

Frankford Community Free Methodist Church
March 3, 2011

Proposal for

The Creation of a Youth Centre in the
Community of Frankford.

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I. Summary

After much prayer, research, communication and discussion a group of believers from the Frankford Community Free Methodist Church have gathered together for the purpose of creating a youth centre in the community of Frankford. This is to serve a currently underserved segment of the local population with vital opportunities for guidance and positive discovery.

The purpose of this initiative is to develop a sustainable and meaningful ministry that will benefit the youth of our community. Furthermore, we have determined that this project needs the cooperation and backing of many members of the community, most significantly the churches of Frankford.

As will be further detailed we will be looking for support in the areas of volunteering, planning, oversight, advertising, prayer and finances.

II. Introduction

In 2009, the fellowship of Frankford Community Free Methodist Church began a process of seeking what direction the church could take for its future growth and development. Part of this process included discovering what opportunities we might be called to take action on within our church and community. This began with a survey of the needs and desires of the church itself. It was determined in this initial survey that a pressing opportunity the church needed to respond to was ministry to youth. This need overshadowed every other identified opportunity or idea by a very large margin.

The second phase of this process was to approach various community groups and leaders to seek ways that the church could offer more to the community at large. Some questions asked were "In what ways could the church be more beneficial?" and "What needs are there that the church could help with?" On virtually all surveys it was again identified that there were clear and definite needs for the youth of our community. It was identified that they had needs that were not met in any meaningful way by any other service or group in the Frankford community itself.

By carefully reviewing all of this data as well as researching various reports from sources such as Statistics Canada, the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, The Ontario Rural Council and various youth agencies, it became clear that we were being led to take action on this need. At this time a committee was formed to begin the process of making this idea into a reality. It is now time to seek a way to serve the youth of Frankford and to provide them with a means of guidance, positive social interaction, and greater involvement in healthy and helpful activity.

One key element of this project is that it not be limited to one church or social group. Forming this centre as a community effort will be key to its success. We also desire that the church and faith community of Frankford be the driving force for developing and supporting this initiative.

III. Needs/Problems

In the research that was conducted a few key problems were identified. Frankford is considered a rural community and lacks many of the services and opportunities that a larger center has. For example, Trenton has facilities such as the YMCA to provide activities for youth. Youth are also able to find employment more easily and are able to be more independent. In Frankford there is much less available to occupy our youth. This problem is also compounded by limitations on mobility for many youth who do not have access to travel beyond Frankford, and are thus more isolated than many of their peers in neighboring towns and cities.

Frankford does not have a secondary school; therefore most of the youth in Frankford need to commute. For many, transportation is an issue that can limit

their participation in extracurricular activities, and unless alternate transportation is provided they are not able to take advantage of special programs offered in their schools.

Frankford also has limits on its access to electronic media such as internet and cellular service. This is a common and well-used means of communication in today's culture. The limits on the availability of high speed internet and other wireless communication add to the isolation that is felt by youth in our community.

Unfortunately, these issues of isolation have led some youth to indulge in unhealthy and even self-destructive behaviours.

A review of material from the Centre for Addiction and Mental Health revealed that youth today are more likely than previous generations to be involved in self-destructive behaviours such as drug use, alcoholism, violence, severe depression and other social problems. One of the key suggestions for changing these behaviours was to create community initiatives that are targeted towards young people. These programs can provide youth with choices and options to counteract the negative influences they are exposed to. Not only were school-based initiatives encouraged, but also partnership from the community was considered a key component of helping youth make positive choices for their future. A youth centre could provide significant support in this area.

Our survey of community leaders identified that the churches of Frankford could be key players in providing opportunities to youth. In a report by Dr. Reginald W. Bibby of the University of Lethbridge titled "Restless Gods and Restless Youth: An Update on the Religious Situation in Canada," Dr. Bibby presented the results of decades of study on how our society has changed in its perception of and involvement in churches. This report stated that there was a clear trend of decreasing interest and activity in the many church denominations. It was clear that there was an increasing polarization in the opinions held by people in the areas of the existence of God and the importance of faith in daily life. However, a key point that was uncovered in his research was that more than half of youth today (approximately 54% according to the survey) have identified that there is a spiritual need in their life. Furthermore, at least 40% of that group did not identify themselves as belonging to any religious group, but stated clearly they were not opposed to the possibility of greater participation. The church is uniquely equipped to create a safe place for youth to investigate spirituality, as well as to offer guidance and encouragement in their spiritual development.

