charge values each person and one's connection to God. We each strive to, and encourage others, including children, to grow in faith. We reach out to the needs of the community.

Rooted In Faith, Fostering Teamwork, Extending Hospitality

Brief History

Crossroads Pastoral Charge was formed in 1987 as a two-point charge with support of Halifax Presbytery of Maritime Conference now known as the [Bermuda-Nova Scotia Regional Council of the United Church of Canada](#). St. James United is located on the Prospect Road while Trinity United Church is found off the St Margaret's Bay Road in a cul-de-sac called Trinity Way in Timberlea.

The Charge has been served over the years with either part-time or full-time ministry, according to available finances and community need, though we have not had one since the COVID pandemic started.

Initially, we were organized with an Official Board and two Boards of Management. In 2007-2008 our structure was reorganized using the Church Council model, specifically a two-tier system, with both an overall Crossroads Council and a Council for each of the points.

To learn more about Crossroads Pastoral Charge, see our website, <http://www.crossroads-ucc.ca>

Communities That We Serve

St James United Church is located on the Prospect Road (Route 333) in Goodwood. Most of the congregational members come from the many communities along this road, which leads to the beautiful Peggy's Cove and St. Margaret's Bay area. The route passes through Goodwood, Hatchet Lake, Brookside, Whites Lake, Bayside, Terence Bay, Lower Prospect, and Prospect. St James serves a mix of urban/suburban citizens who enjoy the scenic amenities of these seaside communities.

Trinity United Church is located near the intersection of the Timberlea Village Parkway, which joins Highway #103 and the St. Margaret's Bay Road (Trunk #3). This area is served by Halifax Transit. This scenic route, through places such as Beechville, Lakeside, Timberlea, Hubley, Five Islands Lake, and Tantallon, was formerly the beginning of the main Provincial highway along the South Shore of Nova Scotia.

Our Congregations

St. James United Church

St James is a faith community that, as of February 2024, has 22 households under pastoral care. There are fewer families with younger children in this congregation. It has a dedicated group of volunteers who work together on a variety of projects. St. James has a volunteer organist and a small choir who contribute greatly to regular worship, as well as provide music for special occasions.

The kitchen at St. James is the heart of many food-related activities. Very successful church suppers continue to be served from the church kitchen. The congregation has moved to take-out suppers since COVID. This is also necessary based on an aging population and having enough person power to put on sit-in meals at this time. The Sunday School and kitchen area is also the home of fellowship following services. In addition to supper fundraisers, St. James does a number of non-food related fundraisers such as the Avon campaign; walk-a-thon (done together with Trinity United); an annual yard sale; no-dinner dinner, and a special lights campaign over Christmas. The Fall Purdy's Chocolate fundraiser has become very popular over the past few years and has become a significant fundraiser for St. James.

St. James participates in the annual World Day of Prayer Service with the other churches along Prospect Road. They also take part in the ecumenical Christmas Concert hosted by St. Joseph's Catholic Church.

Though a small congregation, St. James reaches out to our community to serve others. We support the [Prospect Road Food Bank](#) operated out of St. Timothy's Anglican Church. We provide them with a monthly monetary donation as well as monthly donation of non-perishable food items. We also respond to extreme needs if the Food Bank needs additional supplies. During the Christmas season, we choose an organization to support and provide additional donations of gifts, clothing, and toys. St. James has supported the [Route 333 Refugee Sponsorship Program](#) as well.

The St. James UCW is a steady and active group of women who give generously of their time and talents. Their hard work and consistency have allowed us to improve our sanctuary and hall.

Maintenance and upkeep work that is necessary to maintain the building, both inside and out, are done by congregational members who willingly volunteer their time to keep the sanctuary clean, mow the grass, and tend the gardens. St. James also maintains a cemetery that is located in close proximity to the church.

Trinity United Church

Trinity United is a mix of younger and older members, making it a spirited place during church events. As of February 2024, about 37 households are under pastoral care, but not all are active.

