

A Strategic Framework for Norval United Church

All organizations have a Strategic Framework, often they are written down. Sometimes they are just lived. The document you are holding is the Strategic Framework for Norval United Church. The intent of this Strategic Framework is to lay out a structure that will help to focus effort on achieving our goals and dreams as a congregation.

Our **Vision Statement** defines our overall dream of what we are called to be.

Our **Mission Statement** defines our fundamental purpose, what we feel we are called to do to make our Vision a reality, and how we can live out our Vision.

Our **Core Values** are the fundamental principles and beliefs that form our congregation's life. These values guide our behaviour, worship, service, and programs.

Our **Statement of Inclusion** describes our dedication to being an Affirming Ministry and welcoming all people into full participation in the life and work of Norval United Church.

Our **Strategic Pillars and Strategic Foundation** uphold our congregation and structures and provide both our foundation and the method by which we can measure our performance.

When this **Strategic Framework** is combined with our **Governance Model** anyone in the church – Ministers, paid staff, Executive Team, committees, Congregation members, judicatory officials, and everyone else – will have a sense of who we think God has called us to be and how we feel called to live our faith. These documents will guide us in our planning, dreaming, and decisionmaking.

Vision Statement

Changing lives through God's love

Mission Statement

To be a caring, forgiving Christian community that welcomes people of all ages to join us on life's journey in finding God, growing spiritually, sharing our faith, and reaching out to serve others.

Statement of Inclusion

In response to God's call, Norval United Church (NUC) is committed to welcoming and celebrating people of all ages, genders, gender identities, gender expressions, racialized groups, sexual orientations, family configurations, abilities, ethnic backgrounds, and economic circumstances, into full participation in the life and work of NUC.

With the help of the Holy Spirit, we strive to:

- create a safe, respectful, and welcoming community
 - celebrate the gifts of one another
- receive with gratitude the leadership, service, and ministry of one another
- celebrate and honour the life passages of all (births, baptisms, confirmation, weddings, blessings,
 - healing, death, and dying
- continue our discovery of what it means to be an inclusive community
- challenge ourselves to grow toward greater inclusion and justice seeking for all people

Core Values

Authenticity

At Norval United Church we strive to be real, honest, and genuine; in our people, in our programs, in all that we do. This means being ready to share our joys and celebrations with one another but also being ready to share our sorrows and disappointments with one another. We are not perfect, we must be willing to admit our mistakes. Rather than running away from our challenges and frustrations we seek to encourage one another to look for and find God's grace each day. A sense of humour helps us avoid taking ourselves too seriously. With God's help we seek to live lives of integrity that will be an example to the world.

Community

Community has been a core value of Christians since Jesus first gathered people around him to hear the message. Community has been a core value of Norval United Church from

its very beginning as a small rural church serving area farmers. The love of God, offered through Christ, changes us in community as we serve and are served, challenge and are challenged, give and receive, teach and are taught, forgive and are forgiven, fail and are encouraged and offer encouragement to fellow travelers. In experiencing all this within Norval United, we seek to live it out in our lives each day, reaching out to others as we live, learn and love together.

Spiritual Growth

Norval United Church is a community of faith, described by the apostle Paul as “the body of Christ”. We are not a social club or a service organization, even though fellowship and service are important to us. More important is our desire to grow spiritually. Through worship, prayer, study, service and action we experience transformed lives by the renewing power of God’s Spirit. This enriches our lives and leads us to be an example to others. We believe everyone is on a spiritual journey and our hope is that wherever someone is on their journey Norval United will be a place where spiritual growth happens.

Diversity

We endeavour to make Norval United Church a safe, accepting place for everyone. People come to Norval from a variety of church experiences and from no church experience. They come from a variety of life experiences, and they come from different places on their journey. We strive to avoid becoming a place where everyone ‘looks the same and thinks the same’. We encourage people to explore their questions, experience God’s presence, and progress in their spiritual journey at their own pace. There are many ways of expressing and growing in one’s faith and we want to encourage those different ways, believing that with God’s leading we all can learn from one another and that our spiritual lives will be enhanced by each other.

