

Kingsway-Lambton “Fishing Tips” Visioning Workshop - September 23, 2023

SUMMARY

The workshop was led by Rev. Dr. John Pentland, lead minister at Hillhurst United Church in Calgary and based on his 2019 book *“FISHING TIPS: How Curiosity Transformed a Community of Faith”*. Over the day he described how he and his congregation “threw their nets on the other side of the boat” leading to transformation and vibrant growth.

The purpose of the workshop for Kingsway-Lambton was to present new possibilities and encourage us to dream purposefully about the future of our church about what we want to be longer-term as we enter this period of transition. John stressed that his “fishing tips” are not a blueprint but rather provide a process to encourage a growth-oriented way of thinking. The video recording of his entire presentation is available at <https://youtu.be/Ve9fNeoklOc>

Approximately 90 people attended the workshop. As the day unfolded, they participated in brief table group discussions and were each asked to answer a series of questions on their individual worksheet. Worksheets were collected at the end of the day & are the basis for this document.

NOTE: a full APPENDIX of all the comments is attached and makes for rich reading.

Key Learnings

1. Judging by the attendance at the workshop, the “buzz” in the room & the written feedback **people are energized & enthusiastic for change.** They understand that to stop our decline & start to grow, we need to bring new life to K-L. Expectations are high for leadership to get underway with guiding us through a process of change starting in the coming months.
2. **There is currently no consensus on K-L’s values/guiding principles.** We lack a definition of who we are, and more importantly, who we want to become as a church into the future. As an immediate next step, we should initiate a process to re-define our values so that we can establish a common direction and hire the right type of minister to help lead us there.
3. **There is a desire for the style and format of our worship to change to connect with more people.** Many workshop participants communicated that they would like worship that is less formal, more engaging, more relevant to the outside world and with more contemporary, upbeat music. At the same time, several folks express appreciation for inclusion of some of the traditional elements.
4. **Skilled use of technology that reaches more broadly outside our doors will be critical for future growth.** Many participants feel that our technology-based communications could be more interesting and impactful. It would be valuable to have a paid communications staff function with professional writing/marketing skills and time to fully leverage our website, social media, e-blasts, and signage; additionally, this role could help us offer more professionally presented online services and work with the volunteer staff.
5. There is recognition that **K-L would benefit from additional paid management staff** that would take responsibility for managing K-L staff and coordinating volunteers. This would build greater cohesiveness and accountability for maintaining common values and goals, provide guidance and drive execution of K-L activities, plus lighten the workload for volunteers and help avoid volunteer burnout.

Next Steps

The following are the next steps to get underway now to capitalize on the enthusiasm and momentum following the workshop:

#	Activity	Start Timing
1.	Strike a Values Task Force of “committed, comfortable and curious” to work through the process of developing values . (APPROVED BY COUNCIL NOV 7/23)	Nov 2023
2.	Gather an informal group of advisers (comprising “committed, comfortable and curious) to work with Jaylynn & Nathan on worship changes . Seize the opportunity to initiate “quick win” changes that show workshop participants that their ideas have been heard and acted upon. (APPROVED BY COUNCIL NOV 7/23) (NOTE: the attached participant feedback also suggests many other “quick win” change opportunities, beyond the worship service)	Jan 2024
3.	Add a paid communications contract position to enhance the creativity and impact of our communications and expand our online presence to reach people outside of our church circle. (APPROVED BY COUNCIL NOV 7/23)	Dec 2023 /Jan 2024
4.	Gather a team to investigate and recommend potential new funding sources and creative fundraising campaign approaches that would Inspire the generosity of our congregants to invest in K-L’s future. Explore additional ways to rent out our building. (APPROVED BY COUNCIL NOV 7/23)	Jan 2024
5.	Initiate the process to hire the new minister . Using the newly developed values as a basis, prepare the Living Faith Story in the Community of Faith profile as required by the UCC to get underway with posting the position.	Spring 2024
6.	Finish the preparation of the Strategic Plan . Define K-L’s direction, map out plans/action steps and recommend a new staffing model.	Spring 2024

Summary of Participant Feedback

The following are the top mentioned, 3 to 5 answers for each of the key questions. Of note, the total # of people responding varied by question.

Fishing Tip #1 - Let Leaders Lead – When asked “What kind of leadership do you believe K-L requires in the next era of ministry?” the most mentioned qualities were:

- Innovative/tries new things/encourages change (x16)
- Visionary for the future/forward thinking (x13)
- Inclusive/open-minded/encourages diversity (x13)
- Strong leadership skills/leads by example/mix of professional skills (x12)
- Dynamic speaker/communicator/listener/preacher (x11)

Fishing Tip #2 - Expand Your Circles – When asked “What circle (i.e. committed or comfortable or curious) do you see yourself in?” the responses were, not surprisingly, mostly “committed” (x24) and “comfortable” (x20) as most attendees were long-term K-L members. However, it is striking that more than half of the “committed & comfortable” also designated themselves as “curious” (x27) reflecting an openness to change in this period of transition.

When asked “Who is missing from our K-L experience?” the answers were focussed on:

- The “curious” (x22)
- Children/youth/young families (x13)
- Diversity/alternate lifestyles (x10)

When asked “What new ideas should we consider at K-L to expand our circles and make sure we include all?” most suggestions fell into four categories:

- Use the church more often for more than just Sunday services (x13) – e.g. lunch after church, seniors’ programs, youth sports/music programs, book club, speakers, exercise classes, counselling, charity events, “messy church”, etc.
- Make our Sunday worship more informal, shorter (1 hour), creative, relevant to the world outside, connected to current events, interactive, using everyday language and with more contemporary, uplifting, relevant, upbeat music (x12)
- Implement a diversity and new members plan to better welcome people who may be looking for a sense of belonging (x10)
- Take a hard look at our use of technology and expand our online presence to reach people outside of our church circle (x10)

Fishing Tip #3 - Discern Your Values - When asked “What would you name as the key values of K-L? When have you seen them lived out?” the top three ideas were:

- Outreach/fundraising for charities (x29) - e.g. Flea Market, Art Show, Honduras, Out of the Cold, Warmth Initiative, Pageant, Live Nativity, Ukrainian refugees, knitters
- Community/belonging/friendship/fellowship (x23) - e.g. UCW, Men’s group
- Spirituality/faith/biblical (x14) – e.g. Alpha, bible studies, week of guided prayer, sermons, grief group, prayers for the people

However, there were more than 45 additional ideas, plus a large number of people who didn’t know at all!

