

FAQ – Frequently Asked Questions

Updated October 31, 2011

Q: Why amalgamate? What is the rationale for an amalgamation with another congregation?

A: Amalgamation is a long-term response to the changing needs of our communities. It enables us to do together what we are hard pressed to do alone. This includes funding our ministry, extending our mission in the community, as well as offering sacred space which is accessible, safe and inviting.

Q: How does an amalgamation work?

A: Within the Presbyterian Church in Canada, when two congregations agree to amalgamate, they draw up an amalgamation plan. This plan must account for the pastoral leadership, governance, and assets of the amalgamating congregations. This plan then needs the approval of a Presbytery. In the case of Leaside and Glebe this is the Presbytery of East Toronto to which both congregations belong. Both congregations then vote on the approved plan. If a majority of members in each congregation vote in favour of the amalgamation, the Presbytery then takes the necessary steps to formally conclude the amalgamation.

Q: Who is eligible to vote on the Amalgamation Plan?

A: Only members of each congregation are allowed to vote on the Amalgamation Plan. Those who are adherents also have the opportunity to register their support in the space provided for this purpose.

Q: Since at this time (October 2011) we do not yet know what the proceeds will be from the sale of the Glebe property, how can we conclude any financial commitments: to the ministers, the Bethel Worship Centre, the Flemingdon Gateway Mission (FGM), and the needs for building maintenance at the Leaside site?

A: The Amalgamation Plan will have a fairly good estimate of the proceeds. This estimate will be used to quantify the commitments the amalgamated congregation can make to the proposed ministries, staffing, mission, building renovation and maintenance needs. The Amalgamation document will be subject to our realizing the proceeds from the sale of the Glebe property. If the proceeds are not realized as estimated, then we would revise our commitments accordingly. We cannot put ourselves in a position of making commitments we cannot fulfil.

Q: We are considering an amalgamation with Glebe Presbyterian Church, but there is also mention of the “Bethel Worship Centre.” How does it figure in the Amalgamation Plan?

A: *Bethel Worship Centre (about a block west of Bayview on Millwood) is a small condo complex for seniors, including a sanctuary / meeting room and lounge. It includes a small but active worshipping community and several elderly members of Glebe now make their home there. It is this connection which makes Bethel relevant to the proposed amalgamation. In the future, Bethel may also serve as a base for enhancing services as well as outreach to seniors within our communities.*

Q: Do the number of members and adherents in both congregations justify three full-time ministers?

A: *One of the full time positions will be assigned a five-year period. This is seen as important for the transition phase as the two congregations embark on the process of integration. Pastoral relationships formed over time will be maintained and expanded. At the end the five year period the ministry needs will necessarily be re-evaluated.*

Q: Will we need to increase administrative support for the newly amalgamated congregation?

A: *Depending on the needs of the new congregation, there is a possibility of increasing administrative support from part-time to full time. There has also been discussion of volunteer support, as this area is presently handled by volunteers at Glebe.*

Q: Does Glebe have any leases which would need to be addressed before the sale of their property?

A: *Glebe does have two tenants: a nursery school as well as a Korean congregation. Presently, the leases are being renewed month to month, though the school has indicated they would like to be able to stay to the end of the school year which is June 2012.*

Q: Does either congregation have any debts or liabilities which would need to be addressed in the Amalgamation Plan?

A: *No. Each congregation is presently debt free. In other words, neither congregation would be entering the amalgamation with any debt which needs to be repaid.*

Q: What are the zoning restrictions and possible development possibilities as the Glebe property is put on the market?

A: *This question is best addressed by the Glebe congregation and the Presbytery of East Toronto. During our congregational discussion (October 23, 2011), however, it was pointed out that this area is currently zoned for residential properties and this zoning will not likely be changed. Furthermore, the market value of the property will be directly related to the purchaser's estimation of the number of new units they could get on to that property.*

Q: What new initiative might we take on as a new congregation?

A: *Considering the possibilities of extending the love of Christ to our community is an exciting possibility. At Leaside we have emphasized our focus on families and young children. There is a possibility that this focus can be extended to the Flemingdon area which is part of our ward (Ward 26) and among the priority neighbourhoods identified for particular attention and development by the city. The Presbytery of East Toronto already has a presence here through the Flemingdon Gateway Mission (FGM). FGMs signature ministry is an after school program, and for the first time a summer camp which ran very successfully (June-August 2011). As the minister and the Clerk of Session at Glebe have served on the Board of Directors at FGM, we can explore how we might offer further support, especially as the response the FGM continues to grow.*