Our hall is used to host community meetings, meals, and other fundraising events. Trinity also rents out the hall to a weekly Aikido group. We hope to improve the accessibility to the basement hall.

Fun and fundraising events such as potlucks, breakfasts, dinner theatres, BBQ Chicken & Strawberry Supper, turkey suppers, variety shows, auctions, and many performances have taken place in Trinity's Hall. Our kitchen is considered a commercial kitchen which can be rented out.

Trinity's UCW meets monthly and are always learning about new things and having social time. They are very active in raising money for the group with such current events as the annual Sweets bake sale, the No-Bake Bake Sale, and past events like the Christmas Tea and House Tour. This hard-working group has raised money to purchase two commercial fridges, new tablecloths, a stove, and other necessary items for the use of the church. They also support 1-2 local families at Christmas, with help provided by the elementary school suggesting families that need extra help, with food, toys and gifts.

Trinity has a very active outreach program that supports locally [The Marguerite Centre](#), the [Phoenix Centre for Youth](#), and the [Adsum Centre for Women & Children](#) and international support to Ukraine to name just a few. They've raised money with a continuous book sale that is a free-will payment and fudge sales as well as church offerings. When they hear of someone in need, they put together a plan and look to the congregation and the community to support it.

Trinity's building and property is also maintained by volunteers.

Common Efforts

Sunday School is offered every 2 weeks at St. James and is offered on alternate Sundays at Trinity United. There is a small but vibrant group of young people. Sunday School takes place during the last 45 minutes of the church service, except during intergenerational services. Crossroads Charge embraces the participation of children in the receiving of the Sacraments, so the Sunday School children return to the church sanctuary to partake in communion. Church life is further enhanced when children participate in other parts of the service, including reading the scriptures, greeting at the door, and performing at special events such as the Christmas concert and Easter service.

Our twice-yearly turkey suppers (April and October) are a Charge effort. Each point has a lead for their end and lists for duties and donated foods that need filling. On the last Saturday of the month, they all come together at Trinity United and put on the supper for the public, either Sit-in or Take-Out, which it has been since COVID.

When there are summer services both congregations alternate hosting the services a month at a time. Over the Easter period St. James hosts the Maundy Thursday Service for both points while Trinity hosts the Good Friday service as a joint service for the two congregations. St. James has also hosted the Easter Sunrise Service for both points and the Christmas concert, also as a joint initiative. Some members of both congregations lead Sunday services during times when the minister is away on educational or vacation leave or at meetings.

Members from both congregations also come together for special events and for study groups. Both congregations support the Mission and Service Fund and are consistent donors of food, goods, and money to the community. Some of the community work we used to do – like providing services at the [Maplestone Enhanced Care for Seniors](#) four times each year – we've not been able to do for quite a while, owing to our dwindling volunteer resources.

The spirit to do good work continues to unite our two Churches and their communities. This search for *you* is our latest and greatest common effort!

Challenges and Opportunities

There is a solid base of committed members in both congregations. One of the challenges is to build and sustain both church congregations into a thriving church within each Christian community. We have concluded that we cannot support full-time Ministry at this time. The current membership is not able to maintain a full-time minister using only the offerings. Among the membership of both churches are those who are willing to provide leadership in worship and spearhead our fundraising events. In addition to our own members, we have developed a large following of community members who come to help on special work projects when asked.

Crossroads Resources Profile

Both churches are within a fifteen-minute drive of each other. Transportation to and from the region by car, train, and bus is readily available, and by air through [Halifax Stanfield International Airport](#), with connections worldwide. One has the advantage of working in the outskirts of Nova Scotia's capital city, Halifax Regional Municipality. There is a United Church camp, [Arthur Kidston Memorial Camp](#), supported by churches in the Bermuda-Nova Scotia Regional Council. Many of our members have attended and volunteered at the summer camp, as well as attend past retreats in the off-season.