Fishing Tip #4 – Don’t Fight the Resurrection – When asked “What do we need to let go of at K-L so that new life can come?” more than 40 different ideas were mentioned suggesting that lots of folks would welcome change. Most of the suggestions were centred on the Sunday service:

- Don’t have a children’s story (x20)
- Don’t pass the offering plate in the pews (x15)
- Avoid music that is slow, traditional, conventional; sing less verses of hymns (x13)
- Stop wearing choir gowns (x11)
- Stop making printed bulletins (x9)

Fishing Tip #5 - Pay For What You Want, Not What You Have – when asked “what is something you dream about that you would love to have at K-L to enhance our ministry? (no financial restrictions)” more than 55 suggestions were proposed! The top three areas mentioned were:

- Have an Executive Director staff person to implement a management structure to become more professional in managing staff, volunteers, accountability & cohesiveness; help relieve the burden on volunteers (x19)
- Have a Communications/PR staff person with the professional skills and time to take our website, social media, e-blasts, signage, etc. to a whole new level; think of this as the modern form of evangelism to the world outside our church (x19)
- Have a Children/Youth Minister on staff to implement vibrant Sunday School and weekday programs (x14)

Fishing Tip #6 - Pay It Forward – When asked “What new ideas should we consider at K-L to better encourage the flow of generosity and gratitude?”

- Change our stewardship approach (x13) e.g. let people know what we do with their money; run fun campaigns like “Pick up the Tab” or “Up the Level on PAR”; Inspire people that they are investing in something really valuable to help the world outside our doors.
- Focus more on gratitude (x12) e.g. personal thanks, thank you notes, “why do I give” testimonials, recognize first time givers.
- Have fun, themed fundraisers & creative community events (x6) - e.g. Guess Who’s Coming to Dinner, Academy awards dinner, concerts, galas.

Fishing Tip #7 - Connect To Culture & Fishing Tip #8 - Say Who You Are – when asked “How are we known in the neighbourhood?” people suggested:

- Snobby, not welcoming (x10)
- Flea market (x10)
- Generous with charity donations (x8)
- White, wealthy, privileged (x7)

When asked “What new ideas should we consider at K-L to say who we are to the outside world?” there were a wide range of ideas with these as the most mentioned:

- Hire a professional communicator who is an effective writer, skilled in marketing, knows social media and can spread the word about K-L widely; new website design (x11)
- Make better use of the outdoor sign board (x10) – include topics not just speaker names; make it relevant reflecting what the bible says about current events; add fun; it’s our ministry!
- Have meaningful events and invite everybody (x8) – e.g. pet blessing, earth day blessing/clean-up, bike blessing, live nativity/petting zoo, Halloween event; outdoor courtyard services.

Fishing Tip #9 - Worship Matters – When asked “what would you like to see us change or try in worship at K-L?” there were many dozens of suggestions and the top ideas have been described above under previous tips. The key takeaway is that a significant portion of participants would welcome change in K-L’s worship style.

APPENDIX – DETAILED RESPONSES

Fishing Tip #1 – Let Leaders Lead

What “kind” of leadership do you believe K-L requires in the next era of ministry?

(34 responses)

Phrases or meanings most used:

16 – Innovative/Try new things/ Encourage change

13 – Visionary/Vision for the Future/ Forward thinking

13 – Inclusive/Open Minded/Encourages diversity/ Accepting/ Community builder

12 – Strong leadership skills/ Leads by example/ Mix of professional skills/ Guiding presence/
confident/Collaborative

11 – Dynamic speaker/Communicator/ Listener/Preacher

10 – Compassionate/ Caring/ Understanding/ Kind

9 – Respectful/ Supportive/ Humble

6 – Jesus led/ Spiritual/Grounded in Love

4 – Honest/ ethical

3 – Messages for daily living/ Everyday language

Verbatim Responses

- Forward thinking, Open Minded, Collaborative. Dynamic speaker on Sunday morning with sermons delivering a message which the majority of people can use in their daily lives. We are not biblical scholars (at least I am not).
- We require a strong personality with a vision for the future of the church. He/she needs to be an excellent preacher and communicator. They will engage the congregation and encourage change.
- Servant leader, good listener, humble, authentic, the ability to support and motivate others around a vision of love
- Humility, backbone, ethical, open-minded, inclusive, belonging
- Honest, compassionate
- New ways, innovative. Caring, compassionate, inclusive. Delegate/empowering. Visionary. Confident.
- Strong leadership skills.
- Respectful
- Honest, fair, caring
- Confidence to fail and try again. Good listener. Visioning. Spiritual.
- Professional. Caring. Listener. Innovative. Willing to get one’s hands dirty.
- Open. Creative. Willing to change. Listen to other’s views. Respects all views. Someone like John Pentland. Love the idea of a minister who listens to a group of people in worship planning. Share ideas.
- Compassion. Openness. Accepting personality
- High standards. Visionary. Belief in all. Listener.
- Someone who is passionate about what they do. Someone who leads by example
- Someone that has a vision