A key component to ensuring the success of an initiative such as this is the involvement and ownership of the youth it is meant to service. This is where forming a youth council of some form is critical to the success of this initiative. According to the Rural Youth Working Group of the Ontario Rural Council a key factor in ensuring the success of any youth initiative is the involvement of youth. This will ensure that whatever is created and developed will be current and relevant to the youth of a given community. It is easy for outside groups to

make generalizations about youth and in doing so fail to meet the key needs of youth in their area. In addition, encouraging youth involvement will help them develop key skills and increase their participation in worthwhile endeavours.

IV. Goals/Objectives

The goals of this initiative are as follows:

1. To gather support from the local churches and the community for a project that has clear and significant benefits to the community in both the short and long terms.
2. To establish a youth centre that will meet the needs of our youth in a positive and meaningful way. This will give them an outlet that is safe while providing a positive atmosphere of love and support.
3. To reach a new generation with the good news of Jesus Christ and to communicate it to our youth in a way that is current and effective.

Mission Statement

The mission of this initiative is to provide our youth with a positive influence, much needed recreation, and guidance in their spiritual development.

In general terms, the youth centre will be based upon the following ideas and principles:

- Be a positive alternative to peer pressure.
- Have unique youth entertainment.
- Be a place of their own, a place where they can belong.
- Be a dedicated youth centre. (Not to meet multiple needs for various social groups.)
- To provide positive stimulation. (Media, social setting, conversation, etc.)
- To provide constant adult supervision, availability, and mentoring.
- To provide space for private, serious discussions.
- To have a board of directors composed of a balanced representation from Frankford's church community.
- To hire a full-time executive director, responsible to the board of directors.
- To have clearly identified supporters.
- To encourage appropriate language and behaviour.

V. Procedures/Scope of Work

The development of the youth centre will be a key community effort. In order to make this a success we will require continued and ongoing support from local churches as well as service clubs, local businesses and government agencies where applicable. Securing this support will be necessary to the creation of the centre and its ongoing needs.

A board will be formed to have oversight in the creation and operation of the youth centre and will complete the work initialized by the creation/concept team from the Free Methodist Church. This board will secure further support, establish policies and procedures and select a location for the centre. Furthermore, they will establish and oversee budgeting and staffing for the centre. Based upon the model that other organizations have used we propose that a full time executive director be hired to oversee the daily operations of the centre and to supervise a staff of volunteers that will work within the centre.

In the creation of the board, we will be seeking youth to be a part of it. In order to keep it relevant to youth today, the centre will need to have insight and guidance from the people it is intended to serve. As well, the routine operations of the centre will also require youth volunteers to help the adult volunteers and executive director. This will provide opportunities for many youth to be involved while learning valuable life skills.

VI. Timetable

We are planning to proceed with this proposal along the following general timetable:

	Description of Work	Start and End Dates
Phase One	Gathering of Community Support <ul style="list-style-type: none">• creation of the board• fundraising• advertising	Now – Summer 2011
Phase Two	Securing a Facility <ul style="list-style-type: none">• fundraising• selecting a location• renovating	Fall 2011 – Winter 2011
Phase Three	Recruiting and Training Volunteers, leading to the opening of the facility <ul style="list-style-type: none">• hire a director• establish staff of volunteers• select youth volunteers	Spring – Summer 2012

VII. Budget

In preparing this proposal we have researched the general needs of creating a youth centre. We have estimated the required finances by researching the cost of using the facility at 16 Mill Street, previously housed by Gabby's Books and Video Store.

Ongoing Costs

Building Lease - \$1200/month

Utilities - \$600/month

Salary & benefits for a director - \$4000/month

Insurance - \$100/month (estimate)

