



## A Message from the St. James Church Board

**Subject: Planning for a Sustainable Future for St. James**

**October 19, 2025**

Dear members and friends of the St. James United Church community,

For over 65 years, St. James has been a beacon of faith, fellowship, and service in our community. As we look to the future, your Church Board is committed to ensuring that our ministry not only survives but thrives for generations to come.

Like many churches, St. James is facing significant challenges, including a shrinking congregation, rising costs, and an aging building that is much larger than our current needs. For several years, we have faced financial shortfalls that have been covered by our investments.

This is not a sustainable path forward.

To address these challenges proactively, the Church Board established a Strategic Planning Committee to conduct a thorough review of our situation and explore options for our future. Based on the initial, fact-based findings of this committee, the Church Board has made an important decision: we have directed the committee to begin exploring long-term, transformative options to secure our future ministry.

### **What does this mean?**

The committee will now begin a detailed investigation into the possibility of redeveloping our church property. The vision is to create a new, right-sized, and financially self-sustaining home for our ministry, potentially integrated with community-focused initiatives like affordable housing.

### **It is crucial for the congregation to understand the following:**

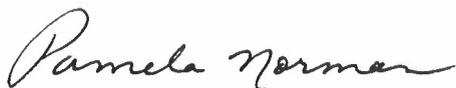
- **This is the very beginning of a long-term planning process.** We are in a phase of research and exploration. This process will likely take several years.
- **No decisions have been made about the future of our church building or property.** The committee is only authorized to investigate options and bring forward concrete proposals for consideration.
- **The life and ministry of St. James will continue.** Our Sunday services, pastoral care, and community programs will carry on as we undertake this important planning work.

- **The congregation will make the final decision.** As per the rules of The United Church of Canada, any major decision regarding the sale or redevelopment of church property can only be made with the approval Regional Council and the congregation at a formal congregational meeting.

We know this news may raise many questions. To help answer some of them, we have prepared a Questions & Answers document available on the church website and through the church office.

This is a moment of challenge, but also of great opportunity. We have a chance to be bold and creative, to honour our past while building a new legacy of faith and service for the future. We ask for your prayers, your patience, and your engagement as we walk this path together. We will continue to provide regular updates as this process unfolds.

In faith,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pamela Norman".

Pamela Norman,

Chair, St. James United Church Board