Both churches have a basement hall with a fully equipped kitchen. Trinity has a wing that houses Sunday School, meeting rooms, a second kitchen, washrooms, and the Crossroads Pastoral Charge office. Both buildings are debt free and are maintained by Property Committees.

Both congregations contribute to Crossroads Pastoral Charge using an annually reviewed formula that equitably allocates the joint expenses. Most of the income for the two churches comes from weekly offerings and fundraising events. Please refer to the *Crossroads Annual Report 2022*, with Financial Statements, found through the link in Appendix A.

Leadership

Crossroads Council's purpose is to make policy decisions, set strategic priorities, and oversee the common interests shared by both points within the Pastoral Charge. As part of the representation from the Trinity and St. James Councils, there are five sub-committees: Worship, Christian Growth, Stewardship, Communication, and Ministry & Personnel.

The **Worship Committee** is a joint committee of the Charge and consists of members from both points. This committee works collaboratively with the organists and minister to set church calendar services, including the readings and hymns.

The **Christian Growth Committee** oversees the faith formation and Christian educational needs of the Charge.

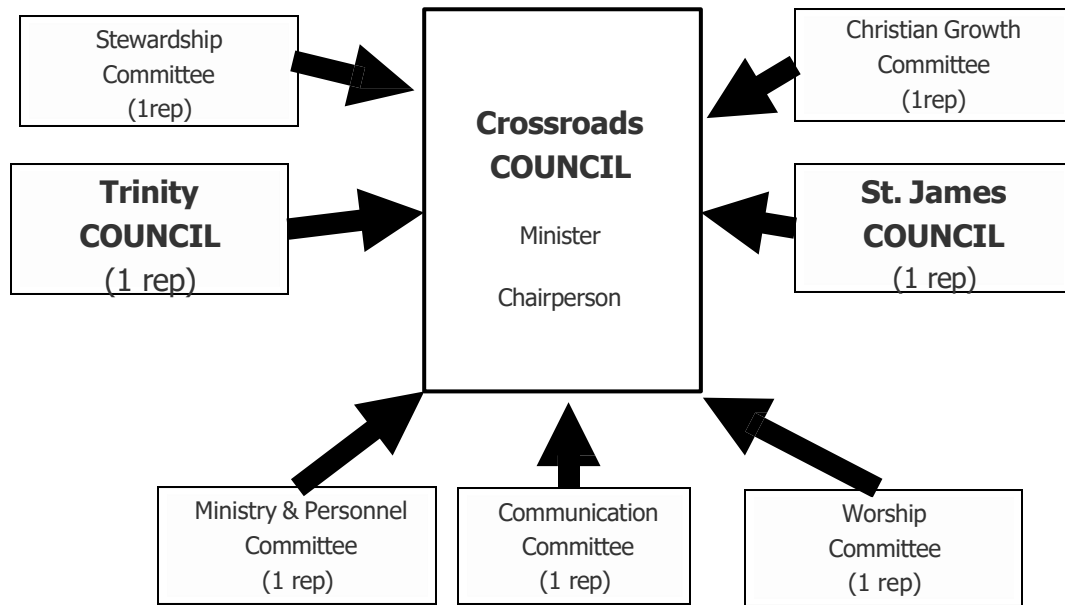
The **Stewardship Committee** oversees all Pastoral Charge financial responsibilities, including Mission and Service contributions, and salaries and benefits for all paid staff. The Stewardship Committee receives allocations from each congregation and annually reviews the formula for allocations, loans and grants for pastoral charge work, and all other pastoral charge expenses.

The purpose of the **Communication Committee** is to coordinate activities within the Charge and facilitate the flow of information throughout the Pastoral Charge, between committees, the congregations, and the wider church. We have a newsletter that goes out to the church members and people in the community (who sign up for it) by email every Wednesday night to keep everyone up-to-date on important information and events happening in the two churches. Our website is <http://www.crossroads-ucc.ca>. It provides some information but it needs a dedicated person with time on their hands to keep it relevant.

