

*Potentials*, through its consultants and board, is committed to God's mission. Our executive director, Paul MacLean, has worked over the past fourteen years with over 150 clients representing hundreds of congregations. Janet Marshall, based in Halifax, is a cofounder of *Potentials* and has worked extensively with churches to create focused and healthy communities of faith. Our clients come from every level of the church, from most Canadian denominations, and from non-church agencies as well. Our experience has taught us that understanding and working with the unique identity and context of the congregation, denomination or organization is the most effective path to realizing full potential.

*It is the real congregation discovering its real hope that is best equipped to overcome critical challenges and realize its full potential. To begin the conversation call Paul at 416-504-3664 or Janet at 902-404-0494.*



*Potentials*

*A Canadian Ecumenical Centre for the Development of  
Ministry and Congregations*

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*Potentials*

## REAL CONGREGATIONS, REAL HOPE

*Potentials works with congregations to overcome their critical challenges by evoking and sustaining hope.*

Hope is at the heart of communities of faith. Hope informs, imbues and emerges from all our collective actions as communities: worship, learning, caring for others, offering hospitality, standing against injustice. Faith communities are founded in God's radical hope for a better world, and these communities are places where that hope can be realized. Congregations participate in God's mission for the world.

Now is the time we need to rediscover the deep roots of real hope in congregational life. Real hope, rather than wishful thinking, will give courage for the challenges that lie ahead. We also need to deepen our understanding of real, rather than imaginary, congregations. Real congregations have unique strengths and limitations. These are the ingredients that carry and sustain hope and lead us into a promising future.

**There are immediate and critical challenges facing congregations today:**

- A questioning of identity and erosion of confidence; needing to adapt and respond to a significantly changing social context
- Creating community from very diverse groups of people, defined by generation, status, values and culture
- Managing conflict
- Responding to external demographic growth and managing internal growth in the congregation
- Redeveloping facilities and realigning resources for changing ministry
- Finding renewed hope, energy and purpose for ministry in the midst of decline
- Encouraging innovation and sustaining it

***When faced with critical challenges congregational leaders need to create transformative rather than technical responses.***

***Potentials* helps leaders effectively address their critical challenges. We empower people to achieve and sustain renewal, transformation, vision and direction.**

- *Potentials* provides facilitation that is transparent, honest, comprehensive, and connects with the deep faith and traditions of the community.
- Good, faithful, and sustainable decisions need to be based on real congregational life rather than on idealized models. We engage the whole community in discerning its future direction.
- Congregations are part of a larger system that has both resources and agenda that impact its life and decisions. This system needs to be represented so that decisions are wise and sustainable.
- Our goal is to transfer knowledge and skills to internal leadership so that the directions chosen by the community may be sustained over the long term. We are guides on the journey.

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Working with *Potentials* you can expect an approach that is reasonable, attentive, and disciplined. We are passionate and insightful about congregations. Our clients point to the value of an inclusive and imaginative process that motivates leadership, increases community engagement, and releases and directs potential for ministry. Many say they have experienced a renewed faith in congregational life.