



FOUR QUESTIONS FOR DISCERNING

- 1. Drawn by love (rather than trying to “secure” the future):** The possibility of being drawn into the future by love captures our imagination. We know we can become mired in fear and anxiety about things like finances and the loss of younger people. Yet we also know, by experience, that money follows vision. We need a new vision for changing times that is rooted in love for God, trust in God’s Spirit, and that allows our spirits to sing. **Questions for Reflection:** *What kinds of things that we do now strengthen our awareness of God’s creative presence here right now, and strengthen our trust in God’s loving purpose for the future? What further (specific) steps could we take that deepen our relationship with God and give us courage to trust God’s leading?*
Alternative: *If we were rooted in love and drawn by love, what would we keep doing? What might we stop doing? What might we start doing?*
- 2. Outreach that builds on our strengths:** We are aging and have less energy for hands-on work, but we also have strengths. We are deeply rooted in the Fredericton community; we have the ability to write and persuade; we are able to have civil conversations that are respectful. These may be gifts that we can offer to the larger community. We also have theological and spiritual resources. **Questions for Reflection:** *What are some possible (specific) ways to focus the energy of our two congregations and build on these strengths to focus our mission in Fredericton? What type of mission initiative for the city of Fredericton can we envision? What are some innovative ways to sustain hands-on work while taking into account our waning energies?*
- 3. Building Relationships:** People in both congregations express how much they have enjoyed the joint conversations thus far, getting to know people in the other congregation, feeling heard, discovering common needs and issues. It gives us energy and hope; we enjoy the stimulation of the diversity. Each congregation has gifts to share. **Questions for Reflection:** *What are some specific ways to strengthen the relationship between the two congregations that build on this energy and are “drawn by love”? (Try to be specific)*
- 4. Youth:** We recognize that as congregations we do not engage with youth as much as we engage with seniors. Yet we love the children, youth and younger families in our midst. We know we can’t “get” Youth, but there may be changes we can make that would make our congregations more inviting, and express more clearly how we value younger people. **Questions for Reflection:** *What needs to be true about us if we want to be the kind of church that invites and engages youth? What specific changes are we willing to make?*