- Needs to be a strong leader
- Openminded. Fair. A leader who listens. Is passionate and committed to purpose and people. One who wants to build a community.
- Generous, compassionate, empathetic, understanding, honest, respectful
- Jesus led
- Community outreach
- Strong leadership, love, persistence, bravery and loyalty. Encouraging of diversity.
- Guiding presence. Not a bully.
- Vision for the future. Trust in others involved. Provide guidance.
- Vision. Like John. Charisma. Someone who “gives the call” – sermons touch on the core; make you say, “I’m here Lord”.
- Innovative
- A leader with vision. More inclusive. Everyday language. Be involved as a leader...not just Sunday! Deal with bullies!
- Committed, good listener, proud of what they do. Understanding, kind, humble, firm, active, fun, involving, open, supportive. Someone who identifies with this community and feel part of it. Not just a job but a lifestyle.
- Thinking outside of the box
- Has vision and passionate about people (everyone). Personable. Jesus Christ centered. Believes in Jesus.
- Inclusive. Willing to change – let go of old ways. Compassionate.
- Mix of ‘professional’ (ordained, other gifts – i.e. technology). Open to change and aware it. Not afraid to demonstrate relevance of our faith in our daily life. Ability to inspire, coach, understand technology, website. Aware of shifts.
- Meeting people where they are. Listening and smiling and approachable. Makes friends – overcome obstacles
- Delegates is caring and compassionate. Passionate, fair, empathetic, vision oriented, innovative, risk taker, listener, fair

Fishing Tip #2 – Expand Your Circles

Which circle do you see yourself in?

(53 responses)

Committed	12
Committed/Curious	12
Comfortable	14
Comfort/Curious	6
Curious	4
All three	5

Who is 'missing' from our KLUC experience?

(45 responses)

Curious	22
Children/Youth/Young Families	13
Diversity	8
Alternative lifestyle	2
Newcomers	2
Neighbours	2
Open minded	1
Lower income	1
Belonging	1
30-50 year olds	1
Visitors at back of church need welcome	1
People from outside the neighbourhood	1
Group togetherness	

Verbatim Answers

1

- "People who will sign up– not be afraid to take on a little job and make it their own and share – be outgoing in simple ways"
- Various spiritual backgrounds, various ages. Multiple socioeconomic backgrounds. Multi-cultural.
- Other denominations/non-church. Diverse backgrounds – be more welcoming!
- We are not diverse racially, lack of any type of minority
- More diversity reflecting our city
- We are not diverse racially, lack of any type of minority
- KLUC congregation could be as diverse as our neighbourhood
- We need to bring back children to expand church

What new ideas should we consider at K-L to expand our circles and make sure we include all?

(36 responses)

PROGRAMS – Use of the church for more than just the Sunday services

13 responses

- Lunch after church. Give out numbers to make it random meet new people.
- Programs to draw new families in
- Other outreach. More activities.
- Younger people activities to draw them in.
- Maybe have a neighbourhood welcome day to encourage people to investigate.
- Open up the church for seniors and youth. Yoga; chair yoga for seniors, meditation, basketball, badminton, youth band, start charity group, foodbank, Book club, speakers*
- Counselling based on Christian values

- Smaller opportunities to participate/contribute. Dial For Hope – meditation/prayer of the day. A meal of a month delivered to seniors and shut ins, delivery plants at Christmas and Easter
- Invite different kinds of program/ministry.
- We need to find ways to get people through the doors in a nonreligious way. (Flea market, basketball, exercise class etc.) then get them to perhaps enter the church
- Events/meals for everyone, not just current church community
- Commit to chat to someone while shopping

WORSHIP SERVICES

12 responses

- Welcoming, hospitable. Less formality. Limit length of service.
- So I have an idea but I am open to being an Ambassador and being more hospitable and welcoming people, but I hardly go to church so am I talking on both sides of my mouth?
- Shorter services.
- More ‘noise’ ‘attention” activity and a little edgy
- Name tags
- All inclusive. Younger.
- Live music (instruments)
- More music, less structure in Sunday service. Other time for service during week
- A greeting system at coffee hour. Connect theology to current events. Continue to innovate services. Try new ways to engage the community even beyond our ‘borders’. Make learning a value (also reflective/contemplative activities). Messy church. 7 days a week church (communicate all we’re doing).
- Make service and church activities more interactive, fun, inclusive, synergy(staff), open hearts. Two ways interaction: more contemplation and less speaking. More music and time for reflection.
- Less formal. Some ev language. Service too long! 1.5 hours.
- “Please” more contemporary music, upbeat – uplifting.

DIVERSITY & NEW MEMBER PLAN (Need Action in this Area)

10 responses

- Include LGBTQ+ communities.
- Need to include all religions/races/cultures. We need to change and adapt to new changes to include other people. Need to make our church more diverse and welcoming
- Get new people involved – an easy sale.
- Welcome the curious. Doing outreach. Warmth and accepting of others!
- Belonging as a goal
- People want to belong, look to make them feel welcome. Affirming, young families, denominations, LGBTQAIZS, events, open/accepting
- Intentional community outreach. Recognize those curious members of the community
- Seek out new people and introduce yourself

- Affirming (getting there). Young families – how? Other denominations/non-church. Diverse backgrounds – be more welcoming!
- Be part of Open Doors to show our church windows.

COMMUNICATIONS

10 responses

- Expand online presence, services/meditations. Less formal.
- More effective use of technology.
- One strategy is an online one (?) to connect with spiritual sites and create conversation
- Take hard look at on-line presence.
- Bigger advertising. Website improvement, advertising in diff places,
- Website, website, website.
- Sign board: no one knows the “3rd week of Lent”
- Social media, communication: keep doing and do more things like flea market, pageant, live nativity, warmth initiative and advertise them more
- Visit the busy churches in Toronto where there are lots of children to learn what draws them there
- Stop referring to spring and summer weeks in calendar as “Pentacost 5,6,7”. It doesn’t mean anything to most people and feels almost medieval.