Each **Church Council** is responsible for those matters which involve the sole interests of their respective points. Each Council has five sub-committees: Finance, Property, Pastoral Care, Nominating and Outreach. In the last few years, Sunday School has been a joint Charge program. Each Council also has representatives from the UCW and Trustees.

The **Pastoral Care Committee** attends to the needs of those members who are ill, house bound or otherwise unable to participate in church life. This entails hospital and home visits, and providing communion at home to shut-ins.

Crossroads Council



Executive: Minister, Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer

June 16, 2007

Staff

The treasurers, organists, and cleaners are all volunteers. Both churches have established funds for maintenance and service

Position Profile

The following gives an outline of the minister's position regarding what we are looking for. The winning candidate will be consulted to further negotiate a contract.

Accountability

Working together, the minister along with Crossroads Council, Trinity Council, St. James Council, other organizations of the Pastoral Charge, and the Ministry and Personnel Committee in all matters within their areas of responsibility. The minister's choice of hours and days off will be established in consultation with the Ministry and Personnel, and Worship Committees, who keep in mind the needs of the minister as well as the church community.

Worship Leadership

The minister is responsible for planning worship in consultation with the Worship Committee, and conducting Sunday worship as well as other traditional church services -- for example, the Christmas Eve and Easter services. The minister conducts a service of worship twice a month at each church on Sundays. Summer hours (July and August) have only one service at one of the two churches, a month at a time. The minister will be responsible for the administering of sacraments as well as presiding at Weddings, Funerals, and Memorial Services.

Pastoral Care

We're looking for a minister to work with the pastoral care teams from each point to provide pastoral care to those who are sick or shut-in, and administering home communion, as needed. The minister helps to provide leadership and necessary training to bring new members into the congregation. The minister provides leadership and training to congregational members to give pastoral care in times of crisis or grief, and to assist individuals or families in obtaining appropriate counseling when needed. The minister conducts ongoing visitation within congregations and may play a leadership role in community outreach. The minister maintains attention and sensitivity to important community issues.

Christian Growth

The minister prepares families for Baptisms and leads or mentors the leadership of confirmation classes. The minister prepares couples for marriage. The minister encourages the presence and participation of children and young people as well as provides support, advice and encouragement to Sunday School teachers and youth group leaders. The minister leads or facilitates adult Christian education, for example, Bible studies. The minister plays a lead role in visitation, developing leadership skills among congregation members, and is a part of periodic reviews of program and event success.

Duties and Responsibilities for Part-time Ministry at Crossroads Pastoral Charge

Crossroads Pastoral Charge will be seeking a part time (50%= 20 hours/week) minister. The minister will be responsible for attending to the needs of the congregations at both Trinity United in Timberlea and St. James in Goodwood. In addition, the minister will agree to work on the goals as established by Crossroads Pastoral Charge and will work with the team to discuss the goals and progress being made.

The following should only be used as a guide and will need to be monitored over time by the M & P Committee.

All standard benefits and allowances will apply, adjusted for part time, and for the duration of the Appointment.

The Worship Committee will work with the minister to plan the worship services and will be kept abreast of when the minister is unavailable so the committee can plan to either fill in or find a suitable replacement. The minister will work with the Crossroads Team to establish a worship service profile that can be used by lay members for services not being delivered by the Minister. Together the Team and Minister will develop a plan to train lay members in planning and delivery of worship.

The minister will provide services half-time with the actual schedule to be determined upon being hired. The time freed up from service preparation and delivery on alternating weeks will allow the other part of the month to be spent working on meeting the goals of the Crossroads Pastoral Charge as identified at time of posting and hire. During these times when the minister is not responsible for conducting worship services, they will be responsible for working with the Changing Church committee (the members who created this document) to work through what a new church life will look like within the context of Crossroads Pastoral Charge. With only two service Sundays a month, two Sundays will be open for the congregation to try something new. What “new” looks like will depend to some degree on finding a match between the interests of the congregation and the interests of the minister. Though the minister may not be physically present for these Sundays, we do look to the minister to help the committee brainstorm, design, and resource these Sundays (or whatever day it might be) so that there are worthwhile activities available to the congregations for those days.

