

Navan-Vars United Church Joint Needs Assessment Report



Prepared by:
The Navan-Vars Joint Needs Assessment Committee

November 22, 2013

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1. Introduction

This Joint Needs Assessment Report was initiated as a result of the retirement of Reverend William Brown, effective December 31, 2013. Reverend Brown has served as the part-time (20 hours per week) minister of the Navan-Vars United Church for 5½ years, since July 1, 2008. The foundation for the current report is the *Navan-Vars Joint Needs Assessment Report* prepared in September 2007, which resulted in the appointment of Rev. Brown.

As part of preparing this report, congregational input was sought in order to ensure that the report reflects the needs and views of the congregation. In this regard, a special congregational meeting was held on November 10, 2013. Participants were formed into small discussion groups and were asked to respond to four questions: what are the strengths and weaknesses of the church, what is the biggest challenge facing the church, what kind of worship service we would like to see, and what we are looking for in a minister.

The congregational consultation meeting was attended by about 36 people, and produced much lively discussion and valuable input for the report. An additional five people, who were not able to attend the meeting, provided their written responses to the discussion questions. The views and input gathered through this congregational consultation figure prominently in the content of this report.

This report was prepared by the Joint Needs Assessment Committee (JNAC) of the Navan-Vars United Church. A brief description of this committee is provided in Appendix A.

2. Community Profile

The village of Navan is located about a 30-minute drive east of downtown Ottawa, and about a 10-minute drive south of Orleans, a large suburban community. Navan is a rural village, but is a part of the amalgamated City of Ottawa.

The first settlers in the Navan area were from Ireland, Scotland, England and Quebec. The village is at the heart of a farming community, and was named after the Town of Navan, Ireland. In recent years, Navan has developed into a growing bedroom community, with most of the residents of its four subdivisions commuting 20-40 minutes to work in Ottawa or Gatineau. The population of Navan is approximately 1700. While most of the families in the community speak English, French, or both, other cultures are also represented.

Due to its location, Navan offers the benefits of a rural lifestyle, while still being close to urban conveniences and job opportunities. In this regard, it is only a short drive to Place D'Orleans Shopping Center, numerous other 'big box' stores, a large movie theatre, the Ray Friel Recreation Complex, and the Shenkman Arts Centre, all located in Orleans.

There are two churches in Navan, the Navan-Vars United Church and St. Mary's Anglican Church. The two churches have a long history of working together cooperatively, jointly running the community Sunday school, cooperating for worship services held as part of the annual Navan Fair, as well as other joint activities and religious observances.

Navan is a village with a strong volunteering tradition. It has a number of volunteer organizations that have contributed greatly to community life and spirit, including the Navan Community Association, the Lion's Club, the Navan Women's Institute, the Girl Guides and Boy Scouts of Canada, and the Cumberland Township Agricultural Society, which runs the annual Navan Fair. Volunteer organizations have contributed to many of the amenities enjoyed by the Navan community, such as the Navan Curling Club, the Navan Memorial Arena (including an ice rink and community hall), the community outdoor skating rink, tennis courts and baseball diamonds.

Navan is also a village that values its rural roots, and the agricultural traditions that go with it. It also has a very strong community spirit. A high proportion of the people living here have an interest in participating in the life of their community. Overall, Navan is a friendly and welcoming place to live, and a great place to call home.

3. Pastoral Charge Profile

The church in Navan was opened on September 10, 1926. In 1971, by action of Ottawa Presbytery, the churches in Navan and Vars were combined into one congregation worshipping in the church in Navan. The Navan-Vars congregation was joined in 1971 with Cumberland and Rockland to become the Cumberland Pastoral Charge. This remained the status until a pastoral charge re-alignment in 2004 established Navan-Vars as a single pastoral charge, which was officially inaugurated on January 1, 2005.

Navan-Vars United Church is governed by a Church Council, and a Church Session. We are seeking growth both spiritually and in absolute numbers. Our members are devoted to our church, we believe in the Trinitarian worship, and we continue to place an emphasis on the Sacrament of Holy Communion by celebrating the Lord's table on a monthly basis. We believe firmly in the power of prayer and insist on the teachings of the Holy Scripture.

