FAIRLAWN

Fairlawn's Next Chapter
Congregational Feedback Summary
(as of October 15, 2026)

Questions Asked

The congregation was asked to thoughtfully consider the following:

1. ***Are the key assumptions the right place to start? Why or why not?***
2. ***What else should we, as a congregation, keep in mind as we begin reviewing our Community of Faith Profile?***
3. ***What questions do we have and what do we need to better understand as we update the Community of Faith Profile?***

Feedback Received

Thank you to those who took the time to provide their input and support our collective discernment of our path forward.

The feedback received has been condensed to present the themes in a clear and accessible way. Although this summary may not capture every individual point, all comments have been carefully reviewed and considered.

Respondent A: The assumptions may make sense, but…consider ways in which our external community's reality has changed since the last COFP was written. Young people's economic reality has gotten more impoverished, indebted and hopeless – should we advocate more strongly about the economic gap with older, more wealthy people? Especially given that we are investing in a seniors' project?

Respondent B: Yes, the two assumptions are true, albeit some tweaks may be needed. Our three core ministries (ES, EB, EA) and our Guiding Principles have been very important steps.

Respondent C: Uneasy with the assumption that we will continue for another 5+ years due to declining attendance, disappearance of programs active in 2022, loss of volunteers for the programs we have continued, and our dependence on our successful music program – a source of vulnerability if that were to change. We should keep amalgamation as an open option.

Respondent D: Social Justice focus:

- Yes, our assumptions are correct. COMET and Supporting Seniors Ministries are very worthwhile endeavours, in sync with our other key social justice programs of Walk-in Support, Saint Luke's and Gibimishkaadimin. Let's designate them as our five core programs that we commit to ongoing funding of. Tell the nearby community more about this social justice focus, e.g., via our electronic signboard.
- Re-think our use of the word "transformation", e.g., in "to support transformation in each other and those around us" – is that off-putting?
- Challenge what we mean by "curiosity, creativity and courage", especially in the context of "creative and dynamic new approaches to worship style".
- We should ask ourselves why too few potential leaders are stepping up to play more of a leadership role and thus spread the load. What barriers do people see?
- Learn from Saint Luke's where a very small congregation can do great things for the community and help people find a why in their lives.
- Remove the reference to Community Research, as it no longer is a priority to guide our strategy.
- Consider what aspects of 'remaining ourselves' will propel us into a new future.

Respondent E: A Vision?

- It is too early to agree or disagree on Assumptions #1 and #2, before we first build a wider Vision. We refer to a path to (or a part of) a new Vision. More broadly, what is Jesus calling us to do and for whom?
- Note that the two highlighted components of the Vision (COMET and Senior's) are only part of the picture. They will draw on financial and volunteer resources, but will they contribute to making our resources sustainable? We are increasingly challenged to sustain or rejuvenate our volunteer leadership with some people in semi-permanent roles and others retiring due to infirmity.
- Are we burning up assets while heading to the cliff?

Respondent F: Things we do not know, including these examples:

- Is the queer ministry growing? How are we promoting it?

- What is the seniors' programming model and how does it differ from other such programs in North Toronto?
- What happened to ***Tuesday Lunch***? What other groups are still meeting, such as women's groups? What programs are we offering for Spiritual Growth?
- What rooms do we have for Seniors' programming? Do we have sufficient security and cleaning resources?
- What are the demographics of our attendees of a given Sunday?
- What volunteer resources can we call upon for our various programs?
- What is our expectation for the future of the music programme, which is so pivotal to our attendance?
- Could we do more to provide Drop-in Support?

Respondent G: Yes, agree to the assumptions, with extra emphasis on:

- Expanding our connections to North Toronto and to Saint Luke's
- Doing more to connect with children and youth
- Positivity toward 2035
- Understanding what we have learned from COMET and Seniors' Programming and how to extend that learning
- Deepening our connections to people in our neighbourhood community

Respondent H: Agree to the assumptions, but asking how we will reach out to younger people and children who can enable us to continue on when others are aging.