

**A Summary of Responses from the September 19 2017  
York-Credit Valley Open Forum**

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**Question #1: We know God is already acting in the world and in our neighbourhoods. That being said, where do you most clearly see God's transformative action today in the world and your neighbourhood?"**

Over a dozen responses identified God working through the broad category of social aid and activism; a significant number of others identified some specific example of this kind of work (e.g. disaster relief, work with refugees, anti-racism and anti-opioid activism, reconciliation work with indigenous peoples, anti-discrimination work on behalf of the LGBTQ community). Participants also saw God's work in the movement of church activity out into the neighborhood, offering meeting space and support to local organizations. Some noted that churches becoming more welcoming of diversity, becoming more involved in ecumenical and inter-faith activities and mindfully seeking to deepen spirituality signaled God's work. In addition, work with youth and children was seen by many as a place where God's transformative action could be seen.

**Question #2: What place/situation in our world or neighborhoods do you think needs to be changed by God's love and mercy?**

The issue of economic inequality was mentioned most frequently, with a number of other local and global challenges being acknowledged by several participants (e.g. hunger/food security, the environment, homelessness/affordable housing, gender issues, racism, mental illness, violence/war, increased numbers of refugees, opioid abuse). A number of attendees identified as problematic a widespread failure of people to recognize and uphold the intrinsic value and dignity of each person; this concern about the quality of our interpersonal relationships extended to a recognition of the issue of selfishness, loneliness and the erosion of family life.

**Question #3: In your experience, what is the one most exciting thing about doing ministry in York-Credit Valley?**

Diversity was cited by many, along with the area's strong community development ethos, focus on serving others and commitment to social justice. Strong collegiality, fellowship and hospitality were highlighted by several participants as well, and the area's interfaith and ecumenical activities were frequently noted. Joy in sharing God's good news with the unchurched and dechurched and the privilege of joining in prayer and worship were also brought forward. This very event was also cited as exciting, along with the welcoming of our new Bishop, Jenny.

**Question #4: In your experience, what are two aspects of ministry in York-Credit Valley that require increased attention?**

Attendees' deep commitment to York Credit Valley and its flourishing were exhibited in the volume of responses to this question, a larger volume and variety than for any other question posed. Ministry to youth and children was prioritized by the largest number of attendees, along with training opportunities for laypeople to empower them for leadership and sharing their faith. Several attendees highlighted a need for greater focus on collaboration and team ministry, as well as greater community engagement. Cultivating new 'non-Sunday' worship and ministry forms was identified; the challenge of addressing the area's aging infrastructure and legacy of deferred maintenance was recognized by a number of participants, too. Some also acknowledged a need for more resources and support for the area's smaller, struggling parishes.