Selected statistics for the church for 2012 are as follows:

- Total Membership 90 Households
- Marriages 4
- Baptisms 6
- Funerals & Memorials 3

Worship service is held on Sunday at 10:00 AM to correspond with the community Sunday school that we are part of and to reflect the desires of the congregation. The ecumenical Sunday school is sponsored jointly by Navan-Vars United Church and St. Mary's Anglican Church, also in Navan. The Sunday school serves the young people of both Churches, as well as other denominations in the Navan area, and it holds a place of great prominence with the congregation. Currently, there are approximately 50 children attending the Sunday school. The second Sunday of every month is scheduled as a family service, where the children are encouraged to attend church with their parents and the Sunday school itself is not open. There are currently three Sundays a year (pre-Christmas, pre-Easter and year-end) where the Sunday school plans and conducts the actual church service.

Our Faith

Our Congregation holds firmly to the traditional beliefs of the United Church of Canada, as articulated in the twenty Articles of Faith, which form the basis of union. Our priority is Christian spiritual growth and the development of personal relationships with our Lord

and Saviour. The Council at Navan-Vars, its Session and the congregation as a whole has adopted the following statement of faith:

- We believe that the twenty articles of Faith of the United Church of Canada do set forth the substance of the Christian faith commonly held among us. In doing so, we build upon the foundation laid by the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief Cornerstone. We affirm our belief in the scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the primary source and ultimate standard of Christian faith and we further maintain our allegiance to the evangelical doctrines of the reformation.
- We pledge to maintain the traditional faith of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, the only Son of the Father who declared in John 20:17, "I go back up to Him who is my Father and your Father, my God and your God."
- We believe, teach and worship God in the mystery of the Trinity, God the Father, God the Son, Jesus Christ our Lord and Saviour who died for our sins, God the Holy Spirit our Comforter and Guide.
- We accept fully the words of Holy Scriptures, which declare that nothing shall be added or taken away from the revealed work of God as contained in the Holy Bible.
- We invite all worship leaders, members of the congregation and visitors who come to share with us the faith and knowledge of God the Father, Jesus Christ our Saviour, and the Holy Spirit our Guide and Comforter.

OUR VISION:

■ *Our vision is to follow the "Great Commandment" of Christ to go out and make disciples of all people, baptising them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.*

OUR MISSION:

- *Our mission is to celebrate the life in Christ with the whole people of God.*
- *To invite people to come and share our worship and fellowship in the name of Jesus.*
- *To nurture and grow in faith, through worship, prayer and study.*
- *To nourish people in the love of God;*
- *To send them forth in the power of the Holy Spirit;*
- *To uphold the faith of our forebearers.*

Our Personality

The Spirit of Christ is in our community. As a community of the faithful, our church has touched all our lives. This is demonstrated in the following comments from the recent congregation consultation.

- *Our congregation is blessed with welcoming, caring and helpful people. The fellowship and concern for others, and respect for the views of others, makes the congregation feel like you are part of a large 'church family', which is a true reflection of the small rural community that we belong to.*
- *The members of the congregation have the ability to work with the larger Navan community, as well as the surrounding areas. This is reflected in the close relationship we have with the nearby Anglican Church.*
- *The love of music shows greatly in the voices of our choir, who sing to the glory of God, and which enhances our worship services.*
- *There never is a lack of volunteers when something needs to be done. The wisdom, knowledge and commitment from our older congregation ensure that tasks get done efficiently and properly.*

The Navan-Vars United Church is a visible presence in our community. Our minister is an important part of the community's crisis response. Whether for traffic accidents or for needy families, hospital visits, visits to the seniors' residences, extended care facilities, schools, calls for pastoral intervention can happen at any time. Our Minister and lay people play an important role in responding to the need for pastoral care within our local community.

4. Resources Profile

The Navan-Vars United Church is a small church with limited revenues. However, the church's financial position is strengthened by the fact that it has no debt, and it has an investment fund of about \$212,000.

The Church Building

The church building is an older structure that was built in 1926. The church has a sanctuary that will hold 130 people and a choir loft that will accommodate 20 people. The basement of the church has a large meeting / activity room with adjacent kitchen facilities. There is elevator access to all levels of the building. The replacement cost of the building has been estimated at \$510,000 for insurance purposes.

In spite of its age, the church is in good structural condition, with no pressing repairs that must be done. However, the building does have some drawbacks that, while not urgent, contribute to the church having a somewhat "worn" and dated appearance. Some of these drawbacks include: uncomfortable pews in the sanctuary, a strong sulphur smell in the water and generally old and dated fixtures and finishings. As well, the church does not have an office for the use of the Minister.