PHYSICAL CHANGES

4 responses

- Get rid of hedges around church! Make church more welcoming in our community!!
- Landscaping – let’s make our church building more inviting. Leadership with this/take down hedges and open up property to invite neighbours to be curious about what is going on – no locked doors
- Use sign better.
- Smiling greeters who are sensitive to the people entering.

CHURCH OVERSIGHT

3 responses

- Have all three circles on committees
- Financial – better understand the demographic of community!
- The members , particularly the ‘leadership’ is overly conservative and resistant to change. That may be changing with a new governance structure. They were also in disagreement with the coordinating minister. Therefore, we are not attracting people. We are irrelevant to the concerns of ordinary people. We need to determine the essence of the Christian message, then figure out how to implement it, in other words, what is the vision. Everything else id strategy and tactics.

Fishing Tip #3 – Know Your Values

What would you name as the key values of Kingsway-Lambton? When have you seen them “lived out”?

53 responses

Outreach/Fundraising for Charities – e.g. Flea Market, Art Show, Honduras, Out of the Cold, Warmth Initiative, Pageant, Live Nativity, Ukrainian Refugees, Knitters (29 responses)

Community/belonging/friendship/fellowship/togetherness – e.g. UCW, Men’s group, “you are not alone” (22 responses)

Spirituality/Faith/Biblical – e.g. Alpha, bible study, week of guided prayer, sermons, grief group, prayers for the people; worship/teaching the word of Christ; through Hugh a personal connection with the Holy Spirit living within us (14 responses)

Music – high quality (13 responses)

Social Justice – e.g. Affirming Process, Anti-Racism (8 responses)

Generous spirit (8 responses)

Compassion/kindness/caring (7 responses)

Welcoming/inviting/open doors (6 responses)

Pastoral care/providing comfort in sadness (3 responses)

Hospitality/food kitchen (3 responses)

Hospitality/but we suck at it/need more (3 responses)

Commitment to the life, growth and future preservation of K-L (3 responses)

Connections to count on to support/help one another out (3 responses)

I have no idea what our values are/I don’t know (3 responses)

Listen to people (2 responses)

Theologically correct/highly biblical/scriptural knowledge (2 responses)

Learning/bible study (2 responses)

Efficiency, Hard workers, Energy (2 responses)

History (2 responses)

Love (2 responses)

Caring

Serving

Friendliness – ministers greet you at the end of the service

Jesus

Sweetness

Value committed people with long history in the church; positions of leadership are based on prestige and standing in the community

High expectation for quality of sermons

Volunteerism

Down to earth
Instilling church values in children
Inclusive
Communication
Events
Stability
Humility
Good manners
Payback
Synergy
Happiness
Peaceful
Engaging
Respect
Fairness
Support
Curiosity

There are a number of different activities that support others, but they do not appear to be connected to a central teaching or what the United Church stands for. Are we anything more than a social agency? We live our values when we explain the values that flow from the Christian message. That means understanding the message & proclaiming it in clear understandable language.

I liked how Pastor Jaylynn mentioned the core values on her first Sunday

Fishing Tip #4 – Don't Fight the Resurrection

What do we need to let go of at Kingsway-Lambton so that new life can come?

33 responses

SUNDAY SERVICES

- Discontinue doing the children's story; no more puppets; better they have more time in class and with friends (19 responses)
- Passing offering plates in the pews (15 responses)
- Slow (dirgy), traditional, conventional, medieval music; less hymn singing; less verses; more contemporary, upbeat, inspirational music (12 responses)
- Discontinue choir gowns; can be seen as officious (11 responses)
- Stop making printed bulletins (9 responses)
- Shorten services; one-hour length (7 responses)
- Restructure services to be less formal; less traditional; less solemn (5 responses)

- Encourage more casual clothing by attendees; ushers and minister in less formal dress (5 responses)
- Get rid of “repeat after me” & responsive readings/prayers (e.g. saying the creed) (3 responses)
- Use clear, understandable, everyday language; a more “inclusive” communication style; (3 responses)
- Stop following the lectionary; instead deal with current issues (2 responses)
- Replace existing online service; is Fresh Start worth 25% of our minister’s time? (2 responses)
- Our formal communion practices (2 responses)
- Have varied instruments/guitar
- Have a service during the week
- Passing the peace takes too long: people can meet at coffee hour
- Stewardship talks during Sunday service
- Make the ushers into greeters/welcomers
- Stop having church envelopes, except for guests; they mostly just get thrown out
- Call it a “reflection” rather than a “sermon”
- Choir walking down the aisle
- Heavy focus on the biblical (more contemporary)
- No second minister

MANAGEMENT/GOVERNANCE

- Reduce volunteer roles and hire a professional executive director; we require an appropriate management structure and personnel; paid person to organize (6 responses)
- Don’t lock the church all day; allow “drop-ins” (3 responses)
- Spend less time at Council talking about money (or lack thereof) and more planning about the long-term future (3 responses)
- Get rid of the “bullies” (2 responses)
- Stop being insular and old-fashioned; let go of old ideas about what is right and wrong (e.g. gay marriage was a past example, but now thankfully we’ve moved forward) (2 responses)
- Current board meeting format; “over the top” organizing (e.g. motions) (2 responses)
- Let go of mistrust/judgement (2 responses)
- Fixed thinking and closed mindedness (2 responses)
- We need to establish the mechanisms that bring about change that include managing the relationship between the ministers, the ministry and the laity
- Share info from executive meetings with the congregation

UCW

- Revamp/reimagine the UCW to be less old-fashioned (3 responses)

COMMUNICATIONS

- Don’t publicize things like “The Seventh Sunday in Pentecost” (2 responses)

- Hire a paid professional to do communication (2 responses)

OUTREACH/FUNDRAISING/SOCIAL JUSTICE

- Don't just deliver a cheque from our fundraisers to charities
- Restructure the Flea Market; streamline so less volunteers are needed

OTHER

- It isn't about you, it's about who is not here!
- As we decide what will "die" we need to be prepared to adapt to what is "new" (e.g. if we eliminate choir gowns we cannot replace restriction with more restriction – like a dress code. People need to be prepared to accept whatever people decide to wear.)

