

Churches seek own paths for future

By DONNA DANIELI

A special service on Sunday, January 9 will celebrate a new chapter for Nassagaweya Presbyterian Church and St. David's Presbyterian Church in Campbellville. After over a century of working together as a two point congregation, with one minister servicing the needs of both congregations, the two churches will formally separate.

"The time has simply come for each congregation to go it alone," explains The Reverend Sean Howard. "It is with great joy that we celebrate this move and it is with great anticipation that we look forward to the future of God's ongoing presence and ministry in the Campbellville / Nassagaweya area."

Built in 1891, the St. David's Presbyterian Church was originally established as a "daughter" church to Nassagaweya Presbyterian Church, (built in 1836). As both congregations grew, it became more and more difficult for one minister to service the needs of both congregations. Reverend Howard began leading the congregation at the Nassagaweya Church in 2001, while still a student minister at Knox College. Both churches were still officially tied together at that point under the guidance of St. David's minister, The Reverend Glen Soderholm.

"We needed to clarify the relationship between the two congregations," explains Reverend Howard. "The process began to decide if we wanted to remain a two point charge or to separate into two separate charges."

After graduating in May, 2004, Reverend Howard was called to the charge, to serve as an Associate Minister for the Nassagaweya Church, under the leadership of Senior Minister, The Reverend Glen Soderholm at St. David's. The two worked closely together until Reverend Soderholm resigned from St. David's last summer to commit more time to his music ministry (www.glensoderholm.com).

Towards the end of 2004, the Nassagaweya Presbyterian Church's request to become an independent congregation, with it's own minister, was granted by the Brampton Presbytery.

"We think this is very exciting," says Reverend Howard, who is quick to confirm that the separation of the two churches is simply because both have grown to the point of needing their own full time minister. He points out that when his father served as the minister for St. David's and the Nassagaweya Churches from 1980 to 1990, there were perhaps a half dozen people in the pews at Nassagaweya Church in the early eighties. Today, Reverend Howard preaches weekly to more than fifty members of his congregation. "There has been a gradual and consistent process of growth at Nassagaweya," he

says. "There is a real sense of community and everyone there knows one another quite well."

The service of celebration will take place at Nassagaweya Presbyterian Church on Side Road 15, on Sunday January 9, and will be followed by refreshments and fellowship at St. David's Presbyterian Church, and all are welcome to attend. "We're celebrating our history and also very much anticipating the future of both congregations as well," says Reverend Howard.



Nassagaweya Presbyterian Church.



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