Human Resources

There are four paid positions at the church, including: the Minister, which is a half-time position; a part-time administrative assistant; the church music director and organist; and the church housekeeper, who is paid by the UCW. This is augmented by a large number of volunteers, who contribute their time and skills to the management and well-being of the church. Key volunteer positions with the church include the Chair of Council, the Clerk of Session and the Treasurer.

The church could not function without the various committees that manage all of the different aspects of church operations. This includes: the Board of Stewards and Elders; the Church Council; the United Church Women; the Pastoral Care Committee; and the Ministry and Personnel Committee. Mention should also be made of the dedicated group of volunteers who run the community Sunday school program.

Music is important to our worship. We are thankful to have an Organist/Choir Director who works closely with talented members of our congregation to provide music at our services. This includes the choir, but also includes other talented musicians who perform periodically to enhance our worship services.

Finally, there are a significant number of ready and willing volunteers who quickly come forward to pitch in when needed. Church clean-up days are well attended, after service coffee and snacks get prepared, fund-raising berry sales get organized, the church website gets set up, flower arrangements are provided for the front of the sanctuary, and numerous other details of church daily life get attended to.

Financial Performance

The Navan-Vars United Church operates at slightly below the breakeven point in terms of its revenues and expenses. As shown in the following table, there has been an operating shortfall for each of the past four years.

Comparative Annual Financial Data (\$)

	2009	2010	2011	2012
Operating Revenue	57,085	57,418	52,008	54,045
Operating Expenses	58,362	57,468	55,509	57,926
Operating Shortfall	(1,277)	(50)	(3,501)	(3,881)

With respect to revenues, there were 49 identifiable contributors to the church in 2012. The average annual offering was \$1,112, including Mission & Service donations. The introduction of the PAR program in 2012 has helped to stabilize the church's revenues. With respect to expenditures, the most significant operating costs relate to paid positions at the church, with maintenance, insurance and utilities also being significant. Careful cost management has offset some of the inflationary pressures on church finances.

The church's financial position is strengthened by an investment fund that has accumulated over the years. At the beginning of 2013, the value of the church's investments stood at \$212,463. This fund generated interest income of \$6,056 for 2012, which was used to fund the church's operating shortfall.

The church's financial statement for 2012 is attached to this report as Appendix B.

Financial Outlook

The church's financial outlook for the upcoming three-year period is for a gradually declining financial position. Operating expenses are expected to increase from their 2012 levels at about the rate of inflation. However, revenues will likely fail to keep pace, especially if there is any shrinkage in the number of active members.

Over the next three years, it is expected that the church will experience somewhat higher operating shortfalls. These shortfalls will continue to be largely covered through interest

earned on the church's investment fund. However, falling interest rates will reduce the level of investment income. For 2012, the interest rate earned on investments was 2.9%. For the period of this outlook, this is projected to fall to about 2.0%. Should interest income fall below the amount of the operating shortfall, the principal amount in the investment fund would gradually decline.

Three-Year Financial Outlook (\$)

	2014	2015	2016
Operating revenues	55,700	56,500	57,400
Operating expenses	60,300	61,500	62,700
Operating shortfall	4,600	5,000	5,300
Income earned on investments, used to fund operating shortfall	4,250	4,250	4,250

The above table provides financial projections for the three-year period 2014 – 2016. Based on these projections, it is expected that the Navan-Vars United Church will have the financial resources to continue operating over the period of this financial outlook, and well beyond. As such, the Navan-Vars United Church will have sufficient funds to pay the salary of a half-time Minister, as envisioned in this report.

5. The Biggest Challenge Facing the Navan-Vars United Church

The biggest challenge facing the Navan-Vars United Church is an aging congregation with a declining number of active members. A solid majority of the people taking part in the recent congregational consultation either expressed this view or agreed with it when it was expressed by others.

Most of the people attending the congregational consultation also realized that, unless this issue is addressed, the long-term future of the Navan-Vars United Church is in jeopardy. There was a wide-spread feeling that the church is slowly declining, with many being uncertain of how we can turn this around.

The fact that we have an aging congregation is evident at worship services, where most of people attending are in the 50 to 85 year old age bracket, and where there is a noticeable lack of young families. Recognizing this challenge, members of the congregation noted that the future vitality of the church is dependent upon attracting new people and younger people into the church.