“Can Do” Attitude

Norval United is a family with a “Can Do” attitude. We foster an environment where anyone can be proactive in responding to the needs they perceive within the church or in the broader community beyond Norval United Church. If an action fits our Vision Statement and our Mission Statement and corresponds to our Core Values, we want to encourage people to act. When someone has an idea, our response should not be “Oh, that will never work, we can’t do that”, but rather “What can we do to make this happen!” We will encourage dreams and support each other in our ministry together. Paul writes, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” (Phil. 4:13) We seek to build upon our ‘Can Do’ attitude.

Roots

This particular family of faith is built upon a foundation laid by thousands and thousands of faithful, dedicated people who have experienced God's presence and sought God's guidance. We honour their commitment and their faith by telling the story over and over again. They are an example to us. We revere our heritage and respect our roots but, just as our ancestors had to dream and dare and boldly live their faith, so we will dream and dare and boldly live into the future, to broaden the foundation as we live out our faith and God's call to us today. Our tradition does not tie us down, it gives us a solid footing from which we go forward. We need "roots for the ground and wings for the sky".

Strategic Pillars

Finding God

We are not alone. We live in God's world.

Gathering together in community is a central step on our journey of finding God in the day to day living of our lives. Worship, both public and private, provides an opportunity to find meaning in Biblical teachings that will help us experience God's touch in our lives, see God at work in the world, and strengthen our relationship with God. We experience God as we serve and are served, challenge and are challenged, give and receive, teach and are taught, forgive and are forgiven, fail and are encouraged and offer encouragement to fellow travelers. Our lives are changed as we find the love of God, offered through Christ, as we laugh and cry and share and experiment and rest and work together in community.

For I know the plans I have for you," declares the LORD, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future. Then you will call on me and come and pray to me, and I will listen to you. You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart. (Jeremiah 29:11-13 NIV)

Growing Spiritually

We believe in God who works in us and others by the Spirit.

Through worship, prayer, study, service, electronic media, and more we experience transformed lives by the renewing power of God's spirit. This enriches our lives and leads us to be an example to others. We believe everyone is on a spiritual journey and our hope is that wherever someone is on their journey Norval United will be a place where spiritual growth happens.

What we have received is not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit who is from God, so that we may understand what God has freely given us. (1 Corinthians 2:12 NIV)

Sharing Our Faith

We are called to be the Church.

We are a faith community, described by the apostle Paul as “the body of Christ”. There are many ways of expressing and growing in one’s faith and we want to encourage those different ways, believing that we all can learn from one another and that our spiritual lives will be enhanced as we share our faith. We seek to share God’s love in tangible ways through our sharing of the gifts given to us. As our own lives are changed through God’s love we are led to be an example to others.

Everything comes from you; all we're doing is giving back what we've been given from your generous hand. (1 Chronicles 29:14 The Message)

Reaching Out to Serve Others

We are called to love and serve others.

God calls each of us to serve others. Reaching out and truly caring for others in our community and beyond is vitally important in the life and work of Norval United Church. Lives can be changed as we share the love of God. This sharing can be in the form of our time, talents, gifts, or money to the church and to groups and people outside the church. It may also be in the form of inviting others to join with us in the various groups that help people of all ages to find God and grow spiritually. It happens both as we gather together as a caring, forgiving Christian community supporting one another on our journey and also as we look beyond our walls to listen where and to whom God is calling us to serve.

Then I heard the voice of the Lord saying, “Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?” And I said, “Here am I. Send me!” (Isaiah 6: 8 NIV)

Strategic Foundation

Administering the Church

We believe in God, who has created and is creating.

Administration is important to the success of all that makes up the life and work of Norval United Church. We value and support the ‘can do attitude’ that allows members of our congregation to initiate new programs or ideas. We revere our heritage and respect our roots but, just as those ancestors had to dream and dare and boldly live their faith, so we will dream and dare and boldly live into the future, to broaden the foundation as we live out

our faith and God's call to us today. Proper administration helps us achieve these goals, develop strategies and plans, identify new goals and to organize people, tasks, and events. It gives us a solid footing from which we go forward as we live our vision, mission, and core values.

Do you see what this means—all these pioneers who blazed the way, all these veterans cheering us on? It means we'd better get on with it...Keep your eyes on Jesus, who both began and finished this race we're in. Study how he did it. Because he never lost sight of where he was headed—that exhilarating finish in and with God... (Hebrews 12:1 The Message)

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