This is why we are seeking someone with creative ways to meet the spiritual needs of both congregations through Christian development (Bible Study, discussion groups, community outreach activities, etc.). This means that other members of both congregations will have to take over a few responsibilities including providing some lay services at times.

There will be times when situations arise in the Charge which may require the minister to change emphasis. If the minister is unable to give time to a matter within the Charge the minister will notify the appropriate Committee or person.

Baptisms and weddings are not spontaneous events so they can be planned well in advance and the minister can work with M & P or Worship Committees to sort out how this impacts other responsibilities like service preparation.

Pastoral Care Teams will check with people under their pastoral care, conduct visits and report to the minister when he/she needs to intervene. We would prioritize the minister's pastoral care duties to attending to shut-ins or elderly people (> 75 years old) who need/request a home visit on a regular basis; regular church attenders less often unless their circumstances require it or whenever an issue is heard through pastoral care committee members.

Distribution of Hours at 50% (20 Hours/week)

All times listed below are approximate; actual days worked will be determined in discussions with M & P, the Charge and the incumbent.

Crossroads Pastoral Charge has a team in place who will work over the next few years with the minister to ensure that the goals as agreed upon are being met.

Weeks With Worship Preparation (every second week)

- **Worship Responsibilities (14 hours):** Preparing and delivering at two (2) sites.
- **Pastoral Care: (3 hours):** visitation or planning special events.
- **Christian Growth: (2 hours):** Sunday School support, suggested readings for congregations, etc.
- **Administrative duties (1 hour):** Miscellaneous administration / housekeeping

Weeks Without Worship Preparation

- **Community Outreach (6 hours):** Address the needs of the community, by working collaboratively with other churches and organizations and looking for ways to offer church in different formats.
- **Program Development (4 hours):** and deliver programs for the congregations (4 hours) Again, this will depend somewhat on the interests of the minister and discussions between the Changing Church committee and the committee. Examples could include:
 - Create training materials and templates for service delivery, such as coffee services.
 - Coordinate social justice activities whose themes are supported by the United Church of Canada, like basic income or addressing climate change.
 - Assist the congregations in developing ways to involve children and youth.
- **Required meetings (3 hours):** Attend meetings where the minister's presence is required.

- **Administrative duties** (3 hours): Miscellaneous administration / housekeeping
- **Pastoral Care** (2 hours): Including wedding, baptism, and funeral prep.
- **Goals review** (2 hours): Communicate and meet with the team to review goals and activities.

Goals for Crossroads Pastoral Charge

Crossroads needs a minister who will:

- **Provide effective leadership** to move the church forward in times of struggle. This will include the ability to engage with members in different ways of experiencing or being **Church**. This can be but not exclusive of activities such as spiritual development through discussion groups, developing strategies for ways to experience church differently.
- **Create a community engagement approach** in concert with members of both points in the Charge, to determine the needs of those living in our communities, especially the vulnerable. Work with the team and the congregations to identify ways to meet those needs. The minister will develop a community presence and will be prepared to share resources, talents, and ideas in partnership with other churches and organizations.
- **Work at the Crossroads** to build good relationships between our Churches and our wider community.

Skills Profile

Looking for part-time qualified and eligible ministry personnel with strong interpersonal skills: friendly and self-motivated; an empathetic listener and an enthusiastic innovator.

Excellent communication and storytelling ability

- To relate Scripture to current events and concerns, relevant to our larger world, and inclusive of all.
- To encourage the participation of members of all ages in services, events, and programs.
- To support the use of music in spiritual service – musical talent a bonus!
- To speak clearly, accessibly, and respectfully

Strong leadership and organizational skill

- To manage leadership, training, and discussion groups.