To address this challenge, the Navan-Vars United Church has strengths that could be harnessed and opportunities that could be pursued in order to attract new members and build a stronger church. The following ideas for achieving this were identified by members of the congregation as part of the congregational consultation.

- Adapt our worship services to appeal to a wider and younger church population, as well as to the present membership.
- Promote church services with the parents of children in Sunday school. Currently, parents take their children to Sunday school, but don't come to worship services.
- Encourage greater family involvement at church services, including more child and youth-oriented segments within the service.
- Enhance the promotion and marketing of Navan-Vars United Church, using means such as social media, an upgraded web site and better signage at the entrance to the community.
- Raise our profile through more community involvement and increased visibility at community activities.
- Use a portion of our cash reserves on outreach and on making improvements to the church.

- Tap into the musical and other talents of members of the church to further enhance our worship services and build a stronger church.

The lively discussion that took place on this issue at the congregational consultation shows that the congregation recognizes the challenge that the church faces and is open to a wide range of approaches for addressing this challenge. Most members of the congregation understand that change is needed, and are interested in finding ways to meet the needs of a broader Christian audience.

6. Position Profile

This profile describes the role, responsibilities and duties of the Minister within the Pastoral Charge. Within this Pastoral Charge, ministry is a shared activity, undertaken by elders and members of the church family, with the Minister exercising spiritual and general leadership.

The Navan-Vars United Church is a small church with a small congregation. As a result, church finances are only able to support a part-time minister working 20 hours per week. The church has had over eight years of very successful experience with part-time ministry, and feels that this model will continue to work well for the future.

The primary role of the Minister of the Navan-Vars United Church is to provide spiritual leadership to the church community. This is accomplished through the specific responsibilities identified below. A rough estimate is provided of the percentage of the Minister's time that may be spent on a particular area of activity.

- 1) **Worship Services** – about 50% of the Minister's time
 - Plan and conduct worship services every week, working with Session, the Church Council, and the Organist/Choir Director
 - Celebrate the Sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, as well as marriages and funerals, in accordance with Session and Church Council adopted practices
 - Lead the celebration of special Christian occasions
- 2) **Pastoral Care and Counselling** – about 25% of the Minister's time
 - Provide pastoral care and counselling, including at home or hospital visitation, as requested by the church family
 - Provide support and direction to the Pastoral Care Team
- 3) **Christian Education** - about 15% of the Minister's time
 - Ensure that a Bible-based Christian Education program is in place, including holding Bible study sessions
 - Provide adult and youth confirmation classes
 - Provide marriage and baptism preparation counselling
 - Ensure that all resource material is consistent with our tenants of faith
 - Be a spiritual mentor to all committees of the church
- 4) **Outreach** - about 8% of the Minister's time
 - Provide leadership in ongoing efforts to address the challenges we face, attract new members and build a stronger church

- Provide leadership in special community events as requested by the Sunday school or by local associations

5) **Administration** - about 2% of the Minister's time

- Work with the Church Council, Session and the administrative assistant to ensure that all congregational records are properly and accurately kept, and annual reports submitted to the congregation and to Presbytery
- Ensure that church officers carry out their responsibilities in a manner that is consistent with United Church guidelines, by-laws and policies

All the duties described above are to be in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and in continuity with the Articles of Faith and Union of the United Church. It is recognized that the Minister is a member of the Ottawa Presbytery of the United Church of Canada and, in matters of discipline, is under the oversight of Presbytery. The Minister is also accountable to Session and Church Council in matters of worship, the Sacraments, Christian Education and pastoral care. The Minister will be a member of Session and Church Council and an ex-officio member of all committees of the church, except Ministry and Personnel. In fulfilling all of these duties, the Minister will be supported by the administrative assistant.

Finally, it is expected that the Minister will provide leadership in efforts to enhance our worship service and reach out to new members. At the recent congregational consultation meeting, it was noted by a number of people that our church must change if it is to draw new members from the local community. While the congregation appreciates and enjoys our current style of worship, there was also a feeling that some aspects of our service could be altered to better appeal to a broader and younger Christian audience. As an example, it was suggested that a worship service with more contemporary Christian music could play a part in attracting more people.

