Kamloops United Church (KUC) Living Faith Story

Our Purpose:

We covenant to be Christian disciples: Loving God, Following Jesus and Serving with Spirit.

Our Vision:

To actively embrace and live out our stated Purpose and Values. To nurture, equip and support faithful discipleship in ever new and changing ways. KUC will be a vibrant centre for Christian Community reaching out in the heart of Kamloops.

Our Values:

KUC, a downtown and Two Spirit & LGBTQIA+ Affirming congregation is Love based and Purpose focused. We believe that the Holy Spirit is always up to something exciting and new. We value and are committed to:

Worship: We come together as the church to celebrate God's presence and to witness to our faith.

Inclusiveness: We welcome all. We Affirm and celebrate the intersecting points of each and every person's identity, including sexual orientation, gender identity, age, race or ethnicity, differing ability, economic standing and cultural background. KUC affirms that all who seek to live faithfully are embraced and welcomed just as they are, to become full participants in the life, membership and leadership of this faith community.

Communication: We commit to open and timely information sharing and we strive to understand diverse points of view through dialogue and education.

Community: With compassion, we offer support and love to all, sharing laughter and tears.

Discipleship: We respond faithfully to God's call to follow and embrace God and Jesus, the Christ, more fully.

Faith Formation: We support development of personal Christian faith through instruction, study, creative expression and learning at all ages.

Justice: We strive to be fair and just in all our relationships and support those experiencing injustice. KUC strives to work for justice in the four priorities named by the UCC: Indigenous Justice and Reconciliation, Two Spirit & LGBTQIA+ Justice, Climate Justice, and Anti-Racism/Racial Justice.

Ministry: We care for others within and beyond our congregation, serving the needs of downtown, the wider community and around the globe.

New Life: We believe in the transforming power of Faith, Hope, Grace and Love.

Stewardship: We manage our property, personnel and finances to serve our Purpose and support efforts that protect and sustain God's creation.

In 2022-23 Kamloops United Church Community of Faith embarked on a journey of self-exploration. Over a number of months, the congregation and the community at large were involved in an extensive consultation process that resulted in a 5 year plan for the future of the church. From this there came three separate recommendations:

1. Embrace Risk Taking (Deep Spirituality) That KUC embrace risk taking in all areas of its life, seeking fresh expressions of worship, and the involvement of younger people in active church life, especially in decision and policy making. That KUC live the question: "What do we have invested in our future?"

2. Prioritize First Third Ministry (Bold Discipleship) That KUC engage a second fulltime minister with primary responsibility for First Third Ministry (those under the age of thirty) for a five-year commitment. That KUC live out its risk taking and invest in the future by drawing the necessary reserve funds to do this.

3. Develop an Eco-Stewardship plan for our building and physical resources (Daring Justice)

That KUC become carbon neutral exploring the options of solar power and an electric car

charging station. That KUC amp up its recycling program and develop new environmental policies.

Our Calling:

We seek to live into: Deep Spirituality, Bold Discipleship, and Daring Justice.

Our History:

KUC was formed in 1925 through the union of local Methodist and Presbyterian congregations.

KUC has always been a congregation ready to embrace change and evolve to meet the ever-changing needs of the community, including the following highlights:

1953: KUC established a camp at Shuswap Lake. Camp Grafton consists of 37 acres operated by the Camp Grafton Society, providing a rustic experience with nature for hundreds of children every summer;

1969: KUC opened its own Thrift Shop which continues to support those in need while contributing to the financial wellbeing of KUC;

1979-1980: KUC addressed its failing facility and rebuilt a new Sanctuary space;

1981: KUC established Hank's Cupboard – a resource for community members to obtain food that eventually became the Kamloops Food Bank;

1996: KUC became a member of Affirm United/Affirmer Ensemble. After some years of discernment and education, the congregation voted to become officially Two Spirit & LGBTQIA+ Affirming in May of 1996. In 2016 the KUC Affirming Ministry was re-energized and remains a prioritized core ministry;

2012-2016: KUC redeveloped its Sanctuary, demolished its aging Christian Education Centre and constructed a new building containing space for church programs along with

56 units of affordable housing;

2020: During Covid, KUC updated the sanctuary creating a new chancel space.

2022: KUC engaged in a Visioning process and ratified the conclusions at the 2023 AGM. The congregation re-affirmed their commitment to justice, naming PIT Stop, Reconciliation and the Two Spirit & LGBTQIA+ Affirming Ministry. Climate justice and carbon neutrality were added as goals. A commitment to First Third Ministry led to the creation of a second minister term position;

2023: KUC amalgamated with Mount Paul and Plura Hills United Churches; and

2024-2025: KUC redesigned and rebuilt the entire west part of the building including the sanctuary and creating a new welcoming foyer after a fire destroyed part of the building.

Who We Are Today:

KUC is a vibrant, Affirming, ministry focused faith community. We are living into a new and exciting model of shared ministry, strengthened by our diversity and united by our call to serve the wider community.

Every Sunday, 100 - 125 people worship in person with an additional 100+ individuals worshipping online through livestream or on YouTube. Many newcomers are younger families, young adults and people new to Kamloops.

In August 2024, the fire in the Sanctuary caused significant interior damage. The rebuilding process was completed in December 2025. During construction, our congregation demonstrated its resilience – offering Sunday services at the Mount Paul location and continuing to offer a weekly hot meal from a variety of locations.

Our new Sanctuary includes state of the art sound, lighting and technology, with new flooring, comfortable seating and a bright, flexible worship space.

KUC enjoys strong lay support and an active congregational volunteer base willing to

assist with identified needs.

In 2022, KUC added a second ministerial term position to help support the needs of our growing congregation. In particular, KUC identified a congregational desire to support additional resources to expand First Third programming.