Fishing Tip #5 – Pay for What You Want

What is something you dream about that you would love to have at Kingsway-Lambton to enhance our ministry? (no financial restrictions)

43 responses

MANAGEMENT/GOVERNANCE/ORGANIZATION

- Have an Executive Director staff person to oversee operations; a Christian who understands the church; to relieve the burden on volunteers and manage a staff that is committed to serve the needs of our vision/values (19 responses)
- Include the curious, committed and comfortable on the council
- Implement an appropriate management structure and personnel to become more professional; the church is a business; why do we believe that it will run itself with volunteers and no accountability?
- Is the new governance model achieving desired outcomes?
- Open up committees (delegate)

COMMUNICATIONS/PR

- Have a Communications/PR staff person; professional – for website, social media, lawn sign and internal communications (19 responses)
- Deliver messages that are based on our values, use everyday language, exhibit curiosity, make it interesting; a theological response to Toronto issues; put interesting info on our sign board; fun sayings; to communicate with those that aren't here; think of it as the modern form of evangelism (9 responses)
- Fix the website (2 responses)
- Learn from the great communications at Lawrence Park Church/Stephen Milton (2 responses)
- Expand weekly electronic newsletter to include more church information
- Use social media for programs, services, activities, contributions of time and money
- Turn the street sign on earlier in the morning to catch morning commuters

CHILDREN/YOUTH MINISTRY

- Have a children/youth minister; young; design vibrant new Sunday School and other programs (14 responses)
- Open up our gym for community youth programs like a rec centre (2 responses)
- Fun programs on a weekday after school for kids
- “Messy church” family nights
- Pagers for parents
- Advertise to attract youngsters
- Pre-school music programs to bring in young families
- Youth music programs

HOSPITALITY/SPIRITUALITY

- Food programs more often; free meals for the public on a regular basis; regular lunch after Sunday service; dinners twice a month (4 responses)
- Start a new contemplative ministry around spirituality (2 responses)
- More bible study; in-person (2 responses)
- Service during the week; e.g. Wednesday night worship (2 responses)
- Become a source for a theological view on things that are happening
- Have movie nights
- Euchre night once per week
- Exercise classes in the gym
- One monthly event to involve newcomers to the community
- More fun activities that involve younger generations would be great including movies, games, etc. to make it more interesting
- Open our doors to the community more
- Evening programming
- Speaker series
- Community choir program
- To make our building more welcoming hire a professional landscape person to understand our vision and then to open up the grounds and make our building more inviting – take down the hedges, add a bench inviting people walking in the neighbourhood to stop and sit in a beautiful place – have music at certain hours – open the building at certain weekday hours – have a coffee/food truck
- K-L to not just be a presence in the community as a “beautiful church” but a place where the community feels a part of the church whether that be dinners twice a month or an open reading room; more access so it’s more than a place of worship

OUTREACH/SOCIAL JUSTICE

- More social justice activities; strong and action-oriented (4 responses)
- Social justice/outreach staff person – someone who doesn’t just “send a cheque”; visit the charities and meet staff and clients; find out their needs (2 responses)
- Build an ongoing community with and for refugee families, adding new refugees on an ongoing basis (2 responses)

- Enhance the benevolent program
- Weekly “out of the cold” dinners at K-L

PASTORAL CARE

- Paid pastoral care person
- One-on-one ministry focussed on “family issues”; low cost for anyone regardless of age, sex, membership or faith

MUSIC

- A new vision for music at K-L
- More time for the choir soloists

FACILITY

- Replace the projected main screen with 2 large LED screens on either side of the chancel (the current screen is dull, pale and gives a terrible first impression)
- Huge shed or storage (for outdoor fun)
- Better sound technology
- Interactive technology
- Re-design the sanctuary
- Washer/dryer combo
- An accessible outdoor area
- An open, event/program-driven building
- Parking

OTHER

- Tech support staff paid
- Programming for young adults

Fishing Tip #6 – Pay It Forward

30 responses

How generous is our community?

We are generous congregation (with money, time and outreach) (4 responses)

Very (3 responses)

Money is celebrated during big fundraisers (Art Show/Flea Market) and during Stewardship (2 responses)

Some more than others

We are generous on one level

Quite generous with \$ and time

We use email and sign together with announcements on Sunday morning (??)

How is money discussed? Raised? Celebrated?

Money discussed during fundraiser (Flea Market, Art Show) (2 responses)

Scarcity 'mode' (2 responses)

Not often enough

Tell stories of what money does, not only \$ but time, effort, skills

Power trip by few based on their own priorities

Money is not celebrated

Not much except yearly

What new ideas should we consider at KL to better encourage the flow of generosity and gratitude?

Thank you notes; one person said I have donated for years and have never received a thank you note (9 responses)

Review stewardship campaign: goals, gratitude, why do I give testimonials (6 responses)

Pick up the tab program (4 responses)

Modern payment methods e.g. offer credit card tap on Sundays (4 responses)

Tell people what their money does (3 responses)

Get personal (2 responses)

Special 'fun campaigns' (2 responses)

Up the level on PAR (2 responses)

Themed standalone fundraisers e.g. Guess Who's Coming To Dinner (2 responses)

Need to make sure that the church community and outside community knows what we do in the community and what we do with our time & money

Regular flow of into on regular budget

Connect weekly services/sermon to what is important to people's life

More events - Dinners, gala night, fun concerts, academy awards, choir events

Hire executive director

Inspire me to think I'm investing in something really valuable to help the world outside our doors

Getting more involved with helping Ukraine and homeless people

Dinners – Oscars

Make our building inviting/a place to stop on a walk through the neighbourhood – hire a professional landscaper and discuss our vision and then create a place to stop for coffee

Get rid of loose offering

Know when person gives for the first time

Money raised should be church money.

