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Council E-News

Nov. 21 2016

***The Living Presence Ministry: Embracing New
Possibilities for Ministry and Mission in East
Gwillimbury***

One of Council's mission goals is to explore and facilitate innovative ways of being the church in the 21st century. Recently, a major piece of this effort has been supporting the development of a Community Pioneer Ministry in East Gwillimbury.

The town of East Gwillimbury is poised to undergo a surge of growth and will soon witness the development of tens of thousands of new homes, businesses and services.

Living Waters Presbytery has embraced this growth as an opportunity and, with the active support of TUCC's Centre for Church Development and Leadership, has spearheaded the creation of

the **Living Presence Ministry**. This ministry is developing a unique approach to mission by starting a new community (pioneer) ministry while simultaneously revitalizing the existing congregations in the area. This 'both – and' approach means working to find new ways of connecting with people who are not drawn to traditional church and helping the local congregations become as attractive and inviting as possible for those who might be looking for a spiritual home.



LIVING PRESENCE
— MINISTRY —

Living Waters Presbytery has committed 3 years of funding to this project (with a plan to eventually extend the funding commitment to ten years). The hope is that this project will become a model for others throughout the country and beyond

Guided by a steering team made up of members drawn from each of the local congregations and each of the Living Waters Presbytery

Commissions, the goal of this new ministry is to actively and visibly help people live healthy, meaningful, spirit-filled lives.



An exciting recent development has been the selection of the Pioneer Minister who will create a brand new Fresh Expression of ministry in the area. The Living Presence Ministry is thrilled to welcome Bri-Anne Swan, a woman of many talents and ambassador of "radical hospitality." A message from the new minister is included at the end of this newsletter.

TUCC & THE CCDL - CONSULTANTS AND PROJECT PARTNERS

Toronto United Church Council (TUCC) is supporting the Living Presence Ministry in a variety of ways:

- Council carried out a demographic study for Presbytery in 2014. The report was then shared with the congregations and leaders of the area through late 2014 and early 2015.
- The Centre for Church Development proposed a plan for a new approach to ministry development that focuses both on strengthening the traditional congregations and planting a missional ministry within the new subdivision. This proposal became the Living Presence Ministry.
- Currently Janet Marshall, Director of TUCC's Centre for Church Development and Leadership (CCDL) and Ron Ewart, Executive Director of TUCC are facilitating and resourcing the Living Presence Ministry's steering team and its sub-groups.
- TUCC has made a major capital investment in the project through the purchase of a house on behalf of Presbytery in the new Queensville development. It will provide the accommodation and 'work-base' for the new Community (Pioneer) Minister (see photo below of the house under construction)



To read more about what the Living Presence Ministry has been up to, check out one of their newsletters below:

[Living Presence Ministry Issue Newsletter 001](#)

[Living Presence Ministry Issue Newsletter 002](#)

[Living Presence Ministry Newsletter Issue 003](#)



A MESSAGE FROM BRI-ANNE SWAN, LIVING PRESENCE MINISTRY'S NEW PIONEER MINISTER!

I am thrilled to be embarking upon this new adventure with Living Waters Presbytery as the Community (Pioneer) Minister for the Living Presence Ministry. Understanding the spiritual nature of “home” has a special place in my heart. Being raised in rural Ontario and moving to Toronto as a young adult, I have grown to understand the importance of finding one’s place in community.

As a singer, songwriter and composer, I have toured United Church congregations—large, small and emergent—in dozens of communities across the country. I am a student of psychotherapy, a Level II Artist Educator, have led an Out of the Cold programme in downtown Toronto, have become an unexpected spokesperson and companion for a death row inmate in Texas, and am often at the centre of social justices initiatives within my current congregation, Rosedale United Church.

At the heart of all my personal, professional and volunteer activities, I strive to be a visible presence of God’s love and seek to emulate the principles of radical hospitality exemplified in the ministry of Jesus. My family and I are excited and enthusiastic about the prospect of being in community with those who are embarking on new journeys, as well as taking part in a new way of living out our faith, witnessing the incarnation of the Spirit.

Please feel free to seek me out online! You can read my blog and listen to some of my music by going to www.bri-anneswan.com, or tweet to me [@swannybee](https://twitter.com/swannybee).



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