We enjoy a collaborative relationship with the Camp Grafton Society, an independent registered charity that operates a UCC accredited camp at Camp Grafton.

KUC is well positioned in the downtown core. There is a new housing development with hundreds of homes currently being built one block from our building. We are also located opposite to the Performing Arts Center currently under construction. We look forward to welcoming many new folks to our neighbourhood!

Our Staff:

KUC is well served with a team of dedicated and talented individuals. Aside from the two ministerial positions, our team includes:

Administrative Manager

Finance Administrator

Guest Relations Coordinator

Welcome Coordinator

Music Director

Lay Marriage Minister

Sunday School Coordinator

Custodial Team

KUC embraces team ministry – a true partnership of ministerial colleagues. It is the expectation that Team Ministers will collaborate and reach consensus on areas of responsibility. This non-hierarchical structure, along with the other members of the Management Team, creates a supportive working environment that enables each

member's specific talents to be fully utilized. The Team Minister Continuing is a permanent position and the Team Minister Term is a 3-year position currently funded through a specified reserve fund.

The Administrative Manager is an integral and deeply valued part of the collaborative leadership structure that supports the daily life, ministry and hospitality of KUC. The strength of this role has helped create a culture of teamwork, creativity and shared responsibility throughout the congregation.

Leadership & Governance:

KUC utilizes a modified Policy Governance Structure that is clearly defined in the Policy Manual developed by Council Circle. Under this structure (modified from the Carver Model of governance), the Management Team reports directly to Council Circle. The Management Team is responsible for organizing and running KUC within the Executive Limits that are defined by Council Circle and regularly reviewed for compliance. The Management Team is also accountable for achievement of the Ends set by Council Circle. The structures that are established and how the organization is run is completely within the discretion of the Management Team, as long as they remain within the Executive Limits. This enables the Management Team the ability to operate with creativity and take initiative when developing programming.

The members of Council Circle are appointed by the congregation.

The Management Team is composed of the Ministers, the Administrative Manager and the Treasurer.

Our Facilities:

KUC is located at 421 St. Paul Street in downtown Kamloops. Our building contains the Sanctuary, Church Hall, commercial kitchen, administrative space, multiple meeting rooms/resource space and our Thrift Shop.

KUC also holds a lease on the Mount Paul United Church site which gives us the opportunity to develop programs in more than one location. The Mount Paul site was a true blessing after the 2024 fire in KUC's Sanctuary and the resulting rebuild time.
KUC's Camp Grafton site is located just over an hour from Kamloops in beautiful Magna Bay. The camp is leased to the Camp Grafton Society – a group of dedicated volunteers who offer exceptional camping experiences every summer.

Ministry Highlights:

As an Affirming congregation, KUC lives out the following Statement of Affirmation: Kamloops United Church affirms and celebrates the intersecting points of each and every person's identity, including sexual orientation, gender identity, age, race or ethnicity, differing ability, economic standing and cultural background. KUC affirms that all who seek to live faithfully are embraced and welcomed just as they are to become full participants in the life, membership, and leadership of this faith community. At Kamloops United Church, people are valued not for what they can contribute, but for who they are.

In addition to Sunday worship, KUC offers creative and contemplative opportunities for spiritual connection, reflection and community gathering, including labyrinth experiences, film nights and other alternative forms of worship that invite people to encounter the Sacred in meaningful and accessible ways.

Our music ministry includes a choir, two English handbell choirs, a musical chimers group and offers both classical and contemporary musical elements.

Social Justice/Outreach:

KUC is a downtown hub of compassion and offers a variety of supports to the wider community. Current initiatives include:

PIT Stop (People in Transition): This program offers a hot meal every Sunday and

provides a warm welcome for all. KUC has served up 100 – 200 meals every Sunday since the late 1990s. The program has become so much more than just a meal as guests can count on receiving other forms of help (clothing, toiletries, supplies) as needed.

Reconciliation Exploration Circle: KUC recognizes that we are on the traditional unceded land of the Tk'emlúps te Secwépemc, and we respect our role in the stewardship of this land. KUC actively and intentionally addresses Truth and Reconciliation, seeking meaningful ways to demonstrate our commitment to walking a path of right relations.

KUC has also shown up publicly in support of trans youth, drag story events and inclusive education initiatives, striving to be a calm, compassionate and visible presence of affirmation within the wider community. In moments of tension and division, the congregation seeks to embody Christ's call to love boldly, welcome openly and stand alongside those who may feel vulnerable or unseen.

AA & NA: KUC provides meeting space for both Alcoholics Anonymous and Narcotics Anonymous programming.

Multicultural: As a congregation, we value opportunities to engage in intercultural learning and welcome people from diverse cultural and religious traditions. Often partnering with the Valid Dreams Foundation, KUC hosts a monthly dinner celebrating different cultural cuisines and providing an opportunity to welcome guests and learn about diverse cultures. Additional events celebrating diversity have been hosted, such as workshops and Multi-faith/ Inter-faith worship services.

Community Organizations: KUC provides a space for a variety of community groups and nonprofit organizations, enabling them to meet. Our Sanctuary serves as a performance venue for a wide variety of performers from across the Kamloops arts community. Our space is used by many organizations and individuals for workshops, rehearsal space, meetings, music lessons and other events.

Daycare/Preschool Space: After 70 years of operating its own preschool, KUC has created space for a new day-care operator. This is a much needed resource in downtown Kamloops to support parents working in the downtown core.

The life of KUC also continues to grow through emerging connectional ministries and small groups that foster friendship, belonging and faith exploration. These include the renewed UCW, the Men's Non-Group, and newer gathering spaces for both young women and young men — each creating opportunities for conversation, mutual support, laughter, spiritual growth and deeper community connection across generations.