

**COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT FOR ST. JOHN'S UNITED**  
**NEWSLETTER #1, MAY 2011**

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**Background**

Recently St. John's was awarded a grant to undertake a 'Community Assessment Project'. The purpose of the project is to get a clear picture of the community around St. John's. By learning more about the character of the neighbourhoods and how they are changing over time we can get a better understanding of who is living there and what their interests and needs might be. This information will help St. John's to plan its future community engagement and outreach activities.

We have started the work by looking at the current statistics for the area contained in a report prepared for the church by *Environics*.

**Where do Congregational Households Live?**

Using postal code information, *Environics* mapped out the area being served by the church. The table below shows that St. John's is a community church drawing 73% of its membership from the Halifax peninsula. The remaining 27% of members live in Dartmouth, Halifax West, Bedford/Sackville and out of town. Most of these suburban households appear to have been formerly resident on the peninsula.

Location of Postal Codes	Congregational Households	Percentage of total
Peninsula	168	73%
- South of Quinpool	44	19%
- North of Quinpool	124	54%
Dartmouth	13	5.6%
Mainland west	36	15.6%
Outer suburban (Bedford/Sackville)	8	3.5%
Out of town	5	1.6%
Total households	231	100%

**Core area served by St. John's**

In order to get a better picture of the area on the peninsula directly around the church, we asked *Environics* to assemble information for an area about 3 km across that has the church in the middle. This area serves about 55% of the congregational households and is more or less within walking distance of the church. It extends from Gottingen Street in the east to Halifax Shopping Centre in the west, and from the start of Oxford Street in the north to Coburg Road in the south. The information comes from a combination of Statistics Canada data and the

research conducted independently by *Environics*. In the table on the next page you will find some general information about this core area which has over 13,200 households and a population of over 27,400 people.

If you have comments or questions about this newsletter please contact Anne Muecke at:  
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Type of Household	Percentage of Total
Households with NO children	75%
- childless married couples	45%
- single, widowed, divorced or separated persons	30%
Households with children	25%
- two parents	15%
- one parent	10%
Non-family households (unrelated people living together)	55%
Households maintained by ...	
- under 25 year olds	7.8%
- 25-44 year olds	42.5%
- 45-64 year olds	32.5%
- 65 to 75 year olds	7.6%
- Over 75 year olds	9.2%
Household Income (Average for Halifax = \$78,000)	Percentage of Total
Households with income lower than the Halifax average	66%
- less than \$40,000	38%
- \$40-80,000	28%
Household income over \$100,000	24%

This information tells us that most households do not include children, many are led by single people living alone, and over half are made up of unrelated people sharing accommodation. Most households are led by young or mature working adults, and nearly 17% are led by seniors. Of the households with children, 40% are led by a single parent. While many households and individuals may be struggling financially, about one quarter is relatively affluent.

The report also confirms that there is a small immigrant population (10%) and a small visible minority population (8%).

### Neighbourhoods around St. John's

In the community around the church about half of the total dwellings are apartments; the other half are detached houses, detached duplexes and a few row houses. The dwellings in the core area are quite old. Nearly 45% were built before 1945, and are in varying states of repair and maintenance. About 38% were built after the war up to 1980. After that construction slowed

dramatically for the next 20 years when only 8.5% of the dwellings were built. More recently some new apartment and condo buildings have been constructed and more are planned. Inevitably they are being located in or at the edge of old, long established residential neighbourhoods that may have seen little change for several decades.

The mixture of housing creates distinct neighbourhoods each with its own characteristics. They attract people on the basis of affordability, quality, amenities and location.

The *Environics* report gives us a general picture of the people who live in the various neighbourhoods around the church - people who may be interested in church activities, in more community engagement or who need some assistance with daily life.

**In the next steps of this project will look at the community in more detail. We invite you to help us by filling in a questionnaire about your own neighbourhood! We will share the findings with you!**