Security System - \$50/month

Operating Costs - \$500-1000/month

Total Cost per month - \$6450-6950

Total Cost per year - \$77,400-83,400

Initial Costs

Renovations - \$10,000-\$20,000

Furniture and equipment - \$5,000-\$10,000

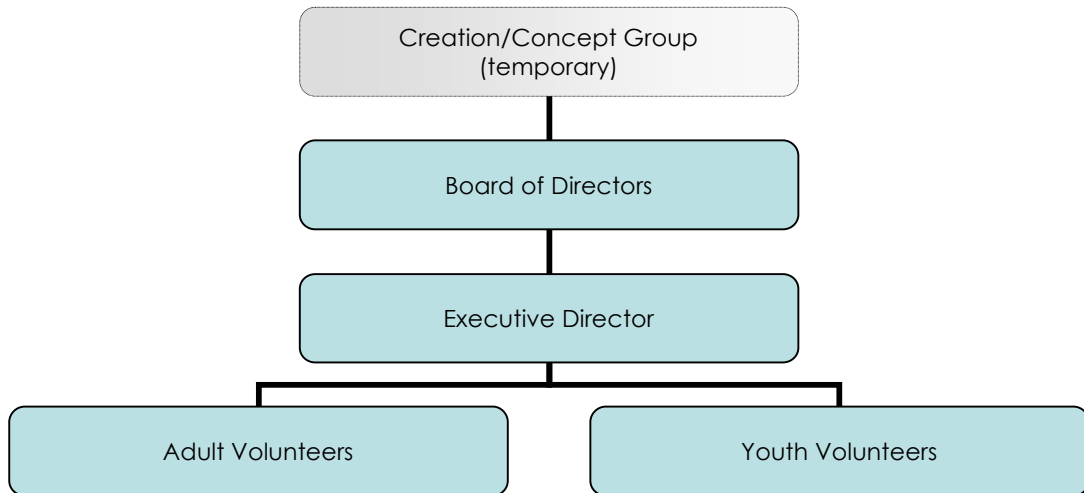
Advertising/Signage - \$2,000-3,000

Legal - \$500-1000

Total Initial Costs - \$17,500-34,000

VIII. Key Personnel

As indicated the centre will be led by a board of directors who will oversee the executive director. In general terms the diagram below will be the structure for the operation of this centre.



IX. Evaluation

To determine the success of the centre we will have to review the impact it is making on youth in the community. Primarily, we can monitor traffic through the centre. This will require tracking how many youth show up on a given night as well as how many return. Identifying the volume and frequency of visits can give us one picture of the impact the centre is making.

In the community we can seek feedback from local sources such as police and government agencies that track youth activity and social services. We will watch to see the impact on these statistics in the community. This will require a great deal of partnership and communication with other services in the community.

We will also watch to see how youth are impacted spiritually. Although more difficult to measure, identifiers may include discussions volunteers have with youth and impact in local churches.

Feedback from parents will also be an invaluable tool to gauge the overall success that the centre will have. Parents will be able to relay to us the impact that the centre has had on the behavior and attitude of their youth.

The board of directors will also have a mandate to review the performance of the executive director. They will assess the quality of work being done and verify that the person in the position is suitably skilled and competent in his or her duties. It will be the responsibility of the board to determine how this will be carried out.

X. Next Steps

At this time we are ready to proceed with the following steps:

1. We will approach local churches to gather firm support in personnel, prayer and finances.
2. We will seek support and endorsement from local community groups and leaders. As well, we will seek solid commitments from the community at large for ongoing support in principle, action and finances.
3. We will work toward forming the governing board that will complete the project and put this proposal into action.

XI. Appendix

The following supporting documents are well worth reading and can be found at their respective web addresses:

Bibby, Dr. Reginald W. (2009) *Restless Gods and Restless Youth: An Update on the Religious Situation in Canada*. Lethbridge, AB.
http://www.reginaldbibby.com/images/Revision_Bibby_CSA_Presentation,_Ottawa_May_09.pdf.

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, The. *Youth Scoop 1: Programs That Work With Youth: Is There a Special Formula?*.
http://www.camh.net/education/Resources_teachers_schools/Youth%20Scoop/youth_scoop_programs_work.pdf.

Centre for Addiction and Mental Health, The. *Youth Scoop 2: Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drug Use Among Ontario Students*.
http://www.camh.net/education/Resources_teachers_schools/Youth%20Scoop/youth_scoop_alcdruguse.pdf

Ontario Rural Council, The. (2008) *Create a Youth Council in Your Community ...in 10 Easy Steps!*. <http://www.ruralontarioinstitute.ca/file.aspx?id=061706a3-2f32-4d2b-a38a-a5cf2c24c9ec>.

Ontario Rural Council, The. (2007) *Rural Youth: Leading Today, Tomorrow and Beyond*. <http://ruralontarioinstitute.ca/file.aspx?id=bf17140f-ce38-4360-9722-b37a2290acad>.