



Potential Merger of:

Runnymede United Church and Windermere United Church QUESTIONS & ANSWERS

Updated March 19th, 2023

1. If we merge, where will Sunday services be held?

Sunday morning worship will continue at Runnymede.

2. What will happen with the Windermere United sanctuary, if worship will be at Runnymede United?

We will not reach definite decisions regarding the Windermere sanctuary for a period of time after a merger, as it will require a period of exploration and consultation. Currently, it is rented out to another congregation worshipping on Sunday afternoons, similar to what Runnymede has done in the past as well.

2. Will the Windermere United campus have capacity for special fundraising events?

Yes, there is certainly the opportunity, should we merge, to hold special events and fundraising events at the Windermere campus. We would also consider having some committee and group meetings take place there.

4. Will we still welcome Windermere United congregants if the merger does not happen?

Yes, of course! "You Belong Here" are the words we use. Runnymede United will continue to welcome everyone who wishes to worship or be a part of our church community. We will reach out to Windermere members to join with us here in worshipping and living out God's calling, no matter the outcome. They are our neighbours, and we can empathize what they must be feeling at this time. Some Windermere folks have already visited Runnymede for worship.

5. What will a Town Hall meeting entail? How do we ensure everyone is included or gets a chance to provide input?

We are currently planning Town Halls, in person and online, to reach as many of our people as we can. We will set dates after we discuss process timelines with Windermere. The format will be a presentation followed by a question and answer session. The goal is to provide the information you need on what a merger would look like for Runnymede before we convene at a later date to make a decision. Dates will be forthcoming shortly.



6. How does a congregational vote work? What happens next if we vote yes?

When the Board of Runnymede United Church and the Church Council of Windermere United Church both agree that we have a merger agreement proposal that is acceptable to both church leadership teams, and it has been reviewed by Shining Waters Regional Council to be appropriate, then both churches will give a two week notice of a congregational meeting. Ideally, both such meetings will happen on the same day. Our congregational meeting will be hybrid, both in person and online, because it is important to have the required quorum. The merger agreement will be presented and motions to approve a merger put forward for a vote at the meeting.

If both congregations vote Yes, then the decision needs to be approved by the Communities of Faith Commission of Shining Waters Region. This will happen after the congregational meetings. Their approval makes it official. There will also be an effective date for the merger set in the agreement.

7. Has Windermere run out of money? What assets do they bring to a merged church?

No, Windermere has not run out of money. Windermere has a church building, a Manse Fund, a number of other restricted funds and also funds for general operations. In addition to these assets, Windermere stewardship has created a church building operation whose tenant revenue creates an annual surplus which will enable its continued use and maintenance over the long run.

8. What will be the financial impact of a merger with Windermere? How are their financials? Does a merger create financial risk for Runnymede United?

Our Treasurer, Brian Traquair, has received detailed financial information from Windermere and has been able to build a financial picture of a post-merger two campus church. Windermere financials that are published on their website include the Stone Soup Network, which creates a distorted view of their actual financial situation. Brian has worked with the Treasurer of Windermere, who has separated out the church operating results from SSN, which is not part of a potential merger. The net financial impact of merging Windermere and Runnymede is the addition of a material building operations surplus each year, which will be used for community outreach ministry, building maintenance reserves and general merged church operations. The proposed merger would make Runnymede financially stronger than standing on its own.