- To promote multi-generational, congregational membership growth.
- To think outside of the box, and support our congregations through times of change.

Keen pastoral care interest

- Visiting on occasion or as requested – especially to the elderly, shut-ins, and people with infirmities.
- Working with congregations to develop community-based support for vulnerable groups.
- Coordinating activities and resources to enhance efforts by pastoral care teams.
- Developing fellowship through participation and support of Church events.
- Empathizing, supporting, comforting, and advising those in need.

Terms Profile

This position is for half-time (20 hours per week) Ministry, and is open to ministers who are:

Ordained (Category A-C), or

Diaconal (Category A-C), or

Designated Lay (Recognized) (Category A-D).

Salary: Up to a maximum of Category C for an Ordained, or Diaconal Minister, or up to a maximum of Category D for a Designated Lay (Recognized) Minister, as per United Church of Canada Guidelines

Travel..... \$ 0.55 per Km adjusted, per UCC Guidelines

Moving..... Negotiable

Phone Cell phone basic service up to \$50/month (Through ADP)

Study and Book Allowance:\$ 1,640.00 per year

Secretarial..... Part-time bulletin secretary

Church Office Laptop (\$500-\$700), photocopier, Wi-Fi

Equipment & Services

Pension, Insurance, CPP, EI As per UCC Guidelines

Regular Hours: 20 hours per week

Vacation 1 month, 5 Sundays

Study Leave 3 weeks per year

Sabbatical 3 months, every 5 years, as per UCC Guidelines

Appendix A

Crossroads Pastoral Charge Annual Report 2022

For additional information about Crossroads Pastoral Charge, please see the *Crossroads Annual Report 2022* through the following link: <https://www.crossroads-ucc.ca/updates>.

Appendix B

Crossroads Pastoral Charge Living Faith Story

*Bold and italicized quotations are from members of Trinity United and St. James United.

What is church? What does it mean? Why do people take an hour (or, with participation on committees and other volunteer activities, much more) to come together, pray, and sing? For many people who grew up in a United Church (or Catholic, Presbyterian, Baptist, or Anglican church) the answer is, “because it’s what we have always done.” Like brushing their teeth or shopping for groceries, it is a part of the weekly routine. And when times have been hard, or joyful, the church was there to commemorate or celebrate it with them.

****“I enjoy the music and the sermon, but I think ‘there, I started my week off on the right note.’”****

For some, the church is about spiritual power. Their faith is the foundation of their life, and attending church is not an option. It is a duty. Prayer and music help them to worship God.

****“I go to church because I believe in the God, and I believe it is my duty to go and worship my God.”****

Sometimes people grew up and left the church or moved away from the home community where they had grown up. Though for a while, these people felt church did not need to be a part of their life. Eventually, something felt like it was missing. They had children, and wanted them to be part of the church, or be part of

a church family. Or they faced a crisis. In the words of one member, their “life was falling apart.” They returned.

****“I went on with my life until 1999 when I returned to the church. It was such a wonderful homecoming, people welcoming me back. It felt so good.”****

For those who have attended, started late, or returned, church will always be there for them, after all. In the Bible, God is often referred to as a rock, but for many people the Church is also a rock – always there for them. The congregations within the Charge were their families. Until recently, this seemed to be the only faith story we knew.

“I have no family here, it’s like a family community at church.”

This is the story of Crossroads Pastoral Charge, a two-point congregation in the suburbs of Halifax. The history of the two churches has been one of change – they were not always joined as a Charge. But for all that time, both churches (whether they were together as a Charge or not) were able to retain a full-time minister, have a Sunday School for children, and support themselves financially. They have had choirs and Bible studies. They have served the community through Christmas celebrations, Blue Christmas services, St. Francis of Assisi blessings, community suppers, flea markets, and musical shows. They have tried to follow the way of Christ by reaching out to those in need, supporting breakfast programs, the work of the Brunswick St. Mission, and giving to important causes locally and internationally when they have arisen.

