

Welcome to Ravenswood United Church

Joint Needs Assessment Committee Report Sept. 14, 2008



Ravenswood United Church Joint Needs Assessment Report

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Part A

Parties to Joint Needs Assessment

Name of Pastoral Charge	Ravenswood United Church
Presbytery/District	Lambton Presbytery
Conference	London Conference

Part B

Needs Assessment Profile Summaries

1. **Community Profile** (size of community where the pastoral charge is located, social and economic basis, etc)

Our church is located in a network of communities, for example, 20 minutes from Grand Bend, 10 minutes from Forest, and 20 minutes from Arkona. These areas are comprised of expansive golden beaches, popular campgrounds, rural farms and market places. A major contributor to our economy is tourism. A large number of our members spend their summer with us and winter elsewhere in Ontario or the Southern US. Ravenswood UC draws from the rural & tourist areas.

Our community has access to local medical centre that offers many services to the entire community. Excellent hospitals are less than an hour away. Schools, Colleges, and Universities are in the surrounding area. Various service clubs sponsor local causes, sports and recreational facilities as well as seven golf courses. In addition, Naturalists enjoy the area for the abundance of wildlife, birds, and butterflies. They can be found in the Butterfly Conservation Area, Pinery Provincial Park, at the Lambton Heritage Museum and along the Rotary Trail. Theatregoers will delight in Huron Country Playhouse and area restaurants offering family and fine dining.

2. **Ministry of Pastoral Charge Profile** (congregation size, age demographic, context, current mission/vision statement if you have one, etc.)

Ravenswood's congregation consists of a small core membership that is bolstered by the influx of tourists in the warm summer months. In the winter months, the attendance drops to around 14 to 18 while in the summer months we range from 22 to 50 on Sunday morning. Many members are retirees, which is a reflection of many year round urban residents.

Although we are a small congregation, we enjoy hearing "the Word of God" and use it as an inspiration in our daily lives and in our monetary support of the work of the church locally and globally. We enjoy hosting Baptisms at Ravenswood and taking part in Communion.

We follow committee structure for Stewards and the Session. The United Church Women meets on an as needed basis providing financial support to the church's work and mission. The missions supported include Habitat for Humanity, Christmas Toy Collection, Jamaican Mission Trip, and support for the Lambton United Church Centre.

The church was rebuilt in 1939 after a fire destroyed the original structure. It has been part of a two-point charge since its beginning. In the fall of 2007, the Arkona portion of the charge made the difficult decision to close. Ravenswood members felt strongly about keeping their church open and continue to be supportive.

Sunday School is available for young children.

A copy of our Annual Report for 2007 is available

As a congregation, we strive to welcome everyone to worship with us.

3. **Resources Profile** (building, annual givings etc.,)

Although we would describe Ravenswood United Church as a rural church, it is located on a busy provincial highway (#21). This feature makes it readily visible and accessible to several communities. The church sanctuary has a country feel. The hardwood floor and pews were refurbished within the last 5 years or so. The core group of parishioners can be depended upon to decorate the church in a way that reflects Christian traditions.

We can boast a year round organist and choir that lift our spirit in song.

Recently, we have added a chair lift to make the sanctuary accessible to handicapped persons, we have a main floor two-piece bathroom, and since purchasing the neighbouring lot, we have increased the size of our graveled parking lot. The garden that fronts onto the highway has undergone a landscape makeover. It is almost maintenance free and incorporates our sign to tell passers by that we are there.

With the closing of the Arkona church, the photocopier, computer and telephone facilities were moved to the secretary's home. There is no manse.

4. **Position Profile:**

Although we like to be independent, we are fully aware that we do not have the size of congregation nor the amount of contributions that would support a full time ordained minister.

Currently, we are managing our financial commitment comfortably with a weekend supply. From informal discussion, with church members, we understand that consistency is important. The weekend supply situation gives us consistency yet we are aware that this could change and therefore we are open to considering other options. The focus of the work is Sunday worship. Funerals and weddings are compensated outside of the regular pay. Board meetings are held following the Sunday church service.

5. **Skills** required for this position would be leadership focused on worship. Given the parameters of weekend supply, a student plus all others listed would qualify and include: Candidate Supply, Diaconal Supply, (United or non-United), designated Lay Minister, Ordained Supply (non-United), Retired Supply, United supply, and Student Supply.

6. Terms Profile

Ravenswood United Church is prepared to offer to prospective candidate a ¼ minister salary and benefits according to the Manual of the United Church of Canada.

In addition, attached to our Report is a 3 year projection of the church finances.

As part of the J.N.A.C. process, congregational members were asked to respond to the following question, “I would be willing/able to accept someone who is Gay/Lesbian/Bi-sexual/Transgendered/2-Spirited as my minister.” At least two-thirds of the congregation responded that they would be willing/able to accept someone who is Gay/Lesbian/Bi-sexual/Transgendered/2-Spirited as their minister.