Money needs to be administered by a professional

Better use of sign, social network

Fun fundraisers

Creative community events to be grateful and share

The contemplative path

Invite generosity and activate gratitude

I think we do very well now (Outreach projects FM. Art Show, UCW)

Fishing Tip #7 – Connect to Culture

36 responses

How are we best connecting bible and cell phone? When have you seen this?

Housing/young adults can't afford housing (20 responses)

Mental health, children's mental health (19 responses)

Environment - e.g. Greenbelt (16 responses)

AI - e.g. teaching; how to help students/teachers understand (15 responses)

Social media influence on kids/teens (11 responses)

Teen suicide (10 responses)

Cost of Living (9 responses)

Racism (7 responses)

War weary e.g. Ukraine (6 responses)

Gay & Trans issues (6 responses)

Violence in the city (3 responses)

Family issues (2 responses)

Medical assistance in dying (2 responses)

Gambling online (2 responses)

Traffic problems e.g. Bike lanes (2 responses)

Drug related deaths

Lying politicians

Recovering from pandemic

Frauds & scams on internet

Re-emergence of Covid

Poverty

Aging (e.g. Alzheimer's)

Refugees

How to connect with God daily

Vulnerability

Lack of ethical behaviour

Opioid crisis

Colonialism/Reconciliation

How do we let the 'outside world' know?

Use sign board better e.g. include topic to be discussed not name of speaker, outside sign message reflects inside experience, be real, reflect honesty (5 responses)

Social media - Google, Instagram, Facebook (4 responses)

Bike & Pet Blessing, Earth Day blessing (4 responses)

Use movies and books as topics for reflections e.g. Barbie (3 responses)

Invite all parties in the community

Discussion panel

Debate

Short video clips/reels

Adding a biblical, theological, faithful voice to current conversations

Encourage people to attend church online as some people may be afraid to come in-person
Send kind messages to new people to make them feel comfortable/welcome
Connect to the community through guests that relate to society through the sermons
What is beautiful?
Teens ??? will make us more relevant to the community. They answer the question, why be associated with KLUC.
Pageant
Petting Zoo
Out of the Cold programs

Fishing Tip #8 – Say Who You Are

43 responses

How are we known in the neighbourhood?

Snobby, not welcoming, closed, stodgy (10 responses)
Known by the Flea Market (10 responses)
Generous with charity donations (8 responses)
White, wealthy, privileged (7 responses)
Art Show (6 responses)
Conservative/Traditional (6 responses)
Old (3 responses)
Music – e.g. Ruth Watson Henderson, Jean Ashworth Bartle, Hillary Apfelstadt (3 responses)
Pretty well known (2 responses)
Pageant (2 responses)
Insular – too much! (2 responses)
Active, Social events,
Beautiful building, idyllic
Good
Dark, old-fashioned
Largest UCW in Toronto
Theological, academic
No parking
Use the sign to say “Whoever you are, wherever you’re at, join us on the journey”
Banner all the time in our vision/welcome
Established church in the middle of a fairly affluent neighbourhood

How public are we?

Not very public but known to some (3 responses)
We are trying to be more public through are social justice programs, Flea Market (2 responses)
We need to be public at times other than the Flea Market
How can we welcome people?
We’re not very public

What is the message we most often proclaim?

Good Flea Market (3 responses)

Art Show is for privileged

We need to find ways of telling the neighbourhood who we are and what we do

The Halloween outside and the Live Nativity brings the neighbours on to the church property

Young people not relevant to me

Huge church family

We proclaim we are welcoming

We are relevant

We don't (??)

Drop in centre for youth. – to get them out of their houses, off their phones – to engage with other peers, e.g. cooking classes for youth (12-15 yrs old)

Open up our grounds – make our church lawn inviting – a place to stop and gather

“let people know” evangelism

What does the Bible say about what is going on in the news?

“You are never alone”

Pageant

Art Show

What new ideas should we consider at KL to say who we are to the “outside world”?

Use outside sign more We need to put more information on the outside sign letting the neighbours know who we are e.g. reflection title (not speaker, text – doesn't mean anything to community) make our sign a ministry – make sure the sign is always up to date, changing news/events/responses) (10 responses)

Ask outsiders to give honest feedback from all 3 circles – ask people in the community, invite them to church, outside perspective, invite someone who doesn't attend to come (3 responses)

Social media - not enough messaging through social media Facebook and Instagram (3 responses)

Friendship and caring, that we care, are friendly and relevant (2 responses)

Encourage offering, cultivate gratitude/Encourage generosity (2 responses)

Need a paid, professional communicator who is able to write effectively, skilled in all forms of marketing, on top of current usage of all social media and the age group(s) that use each one.

Same message outside and inside the church

If we have programs being offered to the public we need to spread the word (e.g. more public worship forums – e.g. outside service)

Events, word of mouth, people connection

Stuff that connects to the world

We should tell people on “the outside world” that we are kind, welcoming

Junior seniors should be our target for new members/3 ages of seniors Go-Go⇒SlowGo⇒NoGo

Replace pew cushions to be more comfortable

Focus on online messages
Enhance online services
Very pretty country style church
Tell community what the dollars we raise, do
Earth Day, community clean up
Bring back cyber seniors
Leverage Flea Market and Pageant to welcome others to come for more activities
ESA youth from church have place to hang out
We're not inclusive enough
Consider speaking about issues like mental health, medical assisted death, homelessness & AI
New design of website

Fishing Tip #9 - Worship Matters

What do you celebrate most about our worship at K-L and what would you like to see us change or try?

