

Frequently Asked Questions regarding the proposed UBC/Hope Mission Partnership & Letter Of Intent

Why are we proposing a partnership with Hope Mission?

The foundation of our Christian beliefs is that we are called to serve God and to model the love of Christ and grow the Kingdom here on earth. This serves as the basis for our mission, vision and values.

Our two organizations share many common values including caring for people's holistic needs (physical, emotional, mental, spiritual); building and investing in the community; supporting families as a whole; meeting practical needs in the community; and creating a safe, welcoming, accessible place for all members of the community.

We also share a vision for how we can build and strengthen our relationship with the community of Normandeau/Glendale and with the North Red Deer area as a whole. Our mutual goal is a shared facility that serves as a gathering space for the community, providing a positive, encouraging, safe space for youth during the out-of-school hours; and an accessible, welcoming worship space.

How did we come up with this Letter Of Intent?

At last year's AGM, the congregation approved a motion to empower the staff and council to continue to investigate the options of using our land and building with Hope Mission. To facilitate this, UBC's council approved the creation of a committee of UBC representatives whose task was to work with Hope Mission to determine options that would be mutually acceptable. The committee is comprised of Ron Murdoch (council rep), Jen Turner (staff rep), Chantel Tombs, Stewart Duffin and Lionel Stuber. Both Rob McLaren and Heather Plett are ex-officio members of this committee. The Joint Venture Committee (JVC) met numerous times to determine, discuss and weigh the relative merits of the different partnership options. There was also a significant amount of interaction and communication between the JVC and the church council to ensure that the committee was working within its mandate and meeting the deadlines and timeframes set by council. The JVC also met numerous times with Hope Mission to work toward an agreement that would be mutually acceptable. The larger committee then worked closely with Bob Teskey (legal counsel) to draft the proposed Letter Of Intent which was subsequently presented to council for review and approval. In putting forth the Letter to the congregation, Council is affirming the work of the JVC and supports the content of the proposed Letter Of Intent.

What kind of spaces will be included in the proposed building?

The building will have a number of rooms and spaces of different sizes to accommodate various activities and programs. There will be a large multi-purpose Great Room; large foyer area; learning spaces; meeting spaces; boardroom; commercial kitchen; shared administrative and office space.

Is the new multi-purpose Great Room space just a big gym that will be uninviting and overwhelmingly large?

The proposed multi-purpose space is NOT a gymnasium. It's a multi-use space whose primary function is as a worship space. Although it will be designed with finishes that are durable enough to withstand use in a number of different ways, it will not have a traditional gym floor or basketball nets on the walls.

The multi-purpose Great Room will accommodate 300 - 320 chairs and will seat approximately 250 comfortably. There will be a permanent platform/stage area. The space will be approximately 1.5 times larger than our current space. In other words the space will not be a large overwhelming space that we will feel lost in.

This photo of Terwillegar Community Church shows the front of their Great Room, which is the inspiration for the space we're proposing:



How can we be sure that the worship space will have good acoustics?

The UBC Joint Venture Committee (JVC) places a high value on good acoustics and sound engineering. We clearly state in the Letter Of Intent that we will hire an acoustical consultant who will work closely with us throughout all stages of this project, from initial concept and design to final construction phases and occupancy.

How are we going to raise the \$300,000 that we need to contribute to this project? Can we afford this project long-term?

We have some options for raising the money: we currently have \$100,000 in savings and \$46,000 in the building/renovation fund. We can start a capital campaign to raise what we need, and/or we have the option of borrowing the money we need. Any decision would have to be voted on and approved by the congregation.

We should end up with some significant cost savings in the long run when we are no longer responsible for the operations, repair and upkeep of the building. We won't have to pay utilities or maintenance costs and we'll have a major reduction in our insurance costs. These potential cost savings amount to just over \$30,000/year based on our current expenses.

The Letter Of Intent says that both UBC and Hope Mission have a 50% undivided interest in both the land and building, but we aren't putting up half the money, and we don't seem to get 50/50 access to the building. Can you explain why this is?

This has been the biggest discussion point among the JVC, the council, and Hope Mission. After working through the benefits and drawbacks of a number of different options, we are proposing an ownership model where both partners have an equal equity stake in both the land and the building. This protects the interests of both parties, demonstrates that we share a common vision and goal for the operation of the proposed facility and recognizes that both organizations are bringing to the table equally valuable (if not exactly "equal") contributions: UBC's land, Hope Mission's money.

That being said, it's also very important to recognize that the building usage requirements of our organizations are not equal. This is where the "priority use" and "secondary right" clauses come into play.

What does the Letter Of Intent mean when it refers to "priority use" and "secondary right"? Does this mean we can only use the building on Sundays?

The term "priority use" refers to which group has first right to book a given space on a certain day. "Secondary right" means that any space not being used by the primary group is available for use by the other partner. No third-party groups (rentals, other community groups) can jump ahead of the needs of the primary and secondary users. The Letter of Intent also clearly states

that there must be close communication between our two groups “so that all of the reasonable ministry needs of Unity will be accommodated while still allowing Hope to carry on its activities.” This means that if we need to use the building during the week for our ministry needs, every effort will be made to schedule this, in the exact same way that we would allow Hope to use the building on Sundays if we had the space available.

How is our building currently being used by our congregation? Don't we use it a lot more often than just on Sunday mornings?

Our building is currently either underused or vacant for most of the week. This pattern has generally been the same for the past several years.

Here is the breakdown of how the regular, recurring congregational activities:

- Sunday mornings from 8 am to noon (4 hours/week)
- Monday morning prayer group (1 hour/week)
- Tuesday morning women's group (2 hrs bi-weekly)
- Thursday morning bible study (2 hours/week)
- Thursday evening Youth Group meets here on average once/month for 2 hours
- Council meets once a month for 3-4 hours

If we add up all of this regular congregational use, we use our building an average of 38 hours a month, or less than 10 hours a week.

What about all the weddings, funerals or special events we currently host - would we only be able to have them on Sunday?

We would still be able to use the worship and fellowship spaces for special events during the week. Since most of these events are planned in advance, we can coordinate our request with Hope to ensure we have the space required. Most of our church-wide fellowship events already take place on Sundays, which is when we'll have primary use of the building anyway.

It's worth noting that we have only hosted one wedding in the church in the last 2 years, and have hosted at most 5 funerals in the same timeframe.

What about all the other groups and organizations that rent our building?

They would be responsible for working out their own arrangements with HM, who are already aware of which groups we host and see definite value in continuing to make these services available in the community.

What about when someone in our congregation wants to rent space?

They would have to request use of the space from HM, in the same way they have to request it through our office now.

We've been saying all along that we absolutely need our own permanently set-up sanctuary. Why aren't we getting one?

Short answer? We can't afford it. Both UBC and Hope Mission started the discussions with a list of items that we each thought were "must-haves" and worked out a rough cost of how much this would cost and it amounted to well over \$4 million. In order to have the proposed building come in at a cost that we both deemed reasonable, we had to make some compromises, the biggest of which was the multi-purpose space: we wanted a dedicated sanctuary, Hope wanted a dedicated gym. Since we couldn't afford to do both, we had to work out how to design a space that would work as both.

So, what would it take for us to get a permanent, dedicated sanctuary?

We would need a strong commitment to raise over \$1 million in a short amount of time, either through donations or a willingness to borrow (and a commitment to eventually repay) the money.