



The congregation was invited to 'listen' to the neighbourhood on four occasions:

Ice Cream Block Parties from Collier United on:

Tuesday July 11 at 6 pm

Tuesday July 25 at 6 pm

Thursday August 11 at 2 pm

During worship at St. Vincent St. Park on:

Sunday August 20

The purpose was to observe and engage with the neighbours and neighbourhood around Collier Street United Church. The first two events had approximately 10 to 12 people in attendance, with a smaller group gathering on August 11. The worship session on August 20 included about 20 people. Groups were sent in all directions on foot, with a group touring around via car on the first and second dates. We then gathered back at the church and the park debrief on our observations (and to enjoy some ice cream treats) answering the following questions:

July 11:

1. Who did you see? Who did you not see?
2. Where do people gather?
3. List some places, things, moments or connections that drew your attention.

July 25:

1. What are the assets or strengths that you observed?
2. What are the needs you discovered?
3. How did it make you feel?

August 11:

No specific questions – six of us (including two children) walked around the neighbourhood.

August 20:

1. Who did you see? How did it make you feel?

What did we discover?

- Lots of people gathered in outdoor spaces – Meridian Place, Heritage Park, Kempenfelt Park, St. Vincent St. Park
- There was a feeling of safety as we explored, the only time someone felt uncomfortable was when they were approached for money
- There is such abundance in our catchment area – successful businesses, lovely homes and condos, great restaurants and more!
- Mixed neighbourhoods – affluent housing around the corner from rooming houses.
- The city maintains the downtown area well. It is clean, attractive and well used, and there are lots of events planned during the summer utilizing the outdoor spaces and waterfront.
- Free parking as you get away from the city core

What did we not see or identify as a need?

- A local grocery store
- More supports for our unhoused neighbours – affordable housing, mental health supports etc.
- Vacant spaces that could be utilized
- More people utilizing the parks on Sunday morning
- Fewer city supported waste containers as you move away from city core

How did we feel?

- Felt positive about community involvement and activities; people were friendly and there was a feeling of family.
- Uncomfortable when approached for money.
- There is a striking contrast between areas within a few blocks.
- Excited! It was a joy to walk the city and experience the waterfront.

- Growing needs doesn't faze excitement.
- Feel the potential – pushing from the bottom up.

Conclusions:

Collier Street United Church is an asset in the core of our city. Our land and building resources are substantial compared to other locations.