Celebrate:

- Coffee time /lemonade on the lawn (3 responses)
- I appreciate the music (2 responses)
- Sharing important congregant celebrations; good news candle
- Music and new music -> short history about anthem or hymn
- Passing the Peace
- Largest UCW \$ - give away money to many organizations
- Love the sermon
- Reconnecting with friends
- Keeping in touch with friends
- I have stopped going to the 10am service as it is not relevant to me
- Music
- Sermon
- Flea Market
- Traditional, peaceful service
- Excellent sermons
- Fellowship
- The Holy Spirit moving through the congregation as the word is "living"
- The Christmas Pageant
- The parishioners that I share with

Change/Try:

- Like the idea of contemporary and relevant pieces of music (6 responses)
- Worship planning with committed, comfortable, curious (3 responses)
- Coffee before the service and in the pews (2 responses)
- Music is too stodgy (2 responses)
- Prayers for others (2 responses)
- Peoples' testimony (2 responses)
- Theme ideas for sermon series, not just the lectionary (2 responses)
- Keep to 1 hr for the 10am service (2 responses)
- Opportunity for brief sharing during the service – connecting with congregants, prayer requests
- Goal is excellent and engaging worship
- Make prayers open to the congregation – share joys, concerns, silence
- Solicit honest feedback from someone you bring to church (ie. for a baptism)
- Review baptism service and bring into the present
- Interactive use of technology during the service for immediate feedback
- Learn from Fresh Start – coffee, contemporary music, no choir robes, make the service interactive, 1 hr max
- Less formality
- More inclusive message
- Letting the leader lead
- No judgement no matter what you believe or how you live
- I would like to see contemporary songs mixed in at the 10am service
- Become casual officially
- More community
- Love the idea of a question of the day
- Make worship more relevant and current
- Conversation together with strangers
- More creativity and fun in the service with a caring community who want to make our world a better place
- Children's programs – straight to Sunday School
- Change our attitude towards LGBTQ communities and welcome everyone
- Add interaction during the service
- Edit online service to reduce long stretch of announcements at the beginning; possibly edit out passing of the peace
- Speak to someone new every Sunday
- Love the idea of a worship planning group
- A break in the service for coffee, offering plate
- Less formality in the service

- Include lay people in the service
- Make the 10am service more interactive
- Max 2 hymns per service
- Welcome new people

Final Thoughts....

As you consider K-L's next era what important ideas do you wish to share?

- We are current, connecting and relevant to the news and news of community and of world
- Have a more contemporary and inclusive service
- Become more welcoming – interactive testimonials, change the money plates, pay for social media experts
- Let's start even with small changes – Rev J is up for it
- Remove Children's Time
- Implement modern music
- Ensure teams represent “curious, comfortable and committed”
- The “spiritual ritual” is something that binds together people over time and into a community – we have to find a way to keep that as we move into and unknown future
- I'm more curious and read to throw the net on the other side
- I want to see more social involvement
- Need to develop a plan to engage the congregation in thinking through these tips: #1 – values – what are KLUC values; #2 – do some research to listen to the curious; #3 – who are we as a church, *really*
- Open minds, open hearts
- Respect difference without imposition
- More activities, more often
- Make a fun environment for the service
- Get rid of the gatekeeping mentality for who belongs and who doesn't (ie. if you don't go to services regularly you don't have the right to participate in other church programs)
- To continue Rev Hugh's vision, value and bible-centered ministry
- Make the church more relevant to community members of all ages; a place to share concerns, connect, do something for other people
- Build the on-line ministry
- Develop more opportunities for community near and far
- Involvement in programs and events
- Need to expand digital presence (although already better than many United Churches)
- We should review the church calendar and figure out what to drop in order to make room for new initiatives

- Make our worship services more fast-paces, modern, fun, relevant to culture with modern music, relevant to social justice
- More meaningful connections with new, lonely and curious people
- I'm excited to see where we go
- I'd like to be more relaxed and inclusive to other people
- Let's slow down, listen to one another, and then speed up together
- Making our community bigger by going online more
- Bring in more people with kindness
- Bring in younger generations by fun things/activities
- Target "Junior Seniors" to bring in vibrant, active, capable new participants and leaders
- Relax focus to get young couples involved
- Church is vibrant
- I feel K-L needs to be willing to invest some of our investments (money?) to do everything we can to increase our presence
- Hire an Exec-Director (ft?) and Communications person (pt?) and do everything we can to ensure we survive and grow
- Reaching out more to the community
- I'm not a big fan of the testimonial – once you hand-over the mic you might not get it back for a long time! Perhaps appropriate for the website?
- That we find new ways to grow and thrive and be inclusive to everyone
- Use our beautiful building to more advantage outside to start – make the property work for the community
- The power of prayer to the individual; reveals your most current thoughts
- Open to change?
- Open the doors
- Showing up in active action – be at Queen's Park; wear Orange shirts; etc. – be more visible
- Like the idea of an Executive Director, a professional running the church
- Paid positions (allocate money to fund)
- Conduct Fresh Start in person
- Use digital sign better/more
- Stop Children's Story; passing the collection plate; choir gowns

What action items would you like to see happen over the coming year?

