

Kanata United Church Our Congregational Profile

On Sunday, March 8, 2009, over 80 of our KUC family met in small groups to answer questions about how we would describe our Congregation as “a person”.

Here’s “Terry” to share her story with you ...

I am a female in my late 40’s, well-educated, confident, quite open to new ideas and perspectives and not trapped in gender-specific roles. I am resourceful, with many skills including communication, leadership, and organizational abilities. I’m a very caring person and love the time I spend in fellowship with those close to me, including occasions involving good meals, fun, and music.

I strive to be open to everyone I meet, while recognizing that I’m often most comfortable with people I know. But if new neighbours drop by, I’ll certainly try to make them feel welcome. I know that some of these neighbours might not fit in very easily at first and wonder if I could enhance my hospitality by becoming more inclusive in response to my increasingly diverse multi-cultural community. Maybe I should explore this a bit.

In case you’re wondering, I’m a happy, ordinary looking person. I tend to wear casual, comfortable clothing but sometimes enjoy dressing up for special occasions. I prefer a wash & wear hairdo and may even change my hair style and colour periodically. Whenever I can find time in my busy life to watch TV, I generally prefer the more well-researched programs like documentaries and educational channels – but I’m also an avid sports fan, especially of hockey! I want to make you feel like one of my family and I hope you would introduce me as a really good friend – like part of your family!

I appreciate my rich history and traditions as a church and love my Kanata community. I have frequently been involved in several local programs. For example, each summer I provide a wonderful Day Camp experience for many local children and recently helped out with repairs and re-decorating at one of the local Seniors’ Residences. I’ve been generous in opening my home to the neighbours when they need a bit more space for a variety of activities. Over the years, I’ve responded to various special needs within my community, including through shared efforts with people from other churches in joint interfaith activities like the Refugee Support Group.

Gathering to worship God with prayer, praise and preaching is important to me. It is also an important family and fellowship time. With a real hunger for knowledge, I’m increasingly aware of my need for continuing education and spiritual faith development for all ages, with a special concern for children and youth. Music is really important to me, and my music appreciation ranges from pretty traditional to more modern styles, and sometimes even extends to music from other parts of the world. I love to sing and enjoy a variety of musical instruments and creative Musicals and Plays. I particularly appreciate those thought-provoking sermons that interpret the Bible stories in new ways and relate them to my present-day time and culture. I cherish the challenges that dare me to ask questions. I love to learn in study groups and in dialogue with others as well as through my own personal reflection.

On the whole, I’m in a fairly comfortable financial situation, strive to be generous, tend to be thrifty, and need to look for extra income to support my outreach activities. I’m very aware of the global socio-economic challenges right now and worry about their impact on my life, my finances and the programs that I believe in and am committed to.

Over the years, I've tried to be proactive in organizing and responding to opportunities that support my community. I volunteer in support of several fund-raising events that involve many of the neighbours as well as offer opportunities for wonderful fellowship. Other projects include the weekly breakfasts at The Mission downtown and even further afield on an annual Habitat for Humanity Build. Although diligent with my donations to people in more distant parts of the world, I generally have a more engaged connection to needs that are closer to home. Similarly, despite my long-term financial support for programs of the wider United Church family, I recognize that my main involvement with this extended church family, in terms of my commitment, time and energy, is at the local Presbytery level

I regret that occasionally, when there's a problem or issue that I hear about, I may actually try to ignore it and wait to see if it will "go away on its own", rather than deal with it right up front. The difficulty with this, of course, is that the problem rarely gets resolved that way - it simply pops up later like a bad penny. I'm beginning to realize that I must work more creatively at recognizing and responding proactively to potential areas of conflict in my life.

Despite this, however, there have been times when I really have been able to work through and resolve some pretty difficult challenges. Generally, I'm able to listen respectfully, hear what others have to say and discuss the different perspectives that have been presented in an open and accepting manner. Although I try to work towards consensus, I haven't always fully succeeded. I feel a real sense of loss when people move away after a disagreement. But I still attempt to stay focused on the Christian messages of love and justice as they guide my daily life, decision-making and actions.

Like most people, I've experienced a lot of grief because of illness, death and personally difficult times. I've improved my skills at helping to support people who are hurting. I know that I must continue to focus on and enhance my ability to be nurturing and compassionate. I believe that paying attention to Pastoral outreach is fundamental both to my sense of well-being and to fostering a deeper, more committed fellowship.

As a very busy, energetic middle-aged person, I've noticed that I'm getting pretty tired these days. Perhaps I'm not focused enough and end up trying too hard to be "all things to all people". As I get older, I wonder if I'll be able to keep up with all my activities and programs and worry about fulfilling the need for future leadership. I also want to stay connected with young people. I believe that these concerns will become easier to deal with if I can clarify my sense of direction. With my strong personality, I realize that although I may be a bit resistant to criticism, I must listen and respond if I expect to stay healthy and dynamic. I know that with a focused vision, I'll be better able to reflect a growing and deepening faith and support my commitment to an evolving faith-in-action.

I hope that over the coming years, I will enhance my relevance for people and families of all ages, especially children and youth. I want to be aware of and responsive to this rapidly changing world. I hope to continue to be welcoming, vibrant and active, and grow in my relationships. I believe that a Christian life has no age limits and I trust that my understanding and wisdom will change and grow in both depth and richness as I continue my journey.