In the last ten to twelve years, that began to change. For decades, children who left Sunday School were rarely seen again. What was more unusual was that their parents stopped coming too. Families were overwhelmed with activities, and while the day of rest was needed more than ever, church began to feel like another commitment rather than a true rest. Perhaps some felt that connecting with their spiritual side was best done on a hike or while doing other volunteer activities. It became ever rarer for new faces to turn up at church.

Financially, these struggles began to show up too. Budgeting became an exercise in deficit management. And committees – which were always a struggle to staff – began to fall apart. The minister decided it was time to move on, and during the year we searched for a new one, the lack of consistency started to affect how many people were coming to church. We hoped that when a new minister was hired, the stability would attract those people back. But it did not, and while the churches continued to serve hundreds in their extra-church activities, inside the sanctuaries, we served fewer and fewer.

Then COVID hit. Suddenly, the small growing problems became a large imminent problem. Incoming finances fell off the ledge. We were facing a situation where we would be unable to pay our minister. Facing few options, we were forced to move to a part-time ministry. This situation continued for a while, but the minister was eventually unable to continue for personal reasons. Again, instability – again, fewer people in the pews.

The congregation entered the [Edge](#) program. After all, thousands of new people were entering our community as subdivisions and apartments sprang up. Surely that should mean something for our future as a church. A small committee worked hard, inviting local politicians, leaders, other churches, and organizations to talk to them.

They were encouraged to find the “side door” to the church – where they can fill needs in the community. They located the highest needs for each point – food security, access to information (e.g., government services), the need to act as a voice for the community, and – for Trinity specifically – access for those at the Marguerite Centre to community services. After COVID, and with high inflation and more newcomers in our communities, these needs are higher than ever.

But while the congregation supported the idea of filling these needs, the question remained, *how* to do it and more importantly, *who* would do it? We were still lost as to how to connect the side door and the front door.

We then entered a “Reimagining Church” process with the Region. Weekly, members of the Charge met jointly with leaders from the Region to discuss a path forward. Together, those able to attend those meetings (which not everyone could give the time to participate in) discussed three core values for the church.

They were: ***Rooted in Faith***

Fostering Teamwork

Extending Hospitality

The leaders encouraged us to reimagine church. Did Church *have* to be an hour on Sunday morning, with hymns and prayers and a sermon? Could it be something else? What could church be, and how could it change to accommodate the changing needs of society? Clearly, the way church is at present is not doing that, otherwise, our pews would be full. But we need some help reimagining church – we can’t do it alone, or otherwise we would have figured it out already.

How do we fill the needs of the community, as discovered in the Edge process, and express our core values with those that remain? Can we invite new people to discover these values with us? Will they come?

We are a church, quite frankly, at the precipice of the story’s end. Many of our core members have either passed away or stopped coming in the past few years, for their own reasons. Though the Pastoral Care Committee and friends have reached out to them, in many cases we get no response. Some have expressed a lack of positive energy in the church. The majority of members are in an older demographic, and a lot of them are tired of volunteering and the constant struggle.

Service time is supposed to be filled with God’s spirit, but services have lacked a certain spirit, even if the minister (lay or professional) is doing their best to bring that to the church. This is not because the congregation does not feel God’s love, but because our earthly worries seem to loom over us.

What is our story’s end? Is it coming soon, or in the distant future? Who will carry our church into that future? There are many uncertainties. Our hope is that our next minister will guide us into that change in a positive way.

Appendix C

Members of the Crossroads Minister Search Committee:

St. James Representative

Sandra Hennigar

Trinity Representatives

Ellen Mclaughlin

Jill Campbell-Miller

Mike McGraw

Bermuda-Nova Scotia Regional Council Representative

Rev. David Hewitt

Crossroads Pastoral Charge thanks the Members of the Crossroads Minister Search Committee for their hard work and support.