- Opportunities for all wonderful outreach events – share with the whole congregation (publish a calendar of events)
- Less "silo" and more communal and interactive sharing of successes and sorrows as committees -> support and share
- Open the church more through the week (move to a 7-day church)
- Consider change

- Determine the vision; Hire a dynamic leader; Develop strategies; Implement Change
- Add coffee in mugs
- No offering plate
- 1 piece of current music per service
- Like Hillhurst's slogan – we need to adopt it!
- Let's start even with small changes – Rev J is up for it
- Remove Children's Time
- Implement modern music
- Ensure teams represent "curious, comfortable and committed"
- Open prayers up to the congregation – joys, concerns, silence
- I would like to see our ministers stepping out of the office and sitting down for coffee with people during Flea Market or doing social issues like being part of the Pride Parade
- Organize events for social causes and take part with the congregation
- Sort out the ministry team
- Make a promotional video for KLUC like Hillhurst to go on the K-L website (Hillhurst is home)
- Actually figure out how to manage this transformation – the process is critical
- Actually support outreach initiatives
- Things being passed on to others
- Delegate functions to other
- Open to changes and suggestions
- More involvement from everyone
- Make the 10am service more like Fresh Start
- New scripture-centres minister
- Partners in Prayer
- Sunday Lunch and Learn
- Coffee before the service
- Lose the choir and minister robes/gowns
- More contemporary music
- Hire and Exec Director
- As we consider what it means to be a more welcoming space, how do we prepare to acknowledge the harm caused by the Church over its history that terrorizes the reputation of the church today?
- Assessment of outcomes of moving to new governance (council) model
- Regular survey feedback from new members and adherents in connections with the living faith story
- Guest of the day
- More circles on all committees (three C's)
- An attitude of generosity and trust with regards to money

- Bulletin Boards
- Physical and online sign-up lists
- People offering their gifts to the community
- More (sandwich) lunches after services (ie. once a month) for community feeling; pay for them so not a burden on UCW or others
- Wednesday evening study/service?
- Have a dine/eat get together
- We should adopt a more streamlined example of Hillhurst
- Hire Exec Director
- Make all of our services less formal and more topical
- Cultural music
- Eliminate Children's time in favour of live announcements (creates community)
- Bringing teens into the church so they feel like they belong somewhere and we can enrich their lives
- Ask Nora Cutcliffe to present the excellent report she creates while interviewing people who attended the Flea Market – it is worth sharing with the whole congregation
- Baptism testimonials/Why do you come here?
- Packing/removal of the platform at the top of the chancel steps
- Would love to see community garden on the property this spring/summer 2024
- Farmer's Market one day/week or one/month would bring more focus to the property and might strike and interest in the community becoming members
- K-L feels intimidating so it would be great to see more events that would make the church feel more welcoming
- Have all new visitors share their emails/contact and keep this folks updated about events
- Make the gym more available to outside events that represent members of the community
- Pay to attract youth to K-L
- Pay for qualified help to assist Council
- Paid positions (allocate money to fund)
- Conduct Fresh Start in person
- Use digital sign better/more
- Stop Children's Story; passing the collection plate; choir gowns

Workshop Feedback

How did this workshop go for you? What part of this workshop mattered most to you? Do you have any feedback for John Pentland?

- Great to meet different people; It was great to speak with folks I'd seen in church but never spoken with (2 responses)
- Great opportunity to share thoughts, ideas and reflections
- Really great sparks to keep the conversation going
- RISK and Change; Keep/Let Go/Innovate
- It would be nice for a bit more time to discuss topics at tables
- Excellent workshop – if KLUC embraces this message we have a future
- Very curious and excited to be on the cusp of something new and relevant
- Incredible presentation – we need to implement!
- Very engaging and stimulating
- The sharing has widened my connections in a beautiful, warm and lasting way!
- It held my attention to the very end, which was great (John's practice of reminding audience that he was watching the time helped people stay engaged right through)
- Fabulous! Energetic and energizing for us
- Participating at table and in large group was excellent
- John (who is neutral) covered sensitive topics – choir gowns, bulletins, communications, why ministers need to know who and how much givers donate
- A great springboard for our next steps
- Hopefully you will keep the congregation in the loop as to where all the info is going next as you collate it
- I thought the 5 hrs together was informative, educational and extremely motivating
- It gives me hope that KL can continue to evolve to be not just a surviving but a thriving church
- I hope we can have a few quick wins implemented from this workshop
- Well done
- It is wonderful to get such a large group of people into one room and actually talk about issues – we really need more opportunities to co-mingle
- Liked the variety of challenge and examples of possible responses
- A bit more time on table discussion would have been good
- Talk more about what is the follow-up/next steps
- Excellent, very helpful, nice tool
- The intentions behind the workshop are the most important both those that brought people here and especially the newly formed intentions they intend to act on
- An excellent session for brainstorming for our church - How to do things differently moving forward; How to consider online attendees as a powerful group to be catered to specifically/uniquely different from people attending in person

- Excellent workshop
- Very inspiring; many good ideas and much food for thought
- Terrific – really stirred my brain to think about what we could do
- More time for audience questions built in
- Personal testimonies were really powerful
- Very thought-provoking: focus on what to stop doing matters
- It would have been great to see planned questions in advance of the workshop
- Connection to church mattered most
- I was particularly moved by the “why I give” video
- Loved it – it has made me more excited for the future of our church
- I’m re-invigorated to care about K-L
- A+ - thank you!
- I look forward to change at KLUC in the next few years
- Really good! It made me reflect on our church community and made me brainstorm and think of new ideas to contribute to my community
- Really inspiring
- Fabulous workshop: thank you so much John for sharing your ideas
- I enjoyed the workshop very much!
- Excellent +++
- Review all material again
- Many excellent tips/ideas
- Thank-you so much!
- It was really helpful just felt that I am not really involved – I learned a lot (I should give more of my time)
- Excellent presentation
- Much to think about (and do)
- I’m hooked – inspired to be involved again
- It was wonderful
- I didn’t want it to end
- I learned so much!
- Excellent
- How to involved the community not just the committed
- Coffee during church
- Very good
- I appreciated the suggestions for the service, thanking donors, management
- The word “belong” has a whole new meaning to me – thank you John
- Allow tables to talk longer for each tip
- Leave separate sheet for one’s own notes