It is recognized that initiatives to reach out to the community and build the membership of the church may entail time commitments that exceed what is available within a half-time ministry position. However, it is expected that members of the congregation would participate in these initiatives to ease the burden on the Minister, and that any renewal program would have to fit within the capacity of the Minister and the congregation.

This profile outlines our expectations concerning the role of the Minister in our church. The Ministry and Personnel Committee will review this profile, in conjunction with the Minister, on a regular basis to ensure that all identified responsibilities are being met. Initially, this review will occur on a semi-annual basis.

7. Skills Profile

The Navan-Vars United Church requires a part-time Minister with the energy and commitment to lead us in strengthening the congregation of our church. This individual will have excellent communication skills and the ability to reach out and enthuse the different generations represented within our congregation. There is a significant desire among our current members to increase our congregation's numbers and to generate greater involvement in the church among the younger families of our community.

This profile reflects both the present concerns and future hopes of the congregation of Navan-Vars United Church as it seeks inspired leadership from a minister who will reflect the values and skills detailed below. The successful candidate should possess and exhibit the following qualities:

General

- A strong Christian with a focus on faith in Jesus as our saviour
- Enthusiastic, with a sense of humour

Communication and Working with People

- The ability to work in a diverse community and relate to the rural character of Navan
- The ability to preach a strong relevant sermon with a clear message
- The ability to establish a personal relationship with members of all ages, making them feel that they are part of the "church family"
- A compassionate person with the ability to work with others, listen to suggestions and offer guidance
- Strong organizational skills and the ability to work effectively with the volunteers in the church
- An ability to relate world events to Christian messages

Leadership and Growth

- A leader who is flexible in considering new approaches and welcoming change
- A willingness to be involved in outreach on behalf of the church
- Someone with ideas on how we can strengthen the church, and who can lead us in overcoming the challenges we face

8. Terms Profile

The Navan-Vars Pastoral Charge is prepared to offer a viable terms package to the successful applicant based on the experience and skills brought to the position, and on meeting the requirements set out by the United Church of Canada. This will include the following:

- Pay will be in accordance with United Church guidelines, pro-rated for a half-time position.
- As the Pastoral Charge does not have a manse, a housing allowance will be paid, pro-rated for a half-time position. This is currently \$8,322 annually (50% of the full-time annual rate of \$16,644).
- A telephone allowance will be paid. This is currently \$678 annually.
- A continuing education allowance will be provided. This is currently \$650 annually.
- Travel expenses will be paid, based on a per kilometre car allowance. This is currently \$0.41 per kilometre to a maximum of \$1,363 annually.
- Part-time administrative support will be provided;
- Time off will be provided for:
 - Annual vacation, one (1) month
 - Study leave, three (3) weeks

The Navan-Vars Joint Needs Assessment Committee

This report was prepared by the Joint Needs Assessment Committee (JNAC) of the Navan-Vars United Church in accordance with guidelines provided by the United Church. The committee carried out its work during the months of October and November, 2013.

The work of this committee was guided by two Presbytery representatives, Barbara Reynolds and Phil Fay.

The members of the committee include:

- Dave Douglas, Chair
- Nancy Gault, Secretary
- Brian Acheson
- Bonnie Bergeron
- Don Macartney
- Heather Monkman
- Tanya Rivington

Navan-Vars United Church				
Financial Report				
For the Year Ended December 31, 2012				
Comparative Annual Data				
Church Operations (General Account)	<u>2009</u>	<u>2010</u>	<u>2011</u>	<u>2012</u>
Operating Revenue	57,084.63	57,418.15	52,008.00	54,044.85
Operating Expenses	58,361.68	57,467.95	55,509.17	57,926.42
Operating Shortfall	(1,277.05)	(49.80)	(3,501.17)	(3,881.57)
Investment Account				
Interest & GIC Redemptions	495.25	4,055.68	9,785.07	17.80
Transfers to Operations	4,000.00	4,700.00	5,000.00	3,000.00
Year-end Balance	772.57	86.25	4,826.12	1,798.72
GIC Investments				
Opening Value of GICs			194,668.05	206,407.27
Increase in Value			11,739.22	6,056.04
Closing Value of GICs			206,407.27	212,463.31
Mission & Service Account				
M&S Donations	4,946.65	3,753.61	4,098.00	4,674.80
Contribution to Mission Treasury	4,925.00	3,725.00	4,075.00	4,600.00
Brian Acheson				
Treasurer				