

## **Rideau Park United Church**

### **Structural Review Update**

On Sunday, October 21, 2018, following our Anniversary Service, more than forty people gathered to hear observations from the Structural Review team and to offer feedback for next steps.

Patricia Whitridge and Elizabeth Bryce presented the findings of the review team. The team interviewed more than thirty respondents, made up of committee chairs, staff, and congregational members, as well as ministers from six other UCC congregations. While committees of Session and Council seem to be functioning well and adapting to the needs of their members and workload, there is some frustration with the overlap between Council, Session and Stewards. Many expressed the need to clarify the focus of Council to be more strategic. There was also concern for more consultation and backup for individuals doing significant work.

The whole group then divided into table groups to discuss specific questions about Council, Session, Stewards, and other church models. Table groups reported back with feedback for the review team.

These include:

- Focus on creating a more strategic Council by decreasing the number of members representing committees, while increasing members at large who bring a variety of perspectives to the Council; this would lead to a more diverse and strategic Council;
- Support committee work with broader use of communication tools;
- Separate two important functions of Session: (1) faith formation and expression; and (2) contact with the congregation;
- Form two committees of Stewards or nominate vice-chairs to stream the workload on (1) Finance; and (2) Property;
- Broaden the Stewardship focus to produce more stability in appeals;
- Follow up on long-range planning, with evaluation; and
- Recognize that reorganization may need to be done in steps.

Next steps: The review team will take the feedback and propose a draft model for Council, Session and Stewards in upcoming meetings. A proposal will be presented to the congregation at the Annual Congregational Meeting in February, for a vote. General guidelines for implementation will also be presented at that time. Any model will need approval by our regional governing body